

Activity: Look inside a digital thing.

The purpose of this activity is to help children develop an understanding of digital things and that they can be connected. This hands-on activity is not a new one to many early childhood educators. However, bringing new language to the description of digital things and trying to purposefully frame the activity to help strengthen children's understanding is important when we explore things like broken or used technology.

Readiness

Children are ready for this activity when they can identify digital things and their uses. If children are having difficulty with this activity you may like to have conversations about digital things and what they do;

“This is a computer”

“This phone lets me talk to someone on another phone. I wonder how it does that?”

Other Playing IT Safe activities to further explore who uses digital things include:

- What is the internet?
- Book Corner.

Description

Part 1: Group

Bring in an old piece of technology and open it up for the group. This is a chance to demonstrate safety around technology, using protective glasses or gloves while you are opening the device.

An old VCR or DVD Player is a good place to start, they are often simple to open with only 4 screws. Children might not know what they are as most TV shows and movies are watched on TVs or tablets. It is great to explain to children how they were used. Open it up and let children have goes at looking inside and sharing what they see and perhaps sharing what different things might do. For toddlers, just seeing and identifying wires, or metal, or shapes within the machine is what we are looking for.

Your role is to guide the discussion and talk about how different it looks and ask “how can this help us watch movies?” or “what does it remind you of?” or “what does it look like to you?”

Part 2: Individual

To scaffold this activity, with young children you don't need to provide tools, you just have to open technology on a table and include some paper and drawing tools. You could have children draw what they see, or draw on the device, or add things and build on to it. You could include gloves and safety glasses that they have to wear when using the table with old technology on it.



Resources required

Old technology and tools to open them.

- VCR, DVD player, smartphone, old laptops, computers, keyboards.
- Screwdrivers, wirecutters, safety glasses.
- Drawing materials.
- Children's gloves and safety glasses.

Modelled play

You can model learning to children in this activity by:

- Using safety gear appropriately.
- Pointing out specific shapes and where things connect.
- Having more than one piece of old technology to compare with.

Prompts

- How can this help us to...?
- What does it remind you of?
- What does it look like to you?
- What is all this made of?
- What shapes can you see?

Learning statement

<Name of child/ren> are able to explore and identify that technology is made up of different parts. They have used a range of different words and worked together to improve their understanding of what technology is. They have understood that technology is quite complex and looks very different inside than it does outside.

Alignment

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating. This is evident when children:

- Ask questions and independently begin to explore and attempt to make meaning through the deconstructing of digital things.

