Practical activity ideas

Notes for the teacher – If your children need to review their learning, you can use these activities to support them.

Working by candlelight



The resources required for this activity include electric candles or LED tealights.

Activity: The children will complete a normal classroom activity using only electric candlelight. They will compare how clearly they can see objects, colours and text compared with normal classroom lighting.

This will help the children to experience how reduced light affects visibility and understand why strong light sources are important for seeing clearly.

Measuring day length

The resources required for this activity include a daily recording chart, sunrise/sunset times (teacher-provided) and pencils.

Activity: The children will record the time of sunrise and sunset over a week. They should calculate the number of daylight hours each day and compare how day length changes.

This will help the children to link light to the natural world, recognise that daylight varies, and use measurement and comparison to explore how much light we receive.

Where does the light come from?

The resources required for this activity include classroom blinds, curtains, cardboard sheets and torches.

Activity: The children should help make the classroom as dark as possible. They will then observe where light still enters (gaps, windows, screens) and record all remaining light sources.

This will help the children to recognise that even 'dark' rooms contain small amounts of light and link this to how buildings use daylight to reduce energy use.

Light switch energy survey

The resources required for this activity include survey sheets, clipboards and pencils.

Activity: The children will walk around school and record how many lights are switched on in each room. They should discuss whether each light is needed and how turning lights off saves energy.

This will help the children to connect the idea 'we need light to see' with 'we don't need too much light,' building awareness of energy-saving habits.

Build a 'dark den'

The resources required for this activity include large sheets, blankets, pegs, chairs, cardboard, black fabric and torches.

Activity: The children will work in groups to construct a 'dark den' big enough to crawl inside. They should test how well it blocks light, then improve it by adding layers or changing materials. Inside the den, they can explore which objects remain visible and which disappear.

This will help the children to apply scientific knowledge to a design challenge and understand how blocking light affects visibility.