



Helping teachers work with children when they first return to education following major traumatic or life-changing events

Finding Something You Lost

Designed for Ages	3 - 5 year olds
Adaptable for Ages	2 - 7 year olds
Learning Experience Description:	In this activity, the facilitator acts as the rainbow caretaker who has lost the rainbow. The children then help the caretaker to find fabric pieces of the rainbow and stitch it back together. This activity explores what it feels like to lose something precious to you.
Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum) Link:	Mana atua (Well-being) Mana reo (communication)
Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):	Taha hinegaro (Mental & emotional)
Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):	Limbic System: emotional regulation, and empathy.
Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):	Turu 1: Identities
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One carry bag/backpack/large purse. <input type="checkbox"/> Large sheet of fabric to use as the magic carpet for the children to sit on. You can also use props such as chairs to illustrate the boundaries of the magic carpet. <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors <input type="checkbox"/> A prop or costume item to signal when the teacher is in role. Attach some of the colours of the rainbow to the prop. (A hat is the simplest) <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-cut small strips of fabric or rainbow to tie as a bracelet on each child's hand. <input type="checkbox"/> Paper – enough for each child. <input type="checkbox"/> Colouring pencils and crayons – enough for each child. <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Speaker <p>If you are using fabric (see note in Things to Consider below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Large rectangular sheets of fabric cloth (less than 4 metres long) in rainbow colours, cut into long strips. We suggest using 5 different colours. <input type="checkbox"/> Double the length of fabric amount of ribbon/yarn/string for each of the colours of your fabric. <input type="checkbox"/> Hole punch (optional) 	



This image shows 5 large pieces of fabric sewn together with different colour ribbons.

If you are using ribbons:

- ☐ Long pieces of ribbons in different colours. We suggest using around 5 colours and wider ribbons work best if available.

Things to consider:

- If the children you are working with are younger, you may want to modify the sewing aspect of this learning experience.
Options:
 1. If you do want to stitch the fabric together, it can be helpful to have some youth or adults available to help when you are stitching the fabric together with the ribbon.
 2. If you think stitching the fabric together is not the right fit for your group, instead of pieces of fabric, use long pieces of ribbon. Then you can just weave or tie the ribbon together at the end. When working with ribbons, instead of parachute activities, you could have the children dance under and around them.
- This activity is designed to be facilitated in an hour. But you can also spread stitching the rainbow together over multiple days.

Prepare ahead:

- Pre-cut small holes (either use hole punch or scissors) near the edge of fabric so the kids can thread the ribbon through the fabric to sew it together.
- Hide the fabric and ribbons in your play space (great to hide outside) ahead of the children's arrival.
- The name of the location written on a piece of paper where you are to look for the rainbow. (See #10)

Instructions:

1. Gather the children in a space where they can see you easily.
2. Start with using the teacher in a role convention. Explain to the children you are going to pretend to be someone other than yourself and they will know you are that person because you will be wearing the prop/ costume or holding the carry bag.
3. Group the children close together and **step into role as the person who cares for the rainbow**. Make sure to have your carry bag with you.
4. Ask the children: “Do you want to see the rainbow I carry in my bag? The one that I put in the sky?”
5. **Tell the children: “The rainbow is very precious and it is my job as the rainbow caretaker to look after it.”**
6. **Open your bag and reveal to them that it is empty.** Act shocked and sad.
7. **Ask the children: “Have you ever found things before?”** Ask the children if they can help you find the rainbow. Let the children know that even the ribbons you use to stitch all of the colours together are gone too.
8. Share with the children: **“The rainbow and ribbon might be anywhere in the world so we will have to travel together to find it! Luckily, I as the rainbow caretaker have a magic carpet we can use.”**
9. Let the children know that we might be away for a while so we should probably **pack a suitcase**. Share with the children this is an imaginary suitcase. Ask the children: “What sort of things might we need to bring with us to find the rainbow?” “What things do you want to bring that will make you feel safe/make you feel like home when we are not at home?”
10. Invite the children to sit on the magic carpet with you and help make it go slow, fast and around corners. Lead this activity by miming the action of these movements for children to follow. Ask the children if they have other ideas for the carpet ride eg, a song, over bumps, snail speed etc.
11. Let the children know: **“We have received confirmation of the location where the rainbow might be. But we have been told that the rainbow might be in pieces, so we will have to look for anything that looks like it might be part of a rainbow!”** *Note: You may want to have this on a postcard or have someone bring you a note.*
12. Offer the children a countdown so everyone knows when they have arrived.
13. Let the **children know that they can grab a partner and look around the space to find the hidden rainbow pieces and the ribbons that hold it together**. When they find a piece they need to immediately return it to you, the rainbow caretaker. *Option: If you have another adult or helper with you, you may want to hide only one colour at a time so it takes longer for the children to find the ribbon. Then let the children know which colour they are looking for.*
14. Once the children have found all of the rainbow pieces, gather the pieces in front of the group. Invite the children to circle around the fabric.

15. **Let the children touch the rainbow fabric.** Ask them what it feels like. They can rub their face against it, hug it, run their hand across it, etc.
16. With children helping, begin stitching together the separate pieces of the fabric using the ribbon. It can be helpful to have other adults to support this process.
Option: if you are using wide ribbons instead of fabric as the rainbow, you can braid, weave or just tie the ribbon together to assemble the rainbow.
17. Once you have sewn two parts together, move to the next fabric and repeat the sequence above of exploring the colour of the rainbow and stitching it to the others. Note: This part can be done over several days.
18. Once you have assembled the rainbow fully back together, thank the children for doing such a good job and helping find the rainbow.
19. **Ask the children: “Would they like to play with the rainbow?”**
20. You can play a variety of parachute games with the rainbow:
<https://www.hartsport.co.nz/article/844/6-favourite-parachute-games>
Option: if you have a ribbon rainbow instead of fabric, you can have two people hold either ends of the ribbon and move it over the heads of the children as they dance underneath it.
21. **Ask the children: “Would you like to ride the rainbow back to the classroom space?”**
22. **Ask the children to help return the rainbow to the bag.** Make sure this is a very careful and respectful process.
23. **As you pack the bag, talk about how you felt losing such a precious thing and ask how they felt when that happened to them.** Stepping out of role (remember to take off the prop or item of costume) talk about what it feels like for them to help sad people - just like when they helped the rainbow caretaker.
24. As a thank you, ask the children if they would like a piece of the rainbow they could wear around their wrist to remind them of how they helped the rainbow caretaker. **Give each child a small piece of the rainbow fabric or ribbon.**
25. Share with the children how they can tell their family about how they helped a sad rainbow caretaker find and repair the rainbow.
26. **Option to extend the lesson by asking the children to draw rainbows for the rainbow caretaker to use / help remember how to put it back together if it ever gets lost again.**

This is a different version of the rainbow thief process drama based on work originally developed by Kathleen Warren.