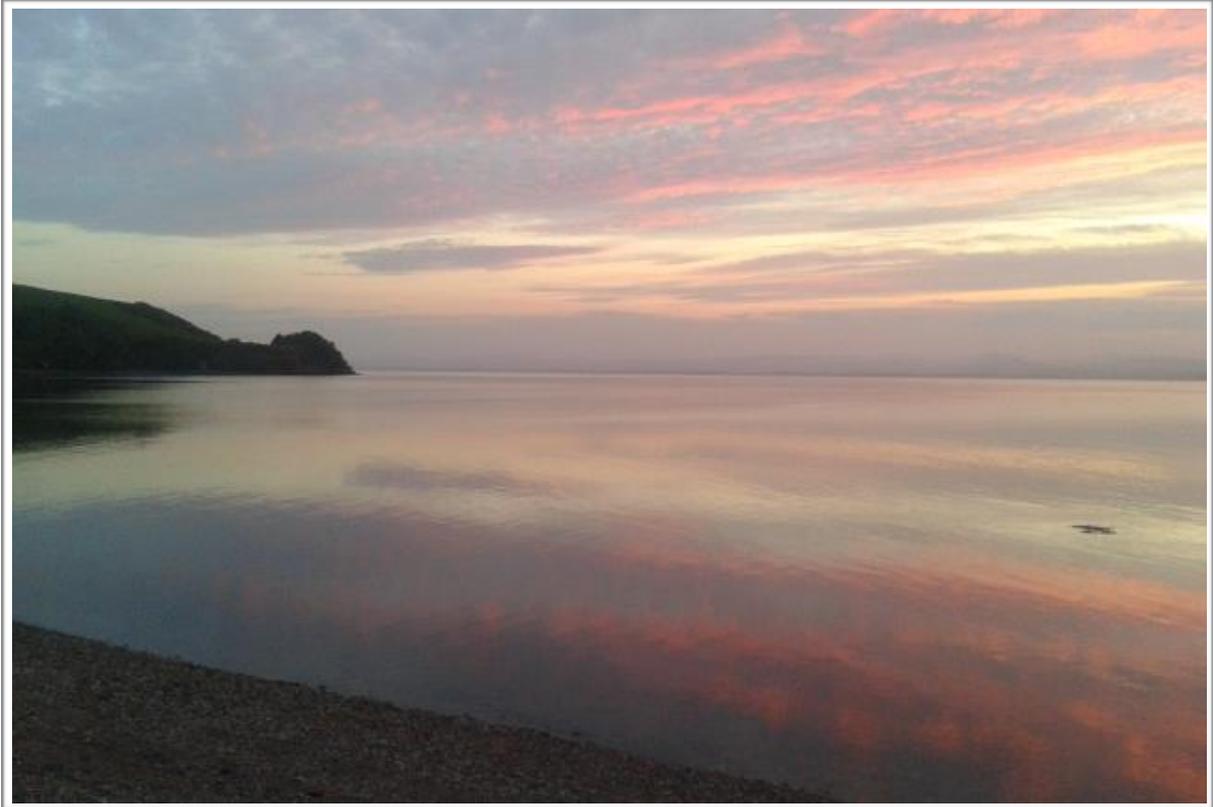


RIVERS & SHORES



A Multi-Sensory Story Resource

"Images are not quite ideas, they are stiller than that, with less implication outside themselves. And they are not myth, they do not have the explanatory power; they are nearer to pure story. Nor are they always metaphors; they do not say this is that, they say this is."

Robert Hass

Rivers and Shores

Contents

Part 1 Introduction	4
Setting the Scene	4
Who are our PMLD community?	7
Working with Inclusion in Mind	8
Multi-sensory Storytelling	12
The Role of Nature in the multi-sensory experience	14
Ethos of Practice	16
Setting up the Story Space	23
Essentials for the Journey	27
Some simple story building models	29
Part 2 Resources	33
1. River Tay	33
2. Scottish shores and rivers	38
3. Mythical Water Beings	43
4. Music and Songs	48
5. Art	52
6. Community Showing the Way	58
7. Family outings	65
8. Celebrating Rivers and Shores	66
The Story of Tatha	66
Part 3 Frameworks	76
1. Plan for a River or Sea Celebration	76
2. Plan for a Nature Story	82
3. Plan for an Indoors Story	84

Reflections	85
Appendix 1 Story Chest	87
Appendix 2 Rivers and Waters songs	88
Appendix 3 Rivers and Waters inspiring websites	90

Part 1 Introduction

Setting the Scene



This resource pack has been created with people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, (PMLD), their families and their carers in mind. Commissioned for PAMIS and funded through Shared Care Scotland in 2020-21, the project follows the theme of Rivers and Shores. Rivers, oceans and watery places can be both soothing and wildly elemental settings that when visited together with others, offer a common space for response and connection. Water seems to have the unique quality of allowing emotions to come to the fore and builds an atmosphere of plenitude and spiritual depth. As such, it can be a wonderful helper and provision for those whose language is deeper and to many of us, felt as out of reach. We hope that this resource of both information and inspiration will help create inlets to the worlds and expressions of the ones whose language is deeper. Our longing is that this material can bring even more substance, appreciation and joy to all of those whose lives are devoted to the caring for and enriching of the lives of those with PMLD. We know that what is in this portfolio is but a tiny contribution to what you are already giving and sharing. The beauty of the relationship you have each formed and carefully nurtured is the spring from which the ideas with rivers and shores can pour.

Rivers and Shores is a multi-sensory story resource. Every river has a source and flows ultimately with other tributaries to the sea. Similarly, the resource seeks to connect and through story, allow a flow for people. There are a multitude of stories both mythical and lived that accompany the rivers of our world. Every river has its story, just as every person does.

The resource includes a wealth of river stories in Scotland, ancient, mythical and lived today. From the archives of Scottish folklore and legend and from the mouths and recounts of people from the PMLD community, stories are gathered and recorded, ready to be a well of inspiration for more. Our hope is that by sharing the old stories of myth with the lived stories of today, a weaving can happen where the rivers and the people of both past and present can inspire new meetings with water. You will each be guided through these resources to connect with or express your own river stories and inspirations and from this will flow thoughts and ideas of what rivers mean to all of us.



Visit Scotland has named 2020 the year of Shores and Rivers. This project was originally funded to support people with PMLD and their families to be active participants within multi-sensory celebrations in public shore and river events. The desire was to further develop the inclusive ethos promoted by PAMIS to place people with PMLD at the heart of community. Due to Covid-19, the resource has instead been initiated by a propulsion of much needed online community gatherings where sharing memories of being by water, collaborating with people with PMLD to create music, tell stories and generate art has onset the production of an

organically produced store of inspirational material. This has been added to and is put into a framework with the planning and resourcing for a collection of fun activities.

Divided into four sections, this supply of inspiration and ideas for people with PMLD working with multi-sensory story and the theme of Rivers and Shores begins in Part 1: 'Introduction' with an introduction to the ethos of this work. Part 1 also relays important elements of multi-sensory practice. Part 2: 'Resources' presents three resources for story with the River Tay, Scottish Shores and Mythological Water Beings as subjects as well as an assemblage of potent community examples and feed back. Part 3: 'Frameworks' presents skeleton models for projects setting up river celebrations, nature story work and indoor story sessions. The portfolio completes with Part 4: 'Going with the Flow'; a reflection on learnings from the building and consultation process of this resource.

In September 2020, the film 'The River Tatha' was shot of the journey of the River Tay, the longest river in Scotland, from source to sea. Additionally a musical project was filmed on Zoom with some members of the PMLD community. These have become additional supportive resources for the 'PAMIS Year of Shores and Rivers', a collective event which will be held at a myriad of shoreline sites in Scotland one day in 2021. In turn, recordings and reflections from these events will be fed back into the resource. The resource includes a framework for setting up a celebration event for your own river.

We truly hope that everyone who accesses this pack is inspired to work with PMLD individuals to enable the creation of multi-sensory stories that can bring even greater stimulation, connection and meaning to both their lives and yours.

Who are our PMLD community?



There is no overarching definition of PMLD but it is widely recognised that people with PMLD are a group of individuals with learning disabilities in the profound range, and have a number of complex healthcare needs. Their disabilities can present challenges for them and those providing care.

However, PAMIS recognise that ‘profound’ also means deep, intense, wise and requiring great insight or knowledge. Although many people with PMLD have significant disabilities, they are also teachers, facilitators and can make a great contribution to our lives.

Working with Inclusion in Mind

Working with inclusion in mind is important for people with PMLD. Here are some ideas produced by PAMIS of helpful ways to operate and communicate to best ensure this inclusion.



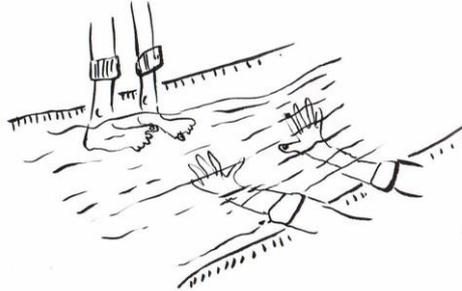
Spoken language or non-autistic comprehension is not the usual language of many people with PMLD. Due to society's narrow and polarised way of operating, most of us are not naturally equipped to communicate with this sector of our community. Guidance is often required to give ideas of ways in to ensure that these people feel included and validated. In order to access the inner world of thoughts and feelings, and as a way to locate individual preferences and areas of enjoyment, it can be helpful to have starting points for connection. This is what this document hopes to provide.



"The story is told eye to eye, mind to mind and heart to heart"
(Maureen Phillip)

Nature trips and working with story are our focus here. These two areas can often provide two often effective starting points for connection.

Nature as an opening



This pack works with rivers and shores in mind as nature sites. When we are in nature, the senses can feel more truly alive. We can find ourselves moving into a natural space. This can provide relief and fresh air. The wavelength of the brainwaves have been shown to slow down in nature to a frequency that is alpha wavelength. This is the wavelength of the brain when we are relaxed or starting to sleep and open up to dreaming states. Nature sites also serve to bring people together in a mutual and shared space that allows everyone to share the same environment.

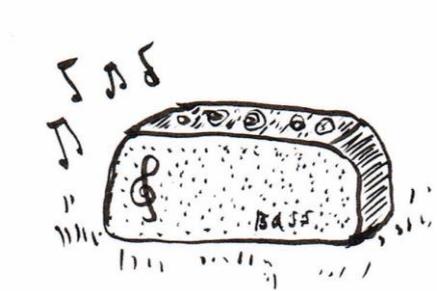
Nature is non judgmental; it doesn't worry and being outdoors can provide a natural ethos of calm, freedom and acceptance that might not be naturally found in more human occupied or indoor settings. Nature belongs to no one, so it can also create an environment that brings an this of equality to everyone. Nature also holds both predictability and surprise. The surprise element can be through the weather and through the visitors that can arrive. Filming the 'Rivers and Shores' film 'The River Tatha', we were surprised to find different bird members of our earth community waiting for us at many of the shore line sites we visited. They provided a way of opening connection and conversation that was unexpected and special and that added to the story as it unfolded.

Please look at the bottom of this section to find a list of wheel chair friendly spaces and also places with toilets nearby with provision for wheelchairs that families have reported as being suitable for visits.

Story

Working with story requires that we first take the time to feel a connection with the people we work with. In order to minimise distress, the way of telling a story begins in a calm and engaging way. Communication will benefit from the use of expression with multi-sensory cues and additions brought in when possible. A story becomes accessible when we employ our senses in the telling of it and when we encourage the people we are working with to engage their senses too with support from some provided mediums.

Please look at the next section to find a list of ideas for a multi-sensory story pack when working with the rivers and shores themes.



It can be good to remember that the language of thinking and feeling belongs to adults without PMLD but that the language of imagining and feeling belongs to children, to the PMLD community and to adults! Therefore, if we can focus on imagining and feeling when we are working with this clientele, we can generate a more inclusive environment for everyone.

Story, drama, song and art can give us a route into the language of imagining and feeling. Stories speak in a much deeper way and often will get to the essence of something in ways that explaining with words cannot reach.

Stories contain the lived experience. They start to capture the inner world and not just the outer world. Stories influence all aspects of our life, whether we are telling them or hearing them. Through story, we take events and then link them together into a plot or a theme. These

become the stories of our identity. In turn, these stories influence the way we experience our day to day life as they are the stories that we tell about ourselves

Wheel chair friendly spaces and also places with toilets close by with provision for wheelchairs

The Changing Places toilet map in the link below includes details of all fully registered Changing Places toilets in the UK.

http://www.changing-places.org/find_a_toilet.aspx

Multi-sensory Storytelling

For people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, an understanding by the supporter of the person with PMLD's need for all of the senses to be engaged when communicating together can make all the difference between a day of feeling isolated and frustrated and a day of feeling hugely held, seen and integrated.

Multi-sensory stories can:

- ✎ Support people to connect with real life experiences through their senses
- ✎ Support people to share their experiences and stories with others
- ✎ Help prepare people for difficult situations in their lives
- ✎ Help prepare people for new experiences
- ✎ Support people to engage with their culture and heritage
- ✎ Support people to access the school curriculum and lifelong learning opportunities
- ✎ Support people to access new experiences in a fun way

Here are some ideas for a multi-sensory storytelling pack with information on what the different items can support.

Ideas for building your own multi-sensory story pack

NB Please be case specific when selecting from the below items. Make sure the people you work with are not left alone with plastic covering, or smaller items and also check for allergies or phobias before introducing. For story workers who will be working with a variety of people, it is a good idea to send out information beforehand of what the story sessions will involve with a questionnaire checking for sensitivity for the people you will be working with.



A waterproof poncho for outdoors

A tray (about 10 cm deep for pouring water in and running fingers through)

Recordings of gentle water sounds

A portable speaker

The Role of Nature in the multi-sensory experience

The benefit of spending time in nature is well known for its benefit of improving physical and emotional well-being. For people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, nature offers the ultimate sensory experience. Every season offers opportunities to connect with the senses in different ways. Think about the different experiences that simply spending time with one tree offers. The sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell of the tree changes with the weather and the seasons. Sitting under the tree in sunshine, with the light dancing through the branches watching leaves creating moving patterns offers a glistening sensory experience and a natural light show that changes throughout the day. The sound of the wind blowing through the leaves and branches is an orchestra of sound, offering a myriad of natural sounds depending on the weather. The wind might calm the mind on a light breezy day in spring or summer. Equally the experience will be different on an autumn or winter day when the wind may whistle and blow loudly through the leaves. Then there's the rain. The sound and smell of the rain creates lots of opportunities to connect with the elements. Nature is a playground for the senses and each person will interact with nature in their own unique way. To sit by the river or



shore and listen to the sounds of the river, waterfalls, the sea and all the bird sounds, is a magical experience. Rivers and shores also provide opportunities for the sense of smell and taste. Some days, depending on the weather, you can almost taste the sea. The smell of sea air and seasonal plants that grow around rivers and shores provides amazing sensory experiences. Nature also offers many tactile opportunities to experience varying natural textures. On the

shore there's stones washed smooth by the sea. There's driftwood and shells, seaweed, and sand. Seabirds too offer an exciting soundscape. In the forests there's bark and leaves of varying textures, there's the sounds of birds and insects. The sights, sound, touch, smell, and taste of nature in all the seasons whether on shore, mountain or forest offers the ultimate sensory experience for the body and the mind. Nature settings provide the perfect framework for working with multi-sensory stories. To create stories in the natural environment with nature as the story theatre, offers opportunities for sensory connection with both the environment and each other. Sharing multi-sensory stories outdoors in nature allows for the natural weaving of the personal experience into the fabric of the story. Through this everyone becomes a part of the story as they interact and participate with the story in their own way and with nature as their guide.

Ethos of Practice

An ethos is generally speaking something that speaks of the attitudes and aspirations of a practice. The multi-sensory story practice has an ethos that works with mindfulness and presence. This is because connection has been shown to be more possible and effective when a person is in the presence of someone who is attentive and calm in themselves and who holds unconditional positive regard for them. If one is able as a family member or carer to feel present and in a calm and inspired space, then the person that is being held space for will in turn feel an atmosphere of holding and interest. It is also equally important that the space holder is able to feel comfortable and able to hold a role authentically and in a way that feels comfortable for them too. The relationship needs to as much as possible work both ways. In your work with supporting people with PMLD, try and choose to work with environments and a story theme that feels enjoyable for you too or that you feel supported with trying out. Often, this will mean that there needs to be some training or help in setting up work with story with an individual so that the space holder can feel confident and happy with the process they are involved with.



The basic attitude behind the multi-sensory story practice is one of facilitating connection. The simple aspiration is to create a steady space of respect, listening, creativity and curiosity for the people one is working with.

Having sequences and structures that are predictable and set a rhythm can set a foundation of settling and expectation for what will follow. If carers, family members or story workers are all able to find a similar way to set up the ethos of presence and listening, then the people they

work with will probably feel the sturdiness of the ethos holding them. This in turn could open up doors for a process to unfold where cues and signs of connection are not missed.

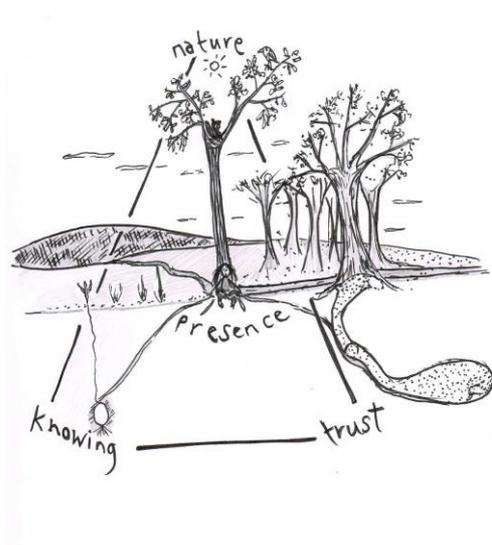
Stepping into a story space with someone to spend time creating and telling multi-sensory stories is a very special experience. Stories powerfully connect people. Being together in the multi-sensory space presents a unique opportunity to be present with both the space and the people in the space. In our work together, we are working to enable the flow of the story and the responses to story within everyone. Through study we have found that this may be facilitated through applying four simple steps. These steps are:

Presence

Nature

Knowing

Trust



Carers, supporters and family members might find it helpful to take these steps to prepare themselves for holding the ethos of a story space. The steps are developed to help connection with all people and also those with multi-sensory needs. They set an atmosphere and preparation to enable careful listening and openings for accessing responses. This can enable richer communication pathways between everyone.

We suggest the below as a basis for training sessions and personal preparation to get oneself in the story zone. At the beginning of the next section ‘Setting up the Story Space’ you will notice that there is an abbreviated process with a suggested ritual to hold to help everyone to attune to being in the zone of Presence, nature, knowing and trust. This may be performed together as a way of beginning story sessions.

Presence

In this instance being present with someone means that you are with them authentically, in the moment. Through being present in the story space with someone with profound and multiple learning disabilities you are there with the person and you hold awareness, understanding, engagement and compassion. By being present with the person you will observe more about the way they communicate, how they react to their story and how you react to them. The story space can then be a place of learning, understanding, communicating connecting and having fun.



Try the exercises below and see how you can begin to develop a stronger relationship with presence, nature, knowing and trust. Over time you will begin to feel that you belong more and more with nature and the effectiveness of this will become clear.

The four steps preparation

Presence

Presence is the act of being present, of not running away or rushing. It is the act of unconditionally and whilst holding awareness and compassion being able to be present with what is. It is a place of power and courage. It is a place that takes us out of dialogue and duality and into a place of observing and allowing a meeting with the heart of any matter. It is a place with no judgment, advice or overlay. It can be felt as a gentle permission to come to a place of presence too.

Practice noticing when you are present and when you are in a place different to presence. What does it take to move yourself back to presence again each time you notice you are not present? When do you find yourself most easily present? Make some notes on this to find out what helps you individually to come into the present moment.

Nature

Being in nature can help everyone to fall in step with our own true natures!

Here is an exercise that can help you to become present in nature.

Sit close to or with your back to a tree. Take some time to become present. Focus on your breath and simply become mindful to what chatter inside your head might be going on. You don't need to push it out, just notice and ok with it. Presence is about allowing awareness to arise and comes from a different place to the mind chatter.

Now prepare to let yourself move into your senses. Touch - feel the air on your skin, touch the ground with your fingers and the surface of the tree, grass and nature around you. Smell - breathe in the scents. Taste - taste the air, lick the grass, bark, a flower. Hearing - let your ears take in the sounds. Sight - let your eyes cast on everything as if seeing for the first time. Let nature join you through your senses.

In this space, bring yourself to an awareness of being present and in the moment. You are looking to become present with nature both within and without. Feel the today. Allow a conversation to happen moving with presence with your senses and nature.

Bring yourself back. How do you feel about nature now?

Knowing

Everyone has a sense of knowing deep within. When we are in a flow with this knowing and listen to this knowing as it is within others too, we create an ethos that creates a sense of equality and peace for everyone. What we are looking to do in our work with story, is to learn how to connect with our own knowing as well as to begin to be curious about the knowing on the people we hold space for. Story helps us to open up a field and awaken memories and stories within everyone.

Here is a task to connect with knowing.

Visualise a bubble of light around you that holds presence. Set the intention that you are only available here to connect with your knowing. Choose a colour to coat the bubble around you that sets the boundary that this is a clear space for you. Sit and connect with being present again. You will get to know what this feeling is like the more that you practice.

Now focus on your knowing. Think of a time when you have known something. Connect with your knowing and let all your attention and the attention flow to hold awareness for this knowing. Ask yourself 'Where does this knowing come from?' Feel the origins and authenticity of your knowing. Let it strengthen and take its place. Observe what happens for you.

Take some notes. How do you feel about your knowing now?

Trust

Cultivating an atmosphere of trust is key to fostering an environment of interest and exploration. This is what we are looking to do in the story space. We are working towards

expressing story in an accessible and meaningful way for those we are working with. This will mean a developing of the way in which we come to trust a flow. It can take a lot of confidence to offer a story and then wonder if anything will come back at us! It can take bravery to allow a new way of flow to open in another, especially when we don't know where it will go and that it will be communicated without words but more of in a feeling and actions. As we look to increase our trust in the process to enable genuine and expressive responses to story and openings to enter into and share the inner workings and worlds of those who have multiple and profound learning disabilities, we are also creating an environment of trust for them to feel safe in too.

Here is an exercise to help you to prepare and to access the place of trust within yourself. Holding this place can possibly be sensed by those you work with. In turn, it may enable them to find this place within themselves.

Choose a place to go to in every day life in nature. Move into a place of presence again. Be in your senses. Take some time to land and be with the earth and the weather. Feel yourself as a part of this wider system. Now open up to feeling the interconnectedness of everything. Become aware of the different systems within the outer nature that are operating right now. Feel how they work together and the plan that they are a part of. Feel into your trust for this plan.

Now feel all of the systems going on within you, your body, mind, emotions and spirit. Feel your organs and your blood flow, the beating of your heart, your lungs breathing, your eyes and the way your thoughts respond to your eyes working. Feel how you connect with the outer world through your lungs and your sight and thoughts, your sense of smell and your emotions.

Move back again to your awareness of the systems in nature outside of you and the plan everything including you is a part of. Feel into your trust for this plan.

Spend about ten minutes in this being with trust. Come out of the task and then make some notes on how you found this and any insight you had.

Ethos synopsis

Being present with someone in the story space, having nature as a backdrop, giving reverence for the knowing within yourself and everyone you work with and making space for this helps to build trust. You will find yourself with this ethos able to respond more easily in a way that is appropriate and true for the person you are creating or telling the story with. The way you respond during your time together will help to build trust. Offering information about personal emotions, whether that is through language, reactions or behaviours is more likely to be possible.

Setting up the Story Space

The story space is a magical space. It is the place of exploration, imagination, and transportation. The story space will take you on a journey into the story fields that are a part of you and a part of those around you. The story space will take you wherever you want to go. The story space is a place of understanding, knowing, trusting, listening and being present. To be present with someone in this space is an honour and a privilege. The story space is where the magic begins.

Opening ritual

A ritual is something that can be repeated and then is expected at certain times. It helps to set up an expectation of what will follow the ritual and can create a feeling of safety once it is established.

Here is an opening ritual that we suggest for the story work for both yourself as space holder and for the ones you work with. Modify it to be something that feels your style if you need to. It includes the basics of the presence, nature, knowing and trust formula we introduced in the section above.



Presence

Stand and gently tap your body from the head downwards, your arms crossing onto your alternate arms, your chest, belly, legs, nose, around the face, bending down perhaps to tap your feet. You can tap your palms together. Each time tap four times on different body areas. For other able bodies in the space encourage them to follow you. Then, if you know this is ok for the people involved, gently approach the people who are limited in their physical movements and gently tap four times their wheel chair arm rest, tables next to them, making eye contact and smiling if you can. All this is done in a very hushed, rhythmic and gentle way so that the atmosphere can become still and present, even with the background of the sounds and expression of the people you work with.

Nature

If you are outdoors then you can rub your hands together and look to trees, rivers, plants, animals and nod in a gesture as you welcome all of the nature environment you share with others. If you are indoors then having a nature table and picking up items and taking them around the room can be this part. You may also choose to do this outdoors. Having lavender bags that you fan around, autumn twigs that you jingle the leaves of, seeds that you make go between your hands to make sounds, water that you pour into a tray, torches shone onto the water, fans that create a gentle wind, whistles that make bird sounds. Just spend a couple of minutes inviting nature in.



Knowing

I recommend you find a little bird that can be knowing for you. A blue tit or a robin can be good. You can have a little ditty that you say

'I know, you know, we all know

Little bird, knowing bird, she knows, he knows

What do you know? What do I know? What does little knowing bird know?

Shall we find out today?

I am looking forward to getting to know you, to you knowing me and to knowing little knowing bird too.'

Trust



Stand with your hand on your heart and connect with trust in yourself. Look around the room to everyone.

Play some notes on the trust xylophone.

You are ready to begin!

The story space



If indoors, find a suitable quiet room or therapeutic space that can be set out nicely in a calming way. Using a particular smell that people associate with the space is useful, as this helps people begin to recognise the space as one where stories take place. Being outdoors making and telling stories is great fun too and story walks can be riotous affairs or gentle strolls, depending on the topic, but again it's that knowing and being present with the person that is important in any story adventure. The space can be used for individual story exploration or for sharing stories with others. If sharing stories with a group, it may be an idea to set up the story space to accommodate the individuals in the group. We have included some ideas in this section of the resource but we do recognise that you are the experts in knowing what will work best for the people you support.

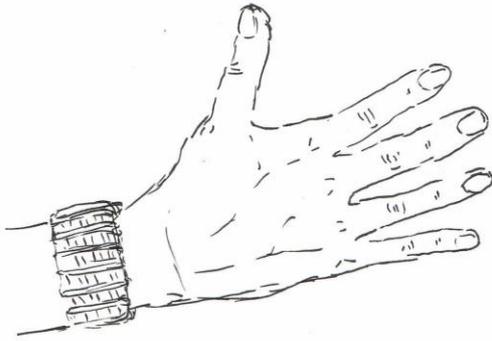
Accommodating reaction

Sometimes when working with a small group in the story space there might be someone who finds the story overwhelming. In these instances you can create space within a space where the person might want to go to feel safe or more relaxed. One fun way to do this is to create a den in the corner of the story space or in a space known to the person. Below we have taken some chairs, covered them with a sheet and laid out a quilt, some cushions and a soft toy.

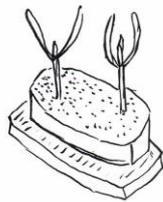
I'm sure you'll have lots of ideas of your own!

Essentials for the Journey

And then there are just these extra essentials for the journey to pass on to you before we open up to the river flowing in part 2!



We have written some essentials for the journey that we hope will even more help to allow a trusting, effective and natural space to develop. Don't worry if this feels a lot on top of what has already been introduced, the material in the rest of the resource pack gives examples, potential scripts and reminders of all of the ideas for practice that are included in this section. The story ethos and practice will develop from trying things out, having lots of opportunities for visits to places to see what environments are favourites and then engaging in simple listening sessions. These reintroduced to be tried out in stages until more involved story sessions are brought in later in the resource. There are also ideas from families who have tried out simple visits and story trials that are here for you to enjoy and be inspired by. The most important thing is that you continue the natural and caring relationships you have spent years building and add to this in a way that is inspiring for you and that feels beneficial and worthwhile.



For the child

Honouring the right for each person to:

Have their own story;

Tell their own story (in whatever way works for them)

Hold non-judgmental space

Recognise the strength and resilience that people bring to their experiences

Recognise that people can have different realities of the same experience

Recognise that the problem is separate from the person. The problem is not the person

For the carer

Support people to tell their story in a way that is meaningful to them

Start from the person's starting point

Have flexibility to use the resource in a way that is meaningful for your context

Recognise that your story interacts with the story of the person you are supporting

For the stories

Hold non judgemental / non blaming space

Bring out and honour the strength

Respect the person as the owner of their story

Create space between the person and their experience in which processing / work can be carried out

Allow for externalisation, deconstruction and unique outcome

Some simple story building models

Stories can be told in many forms. They can include, music, drama, dance, poetry, song and it can be experienced in groups or individually. It can help with preparation for outings or difficult situations. Story can be fun, informative, experiential and sharing stories connects us to each other. In this section, we share a simple seven step structure for creating a story with people with PMLD. This has been designed and researched by PAMIS and follows the model developed by Chris Fuller who founded Bag Books. You will see how these steps have been covered in the resource sections. This outlines a process you might like to use in your own creation of future resources.

Step 1

Identify



The subject of the story / storyline.

The needs of the individual/group for whom the story is for.

The resources you will need.

Step 2

Gather information

Talk to the children/young people

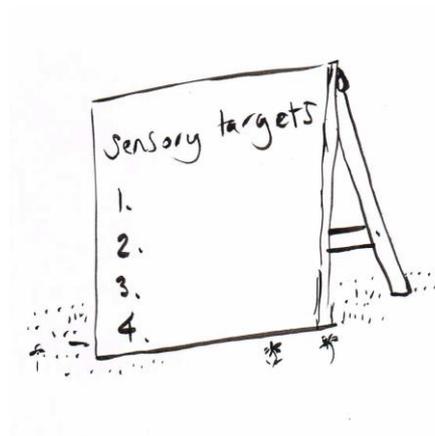
Talk to families

Talk to staff

Talk to AHP colleagues

Step 3

Preparation



Draft the storyline

Identify sensory stimuli relevant to the person you are creating the story for eg smell, sound, touch etc....

Consider consulting with the family, the relevant Allied Health professionals such as Occupational Therapy, Visual Impairment Teacher, Speech and Language Therapist etc. to gain any relevant information that will help you create a story appropriate to the person you are working with (re switching, eye gaze etc.).

Step 4

Collate

Sensory resources (see ideas for building your own multi-sensory story resource pack)

Step 5

Revisit

Sensory stimuli – ensuring all sensory resources are appropriate

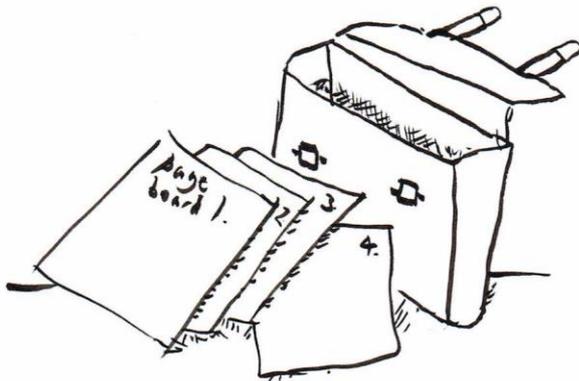
Storyline – ensuring it fulfils the identified subject for the story.

Are you meeting the individual needs of the child/young person?

Step 6

Create

The story! Put the story together with the various sensory stimuli being placed onto numbered 'page boards' (optional) and arrange neatly into the story box/bag. The board is a contrasting colour and will help to identify the stimuli more clearly for someone with a significant visual impairment.



Step 7

Share

The multi-sensory story.

Perhaps you will work one to one, or perhaps you will have a special setting at which to share the story with family members or a special circle that the person you are working with is at ease with.

This is one method of creating a multi-sensory story that is a useful method to follow if you are creating a story for an individual, however you can leave out the boards if you wish and simply have a bag or a box where you can keep the memories of your walk by the river or your day out. Pictures, music, poetry and art can all be used to create stories and don't forget the use of your voice. The pitch, tone, and sound of the voice creates atmosphere and connection and is a powerful storytelling tool.

Part 2 Resources

1. River Tay



Introducing Scotland's longest river

The river Tay (Scottish Gaelic Tatha) begins towards the west of Scotland, near Tyndrum on the flanks of Ben Lui. It increases in size and strength travelling a 117 mile twisting journey easterly across the Highlands, through Loch Dochart, Loch Iubhair and Loch Tay, then continuing east through Strathtay, in the centre of Scotland, then southeasterly through Perth, where it becomes tidal, to its mouth at the Firth of Tay, south of Dundee, to the North Sea.

The Tay has several major tributaries. The major ones are the Earn, the Isla, the River Tummel, the Almond and the Lyon. It is unusual for Scottish rivers to have so many tributaries.

The Tay River is important for salmon, otters, brook lampreys, river lampreys and sea lampreys. It also maintains the biggest population of freshwater pearl mussel. Freshwater pearl mussels are one of Scotland's most endangered species and the country hosts two-thirds of the world's remaining stock.

People have lived by the Tay at different settlement spots for thousands of years. Some of the earliest evidence of human habitation in Scotland has been found at its mid point of Loch Tay. The remains of eighteen prehistoric roundhouses, crannochs, which are raised homesteads built on wooden stilts, have been uncovered by archaeologists.

The Tay can conjure the imagination from its source on Ben Lui (Calf Mountain) to its forming of lochs, joining by tributaries, and its silvery Tay magical qualities. The different wildlife that collect together and some of the forests and villages on its banks provide the inspiration for connection, atmosphere and the creation of memories and stories.

Some simple exercises for being and listening with the river

Beginning a conversation with the river

You will need a bag for collecting items, a camera, a recorder, a bag with a choice of musical instruments like bells, shakers, ocean drums inside, ribbon sticks of different colour schemes.



When you are present with the river, what can you hear? What can you smell? What can you see? What can you touch? What can you feel inside? What do you think the river is saying to you? Can you collect nature small items, photographs and sounds from your experience with the river that will be notes for you.

If you were to answer the river, how would you answer? Would you make sounds, use an instrument, wave ribbon sticks, throw pebbles into it?

Do you have anything you would like to say to or tell the river? How will you express what you want the river to know? Will you tell it a story? Will you thank it? Will you tell a story through sounds, with an instrument, with ribbon sticks? Or will you throw stones into the river with wishes for yourself and the world for the river and for you? What do you wish with the river?

When you get back home, bring out the notes as small nature items, printed photos and recorded sounds? Could you make a little scene that you can then have as a story map so that you can share your experience of being with the river with others?

Bringing in the senses opportunities



As you collect items, imagery from camera and sounds together, talk the person you are with through the senses, asking what they can see, hear, smell, touch, feel and what they feel like the river is wanting to say to them. Build up a connection with the river through the senses, moving close to it, perhaps being able to touch the water. Name the senses and share how you receive the river as part of the task too, but listen carefully to what the person you are working with has to offer.

When you ask what they would like to say to the river, give a choice of mediums for expression. Whatever is chosen, support your communicator with their expression of that they want to say. Mirror them, help them to feel acknowledged and feel the power of communicating with the river with them.



Story resources

The Rivers and Shores commissioned film '[The River Tatha](#)' will take you on a musical and narrated journey from source to sea. The film was created to add to this resource. It was filmed and edited with multi-sensory audiences and their carers in mind.

<https://youtu.be/s7skCSSENuc>

A 'users manual' has been created to go with the film, and this will be included in time to the resources appendices of this document.

There are many stories and legends about the Tay and some of these have been included in the appendices as well. Multi-sensory ideas for the telling of these stories are added over time.

2. Scottish shores and rivers

Introducing the Scottish shores and rivers



A shore or a shoreline is the fringe of land at the edge of a large body of water, such as an ocean, sea, or loch. There are many counties in Scotland that are fringed by the North Sea, the Irish Sea or the Atlantic ocean. The counties with coast are Lanarkshire, Wigtonshire, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Argyll and Bute, Invernesshire, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Capeness, Nairnshire, Moray, Banffshire, Aberdeenshire, Kincardineshire, Angus, Fife, West Lothian, Mid Lothian, East Lothian, Berwickshire and Roxburghshire.

There are a few different Scottish words for watercourses. These are "Watter", (Scots) and "Uisge" (Scots Gaelic) which mean a smaller river. Many Scottish rivers incorporate the name

"Water" traditionally. A "burn"(Scots) or, "allt" (Scots Gaelic) is used for smaller rivers and larger streams. Abhainn is a Gaelic word meaning river, which is anglicised as Avon.

The rivers of Scotland are numerous, but the main ones are:

The River Forth (Gaelic: Abhainn Dubh, meaning "black river"). The River Forth is 29 miles (47 kilometres) long is the major river in eastern central Scotland.

The River Clyde (Gaelic: Abhainn Chluaidh) which is the second longest river in Scotland at 109 miles (176 kilometres) and flows through Glasgow, Scotland's largest city. Its source is in the Lowther Hills in South Lanarkshire before finishing at the mouth of the Clyde.

The River Tweed (Gaelic Abhainn Thuaidh : 'North') is 97 miles (156 kilometers) long and flows across the Borders. As with the Clyde, the Tweed rises in the Lowther Hills at Tweed Wells before flowing to the North Sea.

The River Ness (Gaelic Abhainn Nis) is 12 miles(20 kilometres long) flows from the northern end of Loch Ness to the city of Inverness then in to the Beaully Firth.

The River Dee (Gaelic Uisge Dhe) is 87 miles (140 kilometres) long. It rises in the Cairngorms flows through Strathdee to Aberdeen then in to the North Sea.

Have a look at a map and see which rivers and shorelines are close by. We are working on building a list of rivers and shores that are accessible with a wheel chair and that have car parks close by. At the moment we have a link to this resource:

http://www.changing-places.org/find_a_toilet.aspx

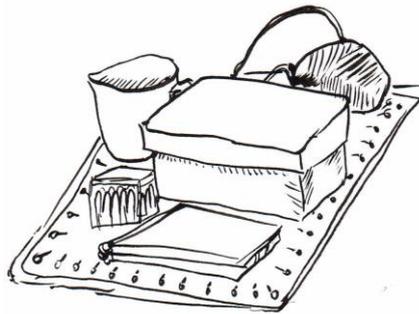
We really recommend going out and scouting areas beforehand. The list isn't very extensive at the moment. Fortunately, this is set to improve in scope over the next few years.

Some simple exercises for being and listening with the shore or river

Making a seasonal story box from a trip to the river or shore

This is an exercise that is season-specific. It can be repeated at different times of the year and you can have a box for each season.

You will need a shoebox with a lid, plastic bags, a camera, a bowl, a plastic jug, a funnel and a jar with a lid, some small squares of thick paper and some thick crayons



Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

In each of the seasons, take a stroll at a river side or coastal place with trees. Sit and come into a place of presence. You are going to collect natural items like pebbles, leaves, cones, seeds, grass and flowers and also a sample of water from there river. You can have fun pouring some of the water from the plastic jug between fingers placed over a bowl and then pour some of the water into a funnel over a bottle to take back home with you.

Remember to bring in all the senses and help the person you are with to touch or hold things when possible and safe to. You can make notes of any smells or things you see and create drawings of them on the squares of paper with the crayons. You might also choose to take rubbings of leaves, tree trunks or stones. It can be like a piece of magic watching the crayon leave the mark of the object it rubbed.

Put everything into a shoe box marked with the season title and get some photos printed of your excursion to add. You can bring them out to remember the day and reflect on the experience again over the months to come.

Bringing in the senses opportunities



Different seasons can bring out different emotions. When you are out on your stroll, see if you can, in a respectful and sensitive way mirror the person you are accompanying and their moods and expressions. See if you can feel what they might be feeling. Keep smiling and making eye contact if appropriate. Sometimes they might want to be peaceful and just sit a while; other times they might seem a bit sad and need some felt empathy. Try to keep it slow and be in the senses to begin with. When you collect things for your story box, choose things that you find personally interesting whilst also seeing if you can find what the person you are working with is finding interesting. See if you can speak about what they find interesting, making some comments about how you might respond. As such as possible, see if you can build a connection of understanding for what one another find interesting, or appreciate. Also notice when your person might not like something and help them to feel understood and appreciated for this, going with their preferences.

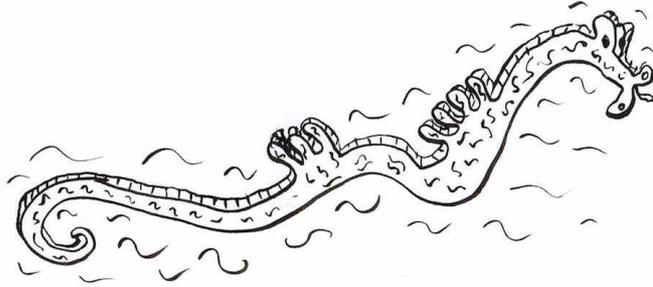
Bring in humour when you can. Hiding behind rocks and peek-a-booing; trying on leaves as earrings or eyes; making a stone animate and mimicking a conversation with it; creating a fan on a hot day from a fern, making images by putting certain objects together, all of this can make for a special and fun experience. You can check in to what the person you are working with likes and prefers.

You can access these days of holidays as memories in future. You are both working together to build memory resources that will be material to evoke stories to be told alone and together to others.

Story resources

There are lots of stories of rivers and coastal places in Scotland. A few of them are included in the appendices. A couple of these have been written as a multi sensory story resource. Have a look through. You might find a story of a local river that can be shared at site. Ideas for stretching into a conversation and activity afterwards are also included.

3. Mythical Water Beings



About myth

Mythology (from the Greek *mythos* meaning the spoken story of a people) is the study and interpretation of often sacred tales or fables of a culture known as myths or the collection of stories which deal with various aspects of the human condition. Myths express the beliefs and values held by a certain culture.

Through mythology, we find out a lot about the previous people of the continents of the earth and their relationship with the land. We also can capture in the entering of these stories ideas about some of their customs, beliefs and traditions.

Myth feeds deep into the individual and collective imagination. It's interesting to hold the thought that the imagination can be some kind of an archive - a collective consciousness that may be accessed through the telling and listening to story.

When we work with the mythology of the land, we can access the support of story and myth to unlock the stories within. This can allow emotions and solutions to be reached. Working in a multi-sensory way telling and opening up possibilities to explore these stories together with those with PMLD, will often bring surprising and enlightening openings for those who we work with.

As ever, in the consideration of some of the ideas below, be vigilant to check in and see if the content of the stories feel appropriate for those you are working with and keep the drama and flow at a level that feels comfortable for all.

Simple exercises for being and listening

Being with the place and telling the story

Bringing in costume with cloth and sounds for the mythical beings

Story resources

Here is a list of Scottish sites of legends and myths that involve mythical water beings.

In many myths, rivers or streams act as boundaries between worlds.

Ashrays

Scottish mythology tells us Ashrays, or Water Lovers, are completely translucent water creatures that are often mistaken for sea ghosts. They can be both male and female and can be found only under water. Being completely nocturnal, one would never come across such creatures during the day. When captured and exposed to sunlight ashrays supposedly melt and only a puddle of water remains

Bean Nighe



The Bean Nighe is described as a form of banshee, but otherwise known as the washer woman. She can be spotted at the edge of isolated streams washing blood from the clothes of those about to die! The appearance of the Bean Nighe is normally that of a hag, however she can change her appearance to that of a beautiful woman if she so decides. Any living person can approach the washer woman, with a variety of outcomes possible, including being told the names of those soon to die. She always wore green and had webbed feet. She was not always a death portent, and would grant three wishes in certain circumstances.

Blue men of the Minch



These supernatural sea creatures were said to live in underwater caves in the Minch, a straight between Lewis, Long Island and the Shiant Islands near Scotland. The Blue Men looked like humans with blue skins. They were infamous for swimming alongside passing ships, and attempting to wreck them by conjuring storms and by luring sailors into the water. If a captain wanted to save his ship he had to finish their rhymes and solve their riddles, and always make sure he got the last word. The Blue men were actually hierarchical, as they were always ruled over by a chieftain. This led to the assumption they are somehow related to mermen. Some think the Blue Men may be Fallen Angels.

Crodh Mara

Highland fairy water cattle.

Fuath(an)

A generic term for Scottish water spirits who dwell in the sea in rivers, and in fresh water and sea lochs.

Kelpies

A shapeshifting water horse that haunted Scottish rivers. It often appeared as a horse but it could take the form of a man and leap at passers by.

Nessie

Nessie is a mysterious creature claimed to inhabit the Loch Ness lake near Inverness, Scotland. The creature is often thought of as female, because of the female tone in its nickname. There are many reports of sightings and some people have even taken pictures they claim to be the monster, but none has been marked conclusive evidence so far. The creature is now thought to be a plesiosaur (a carnivorous aquatic animal from the dinosaur era). Many palaeontologists are against the theory, and claim that the water is too cold for a cold-blooded dinosaur to live in, and that the loch simply does not have enough food to preserve it. Additionally, the dinosaur would have to surface often to breathe, and therefore it would have been seen more often. Some palaeontologists claim it is impossible for an animal that went extinct millions of years ago to live in a lake that dates only 10,000 years back. But many people still believe, stating that animals can adapt to different conditions through time.

Noggle / Nuggle

The Shetland version of the water horse, it was often associated with water mills.

Peallaidh



A Perthshire water monster.

Selkies

In Scottish mythology selkies are seals that could shed their skin and take human form. They were thought to live on the shores of Orkney and Shetland. When a female selkie shed her skin and a human captured it, she was forced to become his wife. If she were to ever find her skin again, she would return to sea, leaving her husband to pine and die. In Ireland these mythical creatures are called Roane.

Shellycoat

The shellycoat is a creature that wears a coat of shells. They haunt rivers and streams, and most think they're mischievous rather than malicious. They might throw their voice as the cry of a drowning person.

4. Music and Songs

Working with music and song is another way to help story and communication to flow. As with all story work, spend some time tuning in with nature and becoming present before beginning your creative time together.

As you listen to and absorb the sounds of the river or shores, it is easier to let the waters communicate their music or song through you. You might find that you all feel yourselves become more of a part of this auditory landscape.

Having instruments available can help. Here are some ideas

List of possible instruments

Plastic bottles filled with water or water and small stones to shake

Plastic bottles with sand inside

Maraccas

Shakers with different loudness and pitch

Ocean drum

Bells

Rain makers

Tambourine

Finding the instrument that speaks to you

Try and give a choice of instruments. See which instrument the person you are working with likes the feel or sound of best. Sometimes you will need to be inventive with ways to help a person to hold an instrument. You can try having straps available or having strings to pull on a bell for example.

Have a shaker in each hand, shake it and ask 'This one or this one?'

Join in too! Choose an instrument that feels good for you so that you can work alongside and be a part of an experience together.

Words from a Musician

Fiona Sharp led the music work for our Rivers and Shores project. We asked Fiona if she could write some words to describe her experience of creating a piece of music with the river as inspiration and of working with the PMLD community that could be helpful for everyone. Here are some insightful words from Fiona, followed by her film of the piece produced.

Rivers Project - 'The Silvery Tay' Written by Fiona Sharp



The sound of running water and nature all around is such wonderful inspiration for anything creative. Writing music for the Rivers project was such a treat as I spent a day travelling down parts of the River Tay in Perthshire, taking field recordings of the river and capturing beautiful moments through video and photographs. I was very lucky that day as the river was fairly calm, there were lots of birds out singing and the sky was bright blue with the sun shining. I took all these sounds and images home with me and lay them out on my piano along with a drawing of a rivers system. With all this fantastic material the song writing process became fairly easy.

I wanted to make both the soundscape piece and the song 'The Silvery Tay' sound like a river which is why you can hear repetitive rhythms in the bass in the chorus of 'Silvery Tay', as if the water is flowing and lapping up on the sides on the river banks. In both melodies the speed changes to indicate the varying speeds of a river depending on whether it is meandering or

flowing out into the ocean. I try and communicate this through the lyrics as well, taking the listener on a journey from the source of the river all the way down to the estuary and into the ocean.

I am so lucky to have a wonderful group of musicians who kindly filmed ‘The Silvery Tay’ video with me. I sent the audio of the song and lyrics to the participants before the recording so they knew what the song sounded like and could sing along if they wanted to. I asked them to play instruments which created soft, gentle, relaxing sounds that could represent the sound and feeling of water. Some of these instruments were wind chimes, rain-sticks, ocean drums and shakers and bells. You can see the musicians playing a variety of these instruments in the video.

This was such a lovely project to be a part of and I know the Pamiis musicians all enjoyed playing a role in the project as well.

Film of the online performance of the Silvery Tay song

by Fiona Sharp and the musicians

<https://youtu.be/aKCjwsqpmjE>



Tay piano music and filming for inspiration

This is an example of music composed by Fiona that may be a soothing and gentle as a backdrop and may be listened to as a way of encouraging focus.

<https://youtu.be/SmQ5WvuzCH4>



Supplier of Instruments made of natural materials



Willow and hazel nut rattles

Donald Spy d.spy360@gmail.com

www.donaldspybaskets.weeble.com

5. Art

Art is another brilliant way to encourage story flow. Images can be created, sculptures can be built that will all lead to something being communicated that would otherwise have been left unsaid.

Ideas for art making activities on the beach or by the river shore (or later with items and photos taken from a river or shore visit)

Drawing pictures in the sand with drift wood

Making mermaids, sea creatures, spirits of the sea by drawing into the sand and adding stones, shells and seaweed for hair, clothes, eyes and other features

Taking photos of patterns in the sand by the water and making collages later with them

Filming the sea

Recording the sounds of the sea

Collecting shells and driftwood to assemble on a tray, to touch, move around and make sounds with

Making necklaces and bangles to wear with shells and stones with holes in

Making mobiles to hang in the home and talk about as a trip to the beach or shore

Making sand trays and placing in objects found on the beach and photographs to tell a story

Mixing sand with paint to make textured paintings

Making poetry with objects, sounds and writing from the experience of being on the beach or by a river

Making a collage from a visit to the beach

Here is a link to a beautiful collage making video titled, **Kinshaldy Beach Project** which was created for PAMIS, by artist Jean Duncan to help you create a collage while listening to the sea.

<https://jeanduncanartist.com/current-exhibitions/current-projects/>

[instruments](#)

Example of a Rivers and Shores Art project

The Calling resource was created during 2019 and 2020. It is a celebration of the land, people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, community and poetry. The poem 'The Calling', uses voice, and sensory stimuli to celebrate the landscape of Tentsmuir. Arianne and Rachel participated in the STANZA Poetry Festival in St Andrews early 2020 to bring the story and sounds of Tensmuir to a festival audience.



Tentsmuir - The Calling

We are a part of this ever-changing landscape
With its ever-changing light
With its ever-changing sound - (Ocean drum)
Wild and tame at the same time
Shifting, moving, carving, creating
Carrying stories with the tide - (Sea umbrella)
Hiding stories in the forest - (Forest umbrella)
Stories locked away
Buried over time

Waiting

Waiting for a time when the voiceless will be heard

For a time when the Selkie will return

And the seal call will be heard - (Seal call on switch)

For a time when we will listen

Listen to the sea - (Sea sounds switch)

To the fish, to the dolphin and the whale

For a time when we will listen

Listen to the forests

To the trees, to the birds, the dragonflies, the butterflies and the bees - (Bird sound switch)

To a time when we will walk this land

And once again hear its calling - (Ocean drum)

A calling from the forests, the dunes, the sea and the lochs

Their stories are here

Waiting

In this wild, untamed landscape -

Waiting to be reclaimed, reborn and retold for our time

So listen

Open your senses

You will hear the calling. (Seal switch again)

Please feel free to download the poem, which has suggestions for sensing the poem. You can be as creative as you want to be with the poem. You can create the sounds of the forest and the sea, story umbrella's can also be created for the forest and the sea. You can make an ocean drum and other instruments to help you from the instrument resource pack.

Tentsmuir - The Calling

We are a part of this ever-changing landscape

With its ever-changing light

We are a part of the ever-moving sea

With its ever-changing sound - (Ocean drum)

Wild and tame at the same time

Shifting, moving, carving, creating

Carrying stories with the tide - (Sea umbrella)

Hiding stories in the forest - (Forest umbrella)

Stories locked away

Buried over time

Waiting

Waiting for a time when the voiceless will be heard

For a time when the Selkie will return

And the seal call will be heard - (Seal call on switch)

For a time when we will listen

Listen to the sea - (Sea sounds switch)

To the fish, to the dolphin and the whale

For a time when we will listen

Listen to the forests

To the trees, to the birds, the dragonflies, the butterflies and the bees - (Bird sound switch)

To a time when we will walk this land

And once again hear its calling - (Ocean drum)

A calling from the forests, the dunes, the sea and the lochs

Their stories are here

Waiting

In this wild, untamed landscape -

Waiting to be reclaimed, reborn and retold for our time

So listen

Open your senses

You will hear the calling - (Seal switch again)

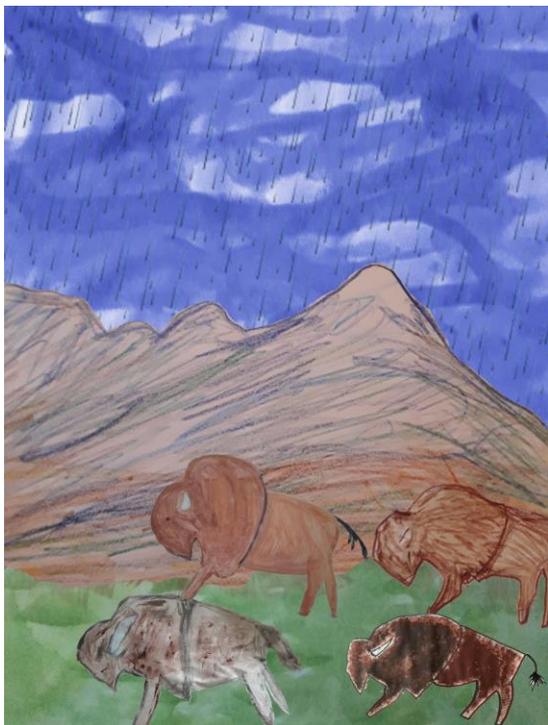
pamis

Examples of art work from the River Tatha project

Ashlynn Warlde is Art Therapist and she facilitates PAMIS online Art for Well-Being groups. Ashlynn worked with the group to create artwork for the resource.



River Tay near the Crannog Centre. Artists were Jack McBride, Helen Johnston and Neil McKinlay.



Ben Lui Rain created by Rachal Frame, Jane McHoul, Lisa Cadman and Ann Marie McBride



Underwater Group

Created by Gillian McKinlay, Fiona Brown and Anne Brown

6. Community Showing the Way

Stories from the PMLD Community

This section of the resource is a celebration of community and here you can read and listen to the stories of what rivers and shores mean to people with PMLD and those that support them. The stories in this section not only capture people's memories of time spent by the river or the sea but they also demonstrate the active role of nature in providing people with connection, stimulation, improved well-being and most of all a sense of a non-judgmental, understanding environment where there is freedom to simply be. Nature makes no judgement, has no demands and is free for all who wish to benefit from what it has to offer.

Each story is unique to the individuals who share their experiences and everyone's relationship with nature is different but together the stories weave their magic and open a door to a deeper understanding of how our stories are not separate from nature.

1. Emily and the Sea

(written by Emily's mum)

For the purpose of a balance of views on what it is like to have a special needs child I am writing this for you!, I had such a beautiful day with this girl, this is the blessed bit, most of it is, spending time with this gorgeous girl. Look at the joy! Emily exudes joy most of the time like in this photo, when she is happy, and these things are usually simple pleasures, like being in nature, on the beach, waves lapping around her feet, the feel of the sand, or listening to birds in the trees but most of all love mainly! And she pours out love from every fibre of her being, and how nice is that to be around. We had so many looks, at first anyway from people as she was shouting again. But then they all smiled at her as they obviously saw or felt her joy, she creates so much love wherever she goes. I had the best day ever with this girl, holding her hand and helping her paddle, and had a great time with Oscar of course too.



2. Louis and Kate's Story

The River Tay has been a sanctuary for both Louis and his mother Kate over the last two years. With its presence and ever-changing patterns of light and flow it has been there for them as a place of solitude, reflection and so much more. It has been a place where they could go to feel a sense freedom, holding and connection for a little while in an otherwise turbulent time for Louis.



Click on the PDF to read Louis and Kate's story.

Louis and Kate's Story.pdf (Command Line)

The story is also available to listen to on audio along with other stories from the community at this link here <https://scrapantics.co.uk/projects/reflections-project/>



3. Walleed's Story



Rivers tell their own stories as they weave and curve through the landscape over land that holds its own stories. The sounds of the river vary as it weaves its way through the land. Sometimes it's fast and sometimes it's slow, sometimes it rushes and roars on its way. The natural soundscape of the river as it flows to the sea can create a sensory experience that is unique to each individual. Waleed and his family spend a lot of time outdoors in nature and Waleed loves to spend time at the river, listening to nature's wonderful sounds. For him the river is a place to relax, and enjoy the soundscape of the river at various points along the river. Often Waleed falls asleep when he comes to the river, but he also enjoys the louder parts of the river too. Waleed feels and hears the rivers own story through the soundscape it creates as it flows past him. The walk along the river for Waleed is a sensory experience of sounds and smells as well as a place to enjoy rest and relaxation. He loves watching the dogs, ducks and other animals and birds he sees on his visits to the river. Waleed loves the river and goes regularly to enjoy the river with his brother Shahzad.

Click here to hear Waleed's story. <https://youtu.be/8lX7ukyh6qY>





4. Leo's Story about his trip to the beach, written and told to you for him by his mum Gill

The sun is shining bright today. I feel its warm glow

Look through orange or yellow cellophane sheet

Or

Shine torch through yellow fabric

We're going to the beach. Take my hand and off we go.

Hold hands

As we get closer to the beach, I hear the seagulls call

Talking tile - seagull cry

And the sound of the waves crashing against the harbour wall.

Ocean Drum

I feel the sea spray on my face, cold and wet

Water spray bottle

I see the fishing boat in the harbour, hauling in its net

Talking tile - fishing boat sounds

and

Fishing Net

Down on the beach I dig my toes into the sand.

Small sandbox for feet

I like the feeling of the different shells in my hands

Selection of shells with different textures

We explore rock pools. The water sparkles in the sun.

Sparkle bottle

I feel the slippery seaweed. Oops, a crab. Run!

Wet cellophane on hands/forearms

And

Small crab toy, or gentle pinching

We've had a lovely time at the seaside but now it's time to go.

Dust off the sand, take my hand and we go home.

Brush knees then hold hands



The video below is a recording of the story

<https://youtu.be/M9RxjeBlbXg>

'Tentsmuir' by Gill White

To the water,
to the water
To the banks of the silvery Tay
With the ebb and flow of each shimmering wave
My worries float away

Through the forest,
Through the forest
I breathe in salt and pine
In trees up high the little birds
Sing a song both theirs and mine

It is my place
My quiet place
I spend a perfect day
Just my footsteps in the forest
As I walk to the silvery Tay



5. Dillon's story



The shore is Dillon's favourite place to be. With the open space and the sound of the waves. Dillon loves to spend every day down on the beach listening to the waves.



7. Family outings

Rivers and shores are great places for family outings. In this section we capture some of the great memories that families have of time spent with rivers and shores.

Katelyn and her mum Ros going on a trip to see the seals



Fiona and her day out on the Canal Boat

Fiona loves spending time sailing with her family and friends on the Canal boat at Seagull Trust Cruises . [Seagull Trust Cruises](#)



8. Celebrating Rivers and Shores

The Story of Tatha



The resource below is made for the preparation of a celebrating rivers and shores event in 2020. The River we chose as a primary river to set this piece around is the River Tay, the longest river in Scotland.

The story and this material may be adapted for other rivers.

The primary intention of the resource is that people with PMLD and their families and carers can gather together and be with the river and shore. In this place they can choose any aspect of the inspiration of the river's story to come into a focused activity in a multi-sensory way.

As a community, the individuals, their families, and carers can then share what they connect with and create. They can do this either together on the shore or through the online portal that has been created as a posting and meeting place for creations and findings.

The river, its shorelines and the river's story becomes the focal point for production and creation of more stories in the community. It is our hopes that the coming to earth, running

together and the opening to becoming a part of something greater that is the way of every river, can be a story of natural flow that may bring all of us even more happiness, sense of belonging, inclusion, appreciation and wonder for our lives and the earth.

The Story of Tatha may be performed by a multi-sensory story teller as stimulation, accessed as an online recorded story resource or told by a parent or carer using the multi-sensory cues.

A film of Tatha telling the story (multi-sensory style) has been made to go with this pack. This can be used by yourself for inspiration or can be watched together with cues and props that are also written about in the appendices.

The literature you are reading today is the primary resource that is created for an event. The intention is that we can make a resource of ideas and recordings that can stimulate and inspire the creation of a public event.

Any feedback to support the development of this project, from the community and especially on behalf of the people with PMLD would be really appreciated.

River story

Everyone begins by going to the waters edge and having water collected in trays, jars, bottles etc to feel or to shake or hold as the story is told. This means every is carrying a little bit of the river to begin with.

The scene is set with a map of the story of the river and its route from the mountains to the sea and various parts of its journey.



The Story of Tatha



I am Tatha. My name means peace. I see you each carry with you and hold a part of me today (Tatha rattles her/ his own jar) I bring a beautiful story for you today. Come, sit beside me. I am the splendid song of water travelling through these lands. (makes finger harp sounds) Come, be comfortable. Listen with your ears. See with your eyes. Smell with your nose. Taste with your tongue. Feel with your heart. Sense with special senses. (make movements to invite everyone to open these senses in turn) For I am the story that joins your story whenever you come to me or whenever you think of me.

Can you imagine a starting point far in the west; a place near Tyndrum on the flanks of the great Ben Lui? Ben Lui is the Gaelic words that mean 'Mountain of the Calf'. (make a mountain shape whilst putting on the bison mask) I am born of the mountain of the young bison, the gentle cud chewing creature of the earth. I am born of the place of lush mountain plants, with saxifrages, mosses and lichens. (bring out the plants from pocket of apron) I find my beginnings with this powerful mountain being. And in this place way over there, I am simply a mountain spring, delivered by the rain that falls from the heavens and seeps into the land, pouring through the lands of Scotland from west to east until I gather in size and strength. (take off mask) I loop and tumble for 117 miles until I deliver myself into the vast expanse of the North Sea.

You may know me as the River Tay or perhaps the Silvery Tay, (show off the silver cloak) for often times on my journey my surface shines mysteriously bright. I am the longest river in Scotland. I am a passionate, magical force of nature who has shaped the landscape and its people for thousands and thousands of years.

People have always come to live by me. For I nourish you all. I provide fish for food, (show fish) water (drink water) to sustain life. I provide passage by boat (row) and you can wash in me (wash). On my banks have been found some of the earliest evidence of human habitation in Scotland. (show artefacts), Remnants of the crannogs prehistoric roundhouses preserved beneath the airless mud of the loch bed.

And here you are now, taking time in these days to be with me. I wonder if you would like to trace my journey with me today? Here, take the water from my shores and carry it out in a shallow bowl. Or view these photographs of my immense form. See the rocks, sand, seaweed

and driftwood that are brought to the beaches as messengers of the life inside me. They tell a story too. Follow my story with me and we will see what we can together find in the depths of you as well to meet on the shore line with me today.

The River of Peace is going to take you on a journey.

Put your fingers in the water, or maybe you could have it shaken for you and put by your ear. Feel the river. Feel the beginnings of the river.



Can you imagine that this water began its life in the sky?

So, can you feel the air as it touches your face, your hands, your fingers? Well, this air is full of droplets that travel from the sea to the mountains. The air swallows the water and rises upwards. Isn't that magical? And then the clouds turn into rain.

Dance 1

Everyone becomes like the wind blowing the clouds to the mountains. The story teller is the clouds.

And then I bump into the mountain and I release my water as rain and the mountain drinks me

Dance 2

Everyone becomes like the rain using rain makers and their water rattles or drops of pebbles on the foil trays and imagines themselves as the mountain driving the water.

And now I am a spring that pours out of Calf mountain

Dance 3

The narrow silk or shiny pale blue river material is moved around the area and around the people.

The people wave their ribbon sticks.

I begin to loop and to turn. I am on a journey now through the land, to visit the people and the creatures, trees and plants of the land to say hello to them all on my way to the sea. And on my way I meet so many other springs that flow from mountains and hills that come from the clouds that have come up from the air swallowing the water of the sea. Could you be the springs that join me with me?

Dance 4

Sing the 'River is flowing' song with the drum or tambourine. Everyone else joins in with instruments and with ocean drums

The river is flowing

Flowing and growing

The river is flowing

Down to the sea

Mother earth carry me

Your child I'll always be

Mother earth carry me

Down to the sea

And then I make it, we make it. Together we make it to the wide estuary that is the sea. We go to join the seals, the dolphins, the whales, the octopus and the many many fish and sea creatures. We go to be in the party of the sea. Would you like to come to the party of the sea?

Dance 5

Sing the octopus's garden in the shade with guitar or other instrument and everyone waves their streamers or makes sounds with bells

I'd like to be

Under the sea

In an octopus' garden

In the shade

He'd let us in

Knows where we've been

In his octopus' garden

In the shade

I'd ask my friends

To come and see

An octopus' garden

With me

I'd like to be

Under the sea

In an octopus' garden

In the shade

We would be warm

Below the storm

In our little hideaway

Beneath the waves

Resting our head

On the seabed

In an octopus' garden

*Near a cave
We would sing
And dance around
Because we know
We can't be found
I'd like to be
Under the sea
In an octopus' garden
In the shade
We would shout
And swim about
The coral that lies
Beneath the waves
(Lies beneath the ocean waves)
Oh what joy...*

So Tatha becomes the sea.

The silvery Tay, the river of peace becomes the sea.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

(those who can put fingers on mouth or makes a sh sh sh sh sound)

Lets listen to the sounds of the sea for a while now.

Thank you everyone for being a part of my journey.

Resources for telling the story

a long blue cloak or cloth with the river's map from source to estuary on it

thumb harp

a compass

a saucepan

bison mask or horns
moss, lichen, saxifrages
photos
rocks
fish
water to drink
oar
artefacts or photos
rainmaker
ribbons for spring
ribbon sticks
Seaweed
driftwood
sand

Following on activities

Opening to the river (activities for connection)

Collecting river water and putting in bottles with small pebbles to make sounds and soothing movement

Collecting stones and letting them move together on trays

Collecting seaweed to make the Lady and Man of the River

Making rain makers

Collecting special items for a medicine pouch/nature sensory bag

Making a sensory river walk with found items on the beach sorted into sections

Gathering to tell a story in pictures, words, expressions, collected items and sounds of shared experiences by the sea

Remembering the water

Making wishes

Throwing special pebbles in the water with wishes for our lives and for the earth

Giving gifts to the river

Making gifts wrapping with seaweed or making boats with naturally found materials sending blessings down the river

Singing to the seals

Listening to a multi-sensory selkie stories

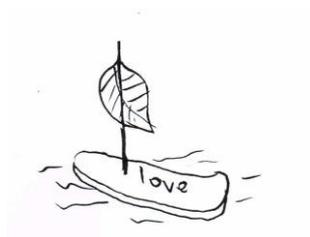
Making a song to sing to the seals and playing bells to see if we can call them

Making a River Water dragon and becoming a part of it (like a Chinese Carnival dragon)

Materials for Participation

Shaker with sea salt

Sharing feelings and closing space together



Part 3 Frameworks

1. Plan for a River or Sea Celebration



A River or Sea Celebration in 5 Steps

1. Preparation

Send your invites!

Get ready to come along!

Here is an example of an invite

Making a paper invite:

A paper cover made with paper with mottled ink as the cover (place water in a tray, drip in ink and then place the paper on top. Lift out and place upwards and flat to dry)

(This may also be photographed for a digital copy.)

Words:

Please come to a river celebration at(address/carpark/place) on(date) at(time)

Bring

E.g.s

A plastic bowl

A rubber duck

A stick

A tupperware cup with a lid

A sea creature (cuddly toy or model)

A windmill

A mirror

A water themed picnic

A message on a card as a drawing to gift to one person to remind them of their river or sea celebration day

A camera

A towel

Please dress as

E.g.s

A superhero

A sea god or goddess

A fish

A holiday-maker

2. Activities on the day

a) Welcoming everyone

b) Singing a song

e.g.s below

- c) Collecting water in a plastic bowl and letting the duck swim on it
- d.) Writing your name in the sand with a stick or drawing a picture of your animal or superhero (Carer or parent helping or doing this)
- e) Making a sand shaker with sand or small pebbles put inside tupperware cup with a lid.
Making sounds to celebrate the river or sea
- f.) Making a story with different sentences adding on something about everyone's sea creature (cuddly toy or model) in turn. (Carers and parents facilitating but pointing at each person and their sea creature (who wave it around) in turn.

e.g. First person (seal)

"A seal went for swim.

Second person (fish)

A seal went for swim.

Seal met a fish.

Third person (whale)

A seal went for swim.

Seal met a fish.

They saw a whale and had a ride on its water spout.

Fourth person (octopus)

A seal went for swim.

Seal met a fish.

They saw a whale and had a ride on its water spout.

Along came an octopus.

Fifth person

A seal went for swim.

Seal met a fish.

They saw a whale and had a ride on its water spout.

Along came an octopus.

The octopus caught a crab.

Sixth person

A seal went for swim.

Seal met a fish.

They saw a whale and had a ride on its water spout.

Along came an octopus.

The octopus caught a crab.

They all lived happily ever after in his garden under the sea with a mermaid.”

g.) Having races in wheel chairs or on foot with the windmills

h.) If a sunny day, reflecting the light of the sun with a mirror onto the waters and blessing the water singing this little light of mine.

i.) Having a water themed picnic

j.) Sharing river or sea card gifts with one other person each as a momento of the day

k.) Group photo and then free time to paddle or sit by the waters edge

l.) Singing a farewell song

Song ideas with lyrics

Beside the Seaside

Oh, I do like to be

beside the seaside

Oh, I do like to be

beside the sea

Oh, I do like to stroll along

the prom, prom, prom

where the brass bands play

tiddley-om-pom-pom

So, just let me be

beside the seaside

I'll be beside

myself with glee

For there's

lots of ones beside

I should like to be beside

beside the seaside

beside the sea

The River is Flowing

The river is flowing,

Flowing and growing,

The river is flowing

Back to the sea.

Mother Earth carry me

A child I will always be,

Mother Earth carry me

Back to the sea.

Goodbye song

Let's all say goodbye in a fun, silly way.

It's how we end our happy day.

Now stomp, stomp, stomp (STOMP, STOMP) and clap, clap, clap.(CLAP, CLAP)

Repeat after me in this goodbye rap.

See you later, alligator - (See you later, alligator)^[SEP]

Gotta truck, baby duck - (Gotta truck, baby duck)

In a shake rattlesnake - (In a shake rattlesnake)

Out of here, reindeer - (Out of here, reindeer)

Let's all say goodbye in a fun, silly way.

It's how we end our happy day.^[SEP]

Now stomp, stomp, stomp (STOMP, STOMP) and clap, clap, clap.(CLAP, CLAP)

Repeat after me in this goodbye rap.

Can't stay, blue jay - (Can't stay, blue jay)

^[SEP]See you soon, raccoon - (See you soon, raccoon)

Take care, polar bear - (Take care, polar bear)

Be sweet, parakeet - (Be sweet, parakeet)

(from Brain Breaks Action Songs: Let's Move! CD)

2. Plan for a Nature Story

Here is an exercise that has been put together to help you to make an experiential story from a walk (and/or wheelchair journey) you make together by the shoreline.

Do you like going for a walk or ride by the river or the shoreline of the sea? If you do, then why not collect things on your walk to make a multi-sensory story about your experience, then come together and share your story with others.

Things to think about when creating your story

What is the weather like? Is it raining, windy, or sunny? Is it cold or is it warm? What is your favourite weather?

What can you hear? Do you hear the wind? Do you hear the birds? Do you here the river or the sea? What other sounds do you hear?

What can you touch? Can you touch the water, feel the sun on your cheeks or feel the wind blow on your skin? Can you feel the textures of the stones or sand on the ground? Can you feel the water with your fingers? What else can you feel when you are on your walk or ride?

Other things to think about when you are travelling together:

Stop and be still for a moment. Be aware of what you can hear, see, touch and smell. Think about how that makes you feel. The person you are with will also be having their own special interaction with nature and you may want to note any slight change in their way of being. Are they more/less vocal? Is there a change in the way they interact outdoors? You will have to watch carefully and remember; everyone is different so everyone's interactions or responses will be different. You might not know how they are experiencing the moment but here are some ideas to help you think about it:

Quiet time is not always possible, especially if there are a lot of people with you on your walk but if you get the chance allow the story maker a little time to experience the sights, sounds and smells of the natural world around them.

Sitting in silence by the rippling or running water and watching the natural light dancing through the trees or listening to the sound of the breeze, the wind and the birdsong, is such

a sensory and magical moment. Often in busy and active lives it is nice to experience the stillness. Every season brings its own experience.

The sound of the river as it gurgles over the stones is also a calming and soothing sound.

Being outdoors offers a multitude of opportunities and experiences for a multi-sensory story maker to collect items and reminders of their walk. The person you are with can then use the items collected to recreate the story of their experience, either for them selves or to share with others. It's great then to have the story to create and retell on a rainy day when you may not be able to get outside. Although rainy day stories are fabulous too!

Rivers, lochs and shorelines all have their own stories and folklore too, so you might want to look up some of these stories provided in this resource and make a multi-sensory story associated with them.

3. Plan for an Indoors Story

Here is an idea for a story activity with rivers and sea for when you can't get out and about. It is also especially for when the person you are with is feeling insular or more frail and needing to be indoors.

Stories in the house or garden

Imagination and a few bits and pieces you have lying around the house or garden are all you need to create a story trail. You could tell the Story of Tatha or the story of the Selkie or maybe you have a favourite story you would want to tell. You could make a trail by setting up sensory scenes around the garden and then move around each story station, exploring the objects you've chosen for the story.

Or you could make up a story about a trip you've been on to the beach or riverside or maybe you would want to tell a story about your favourite place. Use what you have in the house or around the garden if you have a garden.

Reflections

Going with the Flow

We hope you get some good ideas from this resource that will help your work with people with PMLD and that will also help people with PMLD to take more of a place in the directing of their own stories. As we assemble ideas and material for this collection, we are very aware that this is just a skeleton of what will become, over time. Already, memories, ideas, photographs and creative stories are coming in from the community to fill these pages. What is only being dreamt of right now will become something much clearer and more certain to be the right kind of materials as we find out from our communities what is helpful and what is showing as preferred styles, interests and directions for the multi-sensory story work with the people this resource is being created on behalf of. We ask you to keep sharing back your ideas so that this resource can be a living resource and can mature with the findings of lived experience.

There is no doubt that water is powerful. As Lao Tsu wrote: ‘Water will wear away rock, which is rigid and cannot yield. As a rule, whatever is fluid, soft, and yielding will overcome whatever is rigid and hard. This is another paradox: what is soft is strong.’ We wonder if this is something that working with water will allow – the rigidity of old ways yielding to a way that is softer and more allowing of a more resonant communication with the people we care for.

As communities begin to come forward with their ideas of what the waters can do, this resource will evolve. We imagine that this can only raise awareness of how much power and influence the natural environment has. This happens in a subtle and a quiet way. But by being mindful and open to this, we begin to see what the people prefer and begin to be more open to instinctive processes that we are often not aware of.

The truth is that all of us can be more of ourselves in nature. It is a natural environment where there is no judgment. The reports back are already beginning to show the pleasure our people get being by the waters and it is obvious just how much they connect with the environment, a fact that is often overlooked.

We hope that this resource will give encouragement, tool kits and inspiration for some new and exciting ways of working for support staff and families alike. For what we offer here is a shared experience between the families, care staff and the PMLD community, built from the working knowledge, tried experience and patience and inspiration of everyone involved day by day in provision of care.

We hope through the shared activities in the resource there is an opportunity for greater connection with one another and with nature.

Appendix 1 Story Chest

Here is a list of folklore River and Waters stories of Scotland we have found. The anthologies we have found them in are also included.

Through time we hope to create multi-sensory versions of some of these stories.

Perthshire Folk Tales

Lindsey Gibb and C.A. Hope

The Cailleach of Glen Lyon p103

The Loch of the Woman (Lochan Mna Ma near Ben Vorlich) p109

St Fillan's Holy Pool p 125

The Urisk of Murnach Burn p158

Stories for the Songs of the Sea

Fiona Tinker

The Old Woman of Winter (Loch Ness) p30

Piper McFee and his Selkie Bride p60

Seal Tales

Appendix 2 Rivers and Waters songs

Circle Round and Sing by Anne Hill and

Ocean Lullaby

https://open.spotify.com/track/7gNhxY5YGGNKtw5itNRqLc?si=qIk_2r2LQMvRwiFvHKWR
eg

Rain Song

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5d3Fd6OPU9eV9hcm7fDbYB?si=J9a8KU7OQzqBZC-Fun0tRQ>

Circle Round

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5OmHIWqo7EtCfV2KUwciKx?si=Ekp-Po08Q6egV58nKLYKuw>

The Kimboomers

Loch Lomond

<https://open.spotify.com/track/2E0V5NwAUQEhb5YkPywP2v?si=iWV4s1URsC5vaMCTr49>
MQ

Peace like a River

https://open.spotify.com/track/2VjLAeQzLDcFHRqu8d3DHT?si=Rp0KnxftTAuQV8_xqcifWQ

Cape Cod Boys

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5ukyo9h5wJFMpXGeK7mNOu?si=EdojQqRZQ16CtXkrttLRsg>

Red River Valley

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5QwDt8uzBi8Pd94gtCQ7yM?si=T5WVvFTKS-qkeaOgGZ3lRg>

Shenandoah

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1HnNwm5Pppc3F2giSAzN0k?si=sJfnEmS1SW2DEcGmEpy5qw>

The Water is Wide

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6qr5DcZ3GQINZHZ4KjZFTq?si=w2tUcIXeRn6bT01lLmbvzQ>

Appendix 3 Rivers and Waters inspiring websites

<https://www.globalonenessproject.org/library/articles/rivers-and-stories>

<https://www.globalonenessproject.org/lessons/reclaiming-rivers> lesson plan

<https://www.internationalrivers.org/sites/default/files/worldsrivers/> the state of the world's rivers

<https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/center-for-environmental-literacy/river-of-words> River of Words Youth Art and Writing project

<https://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/every-river-has-a-story-7770> Collection of river stories

<https://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/our-rivers-our-lives-1681#Caleen>

https://www.worldoftales.com/Asian_folktales/Chinese_Folktale_59.html#gsc.tab=0

https://www.taylp.org/trb-leaflet/images/teachers/TayEdu_tales_teachers_FINAL.pdf