

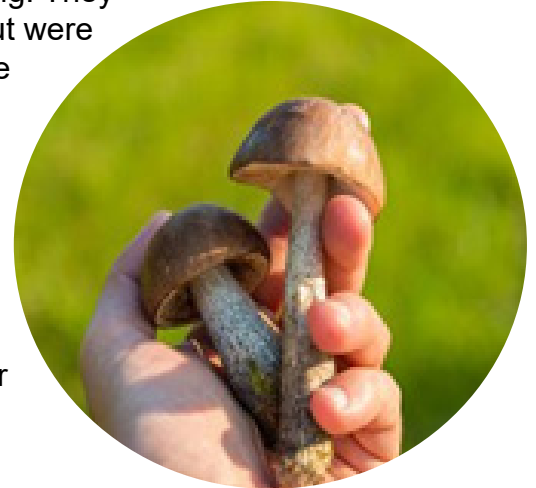
# Understanding the five developmental pathways and pedagogy

## Case study: Reflecting on exploration – Mushrooms

On a walk in the outdoors, child A noticed a mushroom growing. They were curious about the mushroom and wanted to pick it up but were encouraged not to. This led to many questions which drew the attention of more children.

A long conversation followed about mushrooms noting that some were safe and some were dangerous. The child went home that night and returned to nursery in the morning telling everyone that, according to his mum, a mushroom was a fungi.\*

\* Please be reminded that fungi should only be handled under the supervision of a fungi expert.



### Consider

- How could you build on this fascination?

Note down your ideas before you move on.

## Case study reviewed

- The practitioner found lots of different edible mushrooms and brought them into the setting for the children to explore. They were encouraged to investigate them using all their senses except taste (for now) and were provided with magnifying glasses and other resources to assist in this.
- Different books on mushrooms and fungi from the local library were placed in the tuff spot with the mushrooms. Pictures of different colourful and unusual mushrooms were placed in the creative area and relevant colours of paint and crayon materials were supplied, alongside additional interesting creative resources.
- Children were encouraged to respond to their explorations in many ways, through sensory exploration, discussion, mark-making and role play. If children were not interested in responding to the mushrooms or exploring them, alternative resources were also available.
- The children went on more walks to find and photograph different types of mushrooms and fungi using a digital tablet. Magnifying glasses were also taken on these walks and the children were encouraged to look closely but not touch in respect for the environment.
- Using the internet, children were encouraged to find pictures of different mushrooms and fungi (on child-friendly sites).
- The photographs the children took on their walks and the images they found on the internet were printed and made into cards. Two of each picture were made. Each card was marked with a symbol, chosen by the children, to represent harmful and safe mushrooms.
- The children were encouraged to use these cards in any way they wish but an adult taught

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them how to play games such as pairs and snap.

- Mushroom soup and mushroom omelettes were made and the children were encouraged to make and draw recipe cards.
- With adult help, the children set up a café where mushrooms were regularly served. Mushroom soup became a popular dish in the home corner kitchen and the mud kitchen outside.
- An attempt was made to grow mushrooms. This was not very successful but led to lots more questions and discussion.
- The practitioner tried to widen the exploration to include different types of fungi (including mould) but the children now had new fascinations so this idea was dropped to follow their new interests instead.