

Amazing Africa

Extend the children's awareness of the wider world by exploring the stimulating images on this colourful poster together

Using the poster

Create an interactive 'Africa' display, using the poster as a centrepiece surrounded by the children's artwork. Encourage detailed observation by describing one of the images and asking the children to find it on the poster. Always use correct place names and introduce new vocabulary when appropriate.

1 Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe **2** Baby chimpanzee **3** Masai men dancing
4 Johannesburg **5** Orphan elephant, Nairobi National Park, Kenya
6 Bust of Queen Nefertiti **7** Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania
8 Nile riverboats, Egypt **9** Lion at watering hole **10** African elephant **11** Sahara desert
12 Cairo **13** African musical instruments **14** Muhammad Ali Mosque in Cairo **15** White-fronted bee eater **16** Giraffe **17** Camel by the Pyramids, Giza, Egypt **18** Sailing boat at Zanzibar



Activities across the curriculum

Personal, social and emotional development

- Draw the children's attention to the images of the Masai men and the African children, and compare these with a photograph of a group of children from your setting. Talk about the features that interest the children, such as the traditional dress and jewellery.
- Look at the image of the Muhammad Ali Mosque within the Cairo Citadel and explain to the children that this is a special building where Muslims go to worship. If possible, visit a local mosque. Talk about the children's experiences of different places of worship such as a synagogue, gurdwara or church.

Communication, language and literacy

- Look at the image of Nefertiti and explain that she was an Egyptian queen many years ago. Ask the children if they have seen pictures of Queen Elizabeth II, especially during her recent 80th birthday celebrations. Invite the children to compare the tall flat-topped crown and elaborate necklace worn by Nefertiti, and the gem-encrusted jewellery that Queen Elizabeth wears.
- Look at the images of the adult and orphan elephants. Explain how and why African wildlife needs to be protected. Invite the children to make up stories

based on the life of the orphan elephant before and after its rescue.

Mathematical development

- Invite the children to name the African animals depicted on the poster. Explain that these creatures live in the wild. Have the children seen any wild animals from their own countryside, such as foxes, squirrels or badgers? Mix up a selection of model wild animals from both locations and invite the children to sort them into two sets for 'Africa' and 'Great Britain'.
- Look at the image of the pyramids and discuss their shape. Invite the children to recreate them in a tray of wet sand and introduce model camels to the landscape.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- Look at the image of the riverboats on the River Nile and explain that tourists enjoy travelling this way to see more of Africa. Have the children ever travelled on a boat? Suggest that the children create boats from large boxes and set up role-play boat trips along the Nile.
- Point out the images that show African environmental features, such as large waterfalls, dry landscapes, deserts, seas and rivers. Link them to the children's own local experiences of sand and water on a smaller scale, for example, on seaside trips and river walks.

Physical development

- Look at the image of Johannesburg and invite the children to describe the buildings. Explain that when a lot of people live in a small space, buildings are taller to accommodate everyone. Let the children use building blocks or construction equipment to create a small-world city like Johannesburg with lots of tall buildings.
- Point out the Masai dancers on the poster and explain that the 'jumping dance' is one of the most popular dances. Invite the children to make up a jumping dance to some beating drums. Carry out some traditional British dances as well, such as a Scottish reel or a Morris dance.

Creative development

- Look at the image of the musical instruments and listen to similar ones, if possible. Make shakers and drums from recycled materials and paint them in the traditional Ethiopian colours of red, yellow and green.
- Explore the white-fronted bee eater picture and compare this bird with those that the children see daily. What shape is its beak? What colours can the children see? Invite them to paint pictures of bee eaters to add to the African display.

Jean Evans is an early years consultant and author.

