



Creative ways to tackle climate change and pollution

This series of resources, designed for families, looks at creative ways to explore and to tackle climate change, plastic pollution and other sustainable development challenges.

This first resource is about some of the thinking behind the series and the value of these approaches.

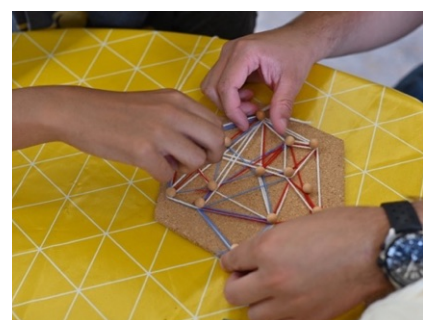
Positive solutions to difficult problems: you CAN make a difference

Climate change and plastic pollution are BIG challenges. Most children have heard about them, and perhaps learnt about them at school and in the media. Often they are communicated in doom-laden and scary ways, to get people to take notice, but this can leave children feeling quite scared and powerless. This doesn't help them feel like they can, or should even bother to, do anything about these problems. So it's important when talking about these challenges to be honest but also to be positive about the solutions and what can be done to help.

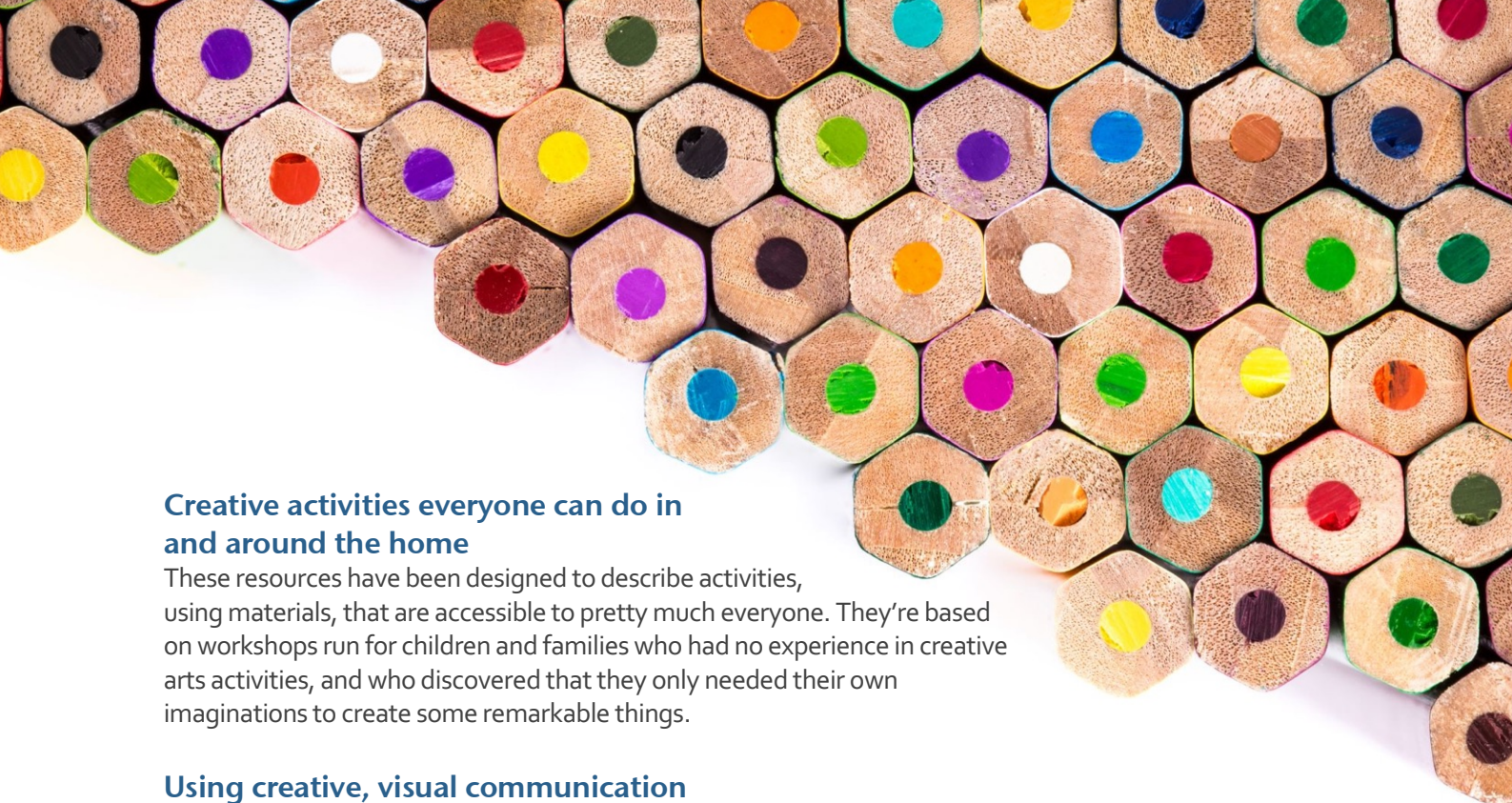
Creating changes, however small they might seem

The story of the starfish-thrower is that a man was walking along a beach littered with thousands of starfish marooned by a storm and was saddened by how helpless the situation was, with no chance of these starfish being saved. So when he met someone throwing starfish back in to the sea, one by one, he asked, 'Why on earth are you doing that? You haven't a chance of saving them all!' The second man turned, threw another starfish back into the sea, and replied, 'No, but look – I saved that one.'

The point is that, in the face of huge challenges, even small differences can be significant, and if everyone was scared off by the scale of the challenge, nothing would be done. But if *everyone* took even small changes for climate change and pollution, big changes would be made. So let's start now, and with ourselves.



Watch the film accompanying this resource at www.artsworld.org.uk/creative-climate-change



Creative activities everyone can do in and around the home

These resources have been designed to describe activities, using materials, that are accessible to pretty much everyone. They're based on workshops run for children and families who had no experience in creative arts activities, and who discovered that they only needed their own imaginations to create some remarkable things.

Using creative, visual communication

In the workshops that these resources are based on, many parents and children commented that they thought working with a few interesting images and getting stuck into exploratory creative ideas was much more successful than long stories and explanations in helping children understand about these big challenges. Try using a few simple questions about recycling or pollution, or a few interesting photographs to prompt creative ideas, as a way to start a discussion.

Making the most out of waste

It's amazing what you can make out of things that are thrown away, or not valued as creative materials. These resources are all about making things out of natural materials, like leaves and sticks, or throw-away materials, like plastic recycling.

What's more, making things out of things that aren't valued any more can make you question how much is consumed, how much is thrown away, how much value is lost – and how we could get more from our resources, whilst using less of them.

Creating things can lead to thinking about things

When you create things yourself, you have to think about, and have a vested interest in, what you're making. So making, for example, art, models, songs, sculptures, or animations related to nature, pollution or the climate, can be a good way of getting children to think critically about how sustainable their behaviour is, or more sustainable ways of doing things.

Spreading awareness

One of the great things about the arts is that they're good at grabbing people's attention, spreading messages and, hopefully, getting other people involved. So once you've had fun in your family making a difference in creative ways, go and tell someone else about it!

