

Infant Weaponry

Making primitive tools with sticks and string

Early Years

Play Based Learning



Instructions

Swords

You will need two sticks and a piece of string. One stick will be the handle and “blade”, so make sure it’s long enough. The second stick will be your hand guard. Decide how long the handle needs to be and tie the guard above this point. You should now have a sword!

Bows

You will need one stick and a piece of string. The best stick will be both strong and flexible. Try to find one as long as your arm and as thick as your thumb. Tie your string to one end, then lean that end on the ground. Apply just enough pressure so that the stick bows. While holding this flex, tie the other end of the string to the top of your bow. The flex in the stick creates the tension on the string – allowing your arrow to fly!

This is a great experience for developing fine motor skills. Tying can be tricky, but the sheer delight on success is great to see!

Many types of play can be seen when children are engaged in this type of activity; including deep play, role play, recapitulative play, social play and symbolic play! ([Hughes, 1996](#))

It is important to have boundaries in this type of play. Encouraging the children to create their own rules can show us their understanding of the activity. We can then support and prompt ideas – if needed!

When working with groups we have used a sword and bow “licence”. This acts as an agreement with the children. Without a licence you can’t have a sword or bow.

Ground rules must be clear and simple. Aim away from people and animals. Leave space between you and others. (This goes for those with sticks and for those near others with sticks!)

For more resources visit www.ltl.org.uk/free-resources

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