

Up the Stairs

Environment Wooden banisters dividing space and creating staircase shadows. Sticks, wood sounds, cahons, tongues drums and beaters. Attic - Trestle masks hanging on elastic around space, polystyrene heads, sad character with; loo rolls, Kleenex, white muslins, long white cloths. Happy character with bouncy balls with faces on. Gingerbread men biscuits.



Banisters Up the stairs we go, step by step, between the shadows. Run sticks along the banisters, play with rhythms as you tap on, under, between the railings. Play each other's sticks, roll them, drop them, hear the different sounds. One by one add wooden instruments to enhance this playful musical soundscape.



Attic Creep into the attic, see who's there, faces hanging all around. The sad face comes alive and greets you. Sobbing and crying he pulls out reams of loo roll, kleenex tissues and cloths. cover the space with tissue, feel the textures, scrunch it and rip it to pieces, blow noses and wipe your eyes as sad music weaves around you. Wrap yourselves and the character in huge white cloths, comfort him and become friends



Happy Man appears from behind the screen, joyful and full of mischief and fun. He brings coloured balls that spin, roll and bounce around the space, up against mirrors, to and fro, twirling over mobile mirrors on the floor. Try other masks and introduce new emotions, a grumpy man, a 'clown'. Explore various interactions between characters, see yourselves in the mirrors, then share gingerbread faces before making your way back down the stairs.



Observations Banisters worked well, changing shape of space, encouraging clients to walk around/remain standing, good for playing with sticks, on, between rungs, running along, peeping through etc. Masks - some groups responded more easily than others, no-one (apart from Chris) showed signs of anxiety, good interactions, often v. caring, lots of humour, playful. Tissue rolls were fun and covered the space with loops of white that clients found fascinating. Good for ripping, scrunching, gathering etc. Happy character comes as a relief and release. Occasionally difficult to maintain energy level throughout this section - v. reliant on musical support and engagement of carers.

