WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE TODAY?

YMW13

🕐 15-20 minutes

To develop awareness of social symbols and signs
To introduce the concept of a weather map
To introduce the idea of using symbols to represent different types of weather
To develop the ability to 'read' (decode) a simple symbolic message

❖ **Various road signs and information signs**

❖ **A sample set of weather symbols**

❖ **A simple weather forecast map**

❖ **Large, square sticky notes and a pencil**

Introduction to signs and symbols: Before the session, go for a walk around your local area to look at warning and information signs in the everyday environment. Talk to your child about the signs and symbols around them and what they think they mean. If they did YMW6 (Caterpillars only), remind them of the road signs they saw.

Back at home, look at the signs provided together – discuss their meaning and how some help us to find places, some give us information about something, some prohibit/forbid certain things and others warn us about something. Ask your child about any other signs or symbols they have seen and discuss them.

The weather: Now explain that we can also use simple symbol drawings to describe the weather now or to show what we think the weather will be like. Show your child the weather forecast map. Let them try to guess what some of the symbols mean.

Ask them to draw some simple symbols that they could use to tell people about the weather on the sticky notes – sunny, cloudy, rain, snowy and windy. If they find this difficult, show them the relevant cards from your sample set of weather symbols to give them some ideas.

Play 'What's the weather like today?' Explain to your child the job of a weather person on the television. Tell them that now they are going to be the weather girl/boy presenting the weather, using the weather symbol cards they just made! You whisper the weather to them, for example: *It's going to rain!* And your child has to hold up the corresponding symbol card and repeat your words. Then exchange roles – ask your child to tell you the weather and you 'present it' by repeating it and holding up the corresponding symbol card. Make some deliberate mistakes! Depending on their age, you could embellish the comments further, like: *Wrap up warm today in the north of the country because it's going to snow!* Then encourage your child to do the same.

Play 'What Happened to the Weather?' The aim of the game is for your child to make and 'read' a simple symbolic message consisting of 2-3 weather symbols. Put 2-3 symbol weather cards in a row and help them read the message. For example, as in the image top right: *First it was cloudy, then it rained and later it was sunny.* Repeat a few times and then reverse roles. As you play the game, take the opportunity to emphasise that weather can be more complicated; it can be windy when it is sunny and it can be windy when it is raining, for example.

Your child can understand many different common symbols and signs.
Your child can relate real weather to particular symbols.
Your child can make and 'read' a simple symbolic message about the weather.
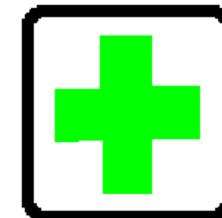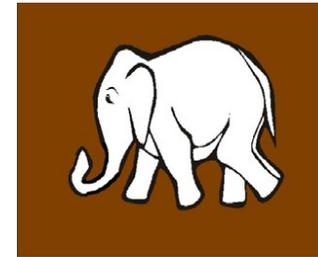
KEY TO LEARNING @HOME

Cut out each sign separately.

Cut out each sample weather symbol.