

The adult role in pattern learning

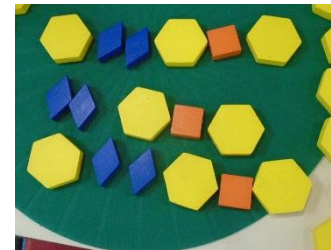
The adult role is crucial to children's pattern development. The adult needs to be open minded to what pattern could be and how children might define the pattern they have made (for example in the photos, *right*). Having good pattern subject knowledge and knowing about progression in pattern is key to being able to move children on in their learning and deepen their understanding of pattern.



Modelling of noticing patterns and making patterns (plan for opportunities if they don't naturally arise) allow the adult to demonstrate curiosity and interest to children and ultimately help children to become more aware of patterns. The adult will need to use lots of language relating to pattern and show children how to



represent patterns in different ways. Adults need to make mistakes (for example in the photograph, *right*) for the children to identify and correct. This can be done in the moment during continuous provision as well as part of adult directed sessions. The use of daily routines can lend themselves to exploiting opportunities to continue modelling pattern work. There are many cross-curricular opportunities for pattern learning and pointing out pattern opportunities will increase the profile of pattern work (for example in the boot painting activity, *left*).



In adult directed sessions, the adult needs to start teaching from an interesting stimulus as well as what the children already know. The stimulus might be patterns in nature (photo, *right*) or rhymes and stories, for example. Adults need to make the pattern explicit for the children (for example, using symbols in a story map, *left*). Then continue the interest with music, action and body patterns before moving onto using objects (which can also be natural objects) and finally symbols to represent the pattern.



Pattern work can also be used as a form of intervention for children who have not grasped the early mathematical concepts, such as number sense, as pattern development will help them. Early pattern work is particularly beneficial as pattern runs through all areas of mathematics.