Building Bridges

Overview

This activity focuses on supporting children to test different materials for their size and strength and therefore, their use in getting over an obstacle, for example a puddle.



Activities

- Create a ‘flat’ bridge to cross an area without touching the floor.
- Encourage children to choose materials to balance on and get everyone involved from one side to the other.
- Develop the activity by challenging children to make a bridge over an obstacle, like a puddle.
- Make sure children test that the bridge can hold their weight before walking across it.

Equipment

- A range of ‘bridges’ for example:
- Wooden planks
- Tyres
- Tarpaulins
- Buckets
- Carpet squares.

Key Questions

Which materials are the strongest?
How will you test your bridge is strong enough to walk across?
Which materials fit the most children on?
What materials are real bridges made from and why?

The Benefits

This activity supports a wide range of skills and learning outcomes – teamwork, problem solving, gross motor skills (balancing and carrying), communication skills, weight and measurement, positional language, shape.

Progression in Learning

- Link to stories that feature bridges.
- Set challenges, 'Can we build the longest/shortest/tallest bridge?’
- Share pictures of real-life bridges focusing on materials and shape.