

0-3-years-old

With this age group, how the end product looks is really not important, but in general, the brighter the bunting, the more likely the children are to get involved and talk about what they have done. Use paint to create flags that represent the children's personalities: possibly

dipping their hands and feet in paint and then making palm and foot prints.

You can make 'family bunting' by gluing family photographs onto each flag. Using different coloured paint and coloured paper makes for a particularly bright effect.

Getting parents involved

Find out from parents about significant achievements children are working towards or have made at home, and celebrate these through making a flag!

If the family are going on a foreign holiday, ask them to find out about the flag of that country, and the children can tell you all about it.

3-5-years-old

At this age children become fascinated by drawing, attempting to write numbers and letters, and with mark-making in general. Their skills at cutting with scissors are developing too, so – with appropriate help from adults – they can produce their own flags. With more help they can learn to thread them onto string as well. Plan to make bunting for special occasions such as birthdays, or the beginning of the school holidays.

Children of this age group are very aware of challenges they need to meet

as they are encouraged to become more independent. These include: toilet training; getting dressed; putting shoes on the right feet; learning to write their name. Make a flag with the child for every little step they are taking in self-help skills.

Flags can also be made to mark the changes in the seasons, with different coloured paper to reflect what is happening in each season, as well as drawings of autumn trees, snowmen, spring flowers and summer sunshine.

As a way of discussing and celebrating children's culture or cultural heritage, ask the parents about the flag that represents the country they or their relatives originated from. If any family festivals are coming up, get the parents to give you as much information as possible, so you can celebrate together with some bunting.

For ideas about making flags visit www.activityvillage.co.uk/flags_of_the_world.htm

For ideas about making bunting visit www.activityvillage.co.uk/make_bunting.htm

Michael Jones, early language consultant. With special thanks to Jane Sheppard, who inspired this article

Extending activities for 5-8-year-olds

Making flags to celebrate achievement is just as relevant for this group as they it is for younger children. However, older children are more aware of the meaning of symbols, including flags.

Many children recognise the 'skull and crossbones' of the pirate flag, and what it means, so this can be a good introduction to finding the meaning of flags from around the world.



Usually the colours used in the flag tell us a lot about the country. The yellow in the Jamaican flag, for example, signifies the sun, while the green represents the land and hope for the future.

You can find out more about different flags and their origins with the children by getting books from the library or visiting www.flags-flags-flags.org.uk

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Tips for getting older children involved in helping younger ones

- Older children can draw triangles for young children and help them cut them out with scissors.