

Many of the concepts that we use in the scout method are solely intended to help the leaders to motivate and encourage the pack activities; the children do not need to know what each of these elements are and still less how they are related to each other.

Children play, join in naturally with each other and experience the enjoyment and satisfaction of activities which happen one after another. That all these things happen in orderly cycles is something that is of no interest to them whatsoever.

However, through their unknowing participation in different parts of the cycle, the children learn to form opinions about themselves, to make judgements, draw conclusions, try out solutions, take on responsibilities and carry out tasks.

The programme cycle varies in length

The length of the programme cycle can vary, but it is usually between two and four months. There will therefore be about three programme cycles per year. However, the pack leaders must decide on how long to make each cycle on the basis of their own experience, the pack's circumstances and the type of activities that the children have chosen, which is ultimately the determining factor in the length of the programme cycle.

Moreover, the original length can be altered during the course of the programme cycle if it is sufficiently flexible. A cycle with lots of short duration activities is more flexible than one with fewer activities of medium or long duration.

In general, a shorter cycle is best in the pack, because:



At this age children need constant stimulation, which they receive at the end of a cycle when the objectives they have achieved are recognised and they may move to the next progress stage;



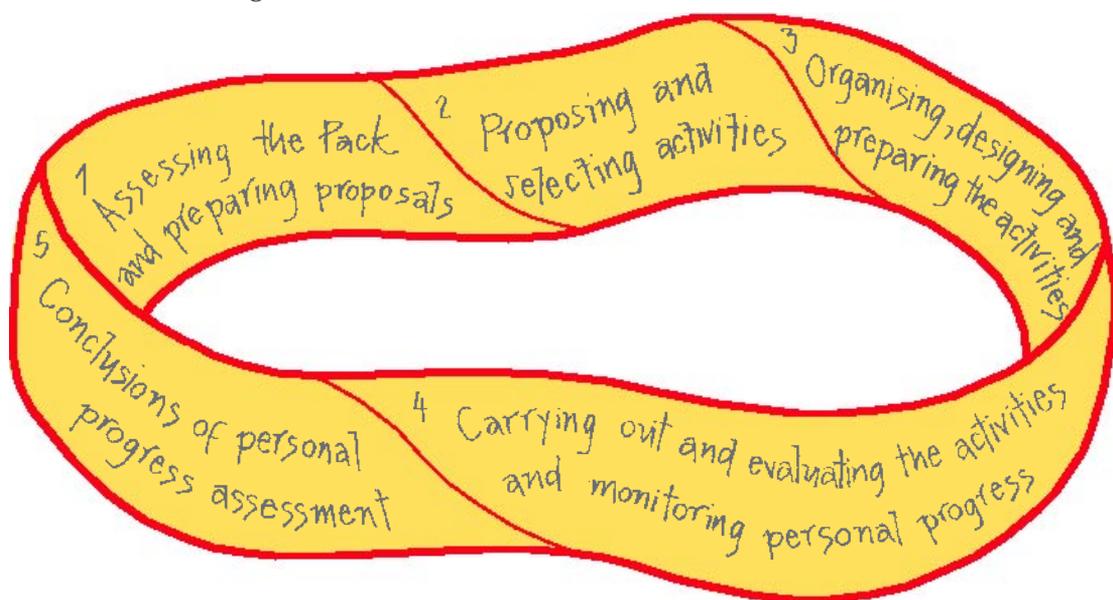
the behaviour envisaged in the objectives can be achieved in a relatively short time-scale; and



these types of behaviour are easier to observe than in other age-groups.

There are 5 phases in a programme cycle

The phases in a cycle are all linked to each other, and each follows on naturally from the one before and prepares the way for the next. So much so that the last phase merges inevitably into the first phase of the next cycle, as shown in the ring below.



Firstly

assessing the pack and preparing the proposal of activities

Given the close connection between cycles, this phase ends one cycle with the pack assessment and immediately starts the next with setting an emphasis for the new cycle, pre-selecting its activities and preparing the proposal to be made to the children.

Therefore in this phase the leaders first analyse the results of the cycle that has just finished and make a general **assessment** of the pack in terms of how well the method has been applied, how successful the activities have been and the progress that the boys and girls have made in reaching their educational objectives.

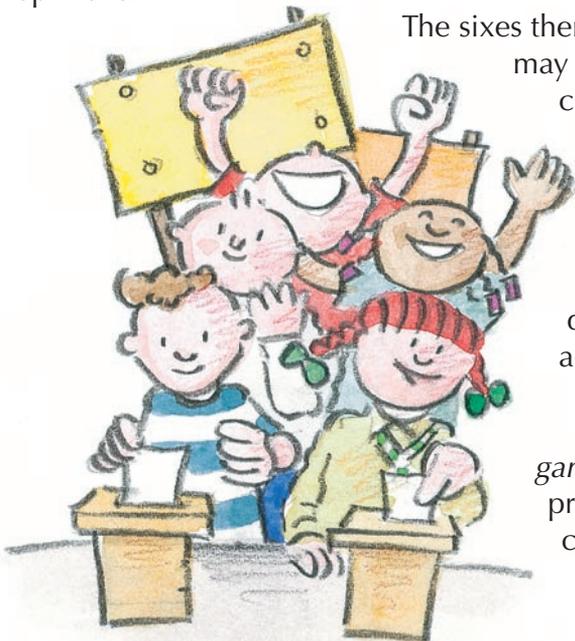
This overview shows them where the **emphasis** of the next cycle should lie, especially in relation to the type of activities and growth areas.

This emphasis will then determine some aspects of the fixed activities and all the variable activities, which the leaders will **pre-select** for each different growth area and include in the activity proposal that the children will see.



Secondly, proposing and selecting the activities

The pre-selected activities are **proposed** to the children by the leaders in different ways to stimulate their creativity and encourage them to express their opinions.



The sixes then respond to this proposal. They may accept it just as it is, make some changes or indeed add whole new activities which they have thought of themselves.

All the activities resulting from this proposal process are put to the decision of the pack, to **select** its activities for the coming cycle.

There are a number of *democratic games* that can be used for this selection process, in order to ensure that the children take an active part in the decisions and learn to make choices through play.

Some possibilities are: simulating a parliamentary debate, an election day, a law court, a public auction, a day at the market or any similar situation which puts the children in the position of being asked to put forward their ideas, defend their views, learn to construct arguments, make choices and develop many of the abilities and attitudes that are part of the democratic decision-making process.

Using mechanisms like these, selecting the activities becomes just one more activity among the many that the pack carries out all the time. Another new adventure for the children, and one more step in their development.

Thirdly, organising, designing and preparing the activities

Once the children have decided on the activities for the next programme cycle, the team of leaders need to organise these activities into a calendar which considers both the usual weekly meetings and the camps and hunts that will need to be planned.



This phase requires a certain amount of skill to make the children's selection of activities into an attractive calendar, fitting activities of different types and duration into a schedule which reconciles the variables of time and resources.

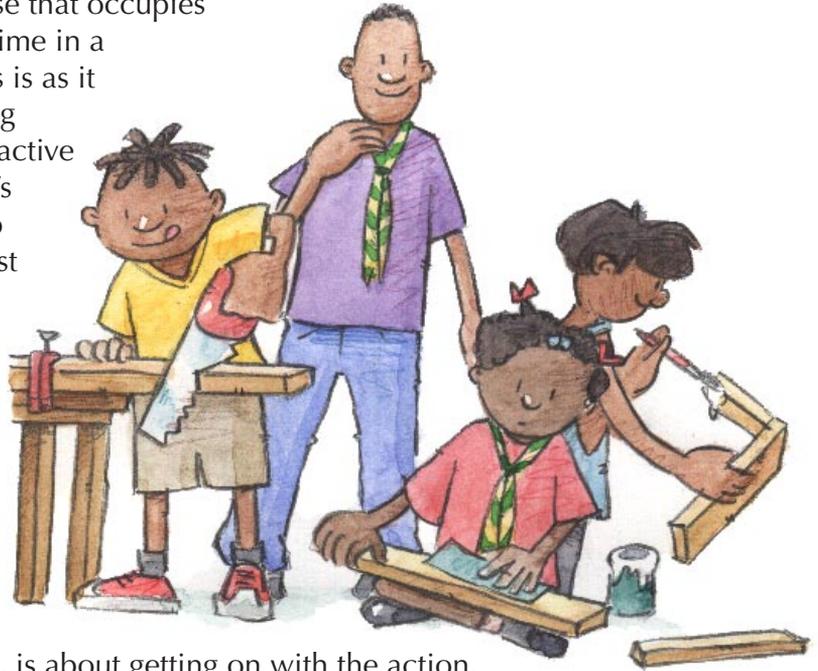
Obviously the programme has to be complete before actually beginning any of the activities, but only the activities programmed for the beginning of the cycle need to be fully **designed** and **prepared**. The ones which come later can be designed and prepared as the time approaches, although of course some will require more preparation than others.

When the calendar of activities is complete, it is officially submitted to the Council Rock for approval. After approval, it is immediately put into action.

Fourthly,

carrying out and evaluating the activities and monitoring personal progress

This is the phase that occupies most of the available time in a programme cycle. This is as it should be, since "doing things" is the most attractive part from the children's point of view. It is also the part of most interest to the leaders in terms of helping the children to grow by means of the "things" that they do. The previous phases require a certain amount of time for calm decision-making and organising, but this, the longest phase, is about getting on with the action, doing the activities we have chosen!



In this phase we have to distinguish between the **carrying out and evaluating the activities** and **monitoring personal progress**.

The activities are like the multi-coloured and different shaped pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. Each piece on its own may seem insignificant, but together they form a picture which everyone has helped to make and which would not be the same if any single piece was missing.

The activities are evaluated by both the children and leaders as they are done: during the activity itself, when it is finished and even some time later.

Assessment of personal progress is different. Throughout this phase the leaders provide support and monitor how well the children are progressing towards achieving the behaviour established in the objectives. However, the actual conclusions of this monitoring exercise are only drawn at the end of the programme cycle, during the last phase, since it takes time to establish whether the activities have helped a child to reach any single objective.

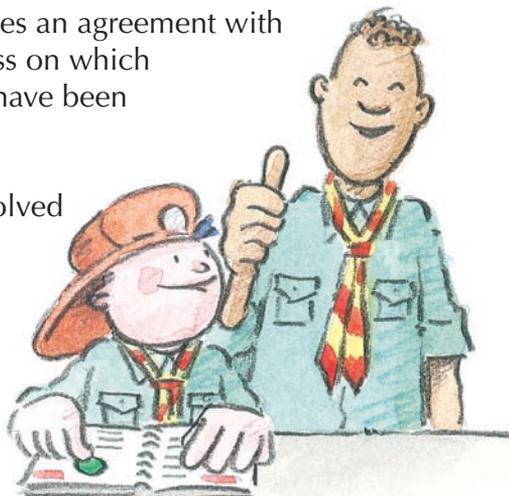
Fifth,

conclusions of personal progress assessment

In this final phase each child reaches an agreement with the leader who monitors his or her progress on which personal objectives can be considered to have been achieved during the cycle.

The other children can also be involved in these conclusions and, depending on circumstances, the child's parents and / or teachers.

When the time is right, the child receives the badge for a new progress stage.



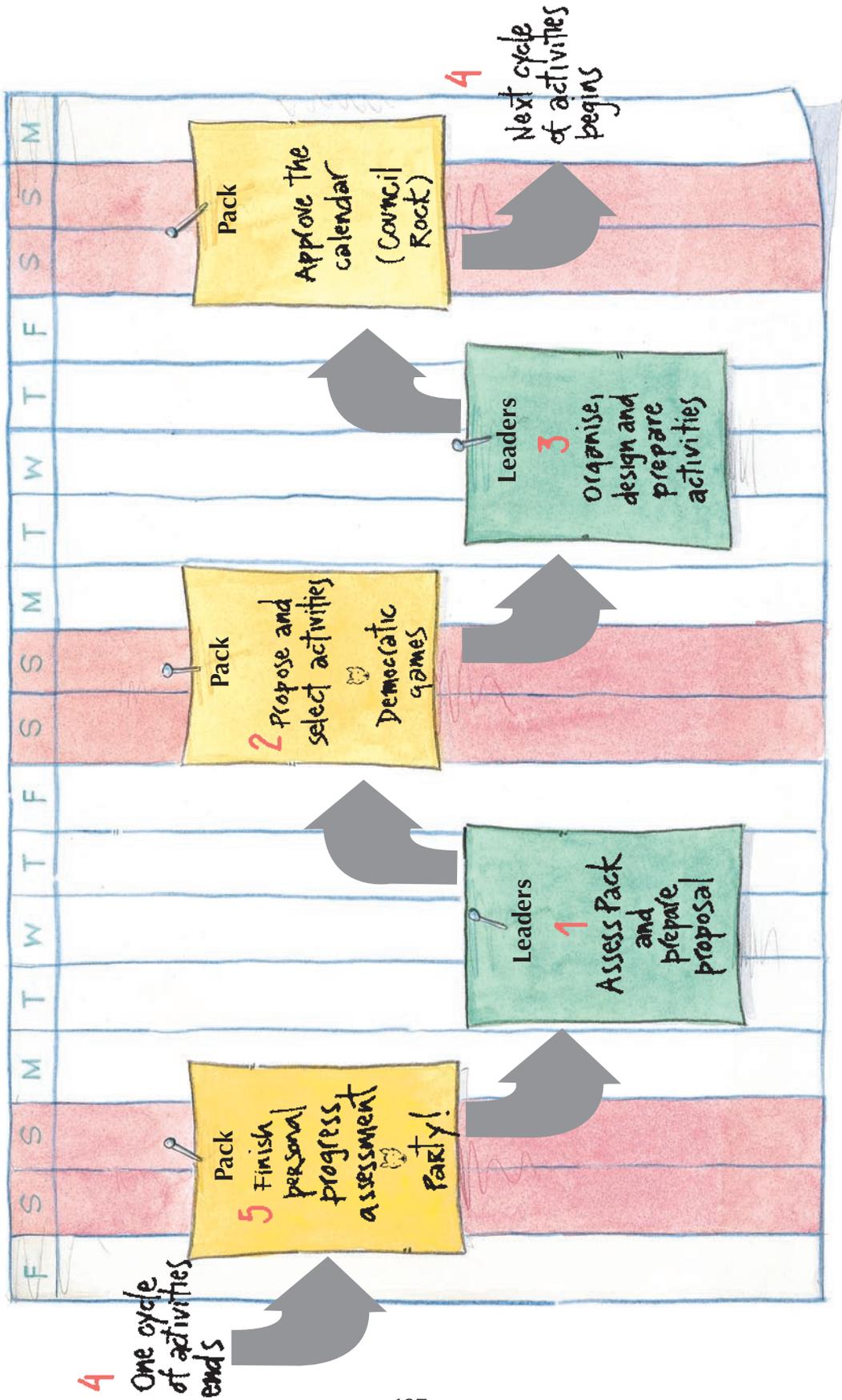
Whatever the outcome, there is always a party to finish the cycle and celebrate the objectives achieved and the stages that have been reached.

Pack life is a continual succession of programme cycles

The links between the phases of a cycle, including the last phase of one and the first phase of the next, make the organisation of pack life a continual succession of programme cycles from the leaders' point of view.

This means that it is important to ensure a smooth transition between cycles which does not take up too much time and does not interrupt the continuity of the game from the children's point of view.

The picture opposite shows one possible way of planning the transition over a two-week period to avoid creating a hiatus in the pack's activities.





The diagram on the previous page is a way of programming the transition between two programme cycles, but this is flexible, and the leaders can do it in whichever way best suits their situation.

Now you have an overview, albeit a general one, of the different phases of the programme cycle, from assessing the pack to assessing the children's personal progress.

If your team is used to planning, this is probably all you need to know. But planning is usually an area most of us can improve on, and the next five chapters take a more detailed approach to each of the phases, explaining in depth the steps to follow at each phase with examples and recommendations.

At first this may seem a more complex approach to planning than you would normally take, but as you read on you will realise that it is only a detailed sequence which orders and puts names to the things that we normally do when we programme our work in the pack, or at least, when we try to programme it well.



12

chapter

Assessing the pack and



Preparing a proposal

Assessing the pack

links one cycle to another

This phase is located at the point where one cycle joins another since, as well as analysing the results of the programme cycle that is ending, it sets the emphasis and pre-selects the activities for the cycle that is beginning.

In the transition calendar at the end of the last chapter, we suggested carrying out the assessment during the week following the meeting at which the children's achievements are celebrated with the party. But it could also be done earlier:

- at the end of the cycle's activities;
- at the same time as the personal assessments are finished;
- immediately after the party.

The sooner the assessment is carried out, the more time the leaders have to explain the emphasis and propose the activities to the children.

The team of leaders is responsible for pack assessment

The pack assessment is an activity for the leaders, in which the children are not involved. It enables the leaders to draw conclusions about the current state of the pack, establish where the emphasis of the next programme cycle should lie and propose a set of activities to the children in accordance with this emphasis.



The pack does not participate in this task, but you should nevertheless bear in mind what the children have had to say during the times when they *have* participated. These may have been formal occasions like the Council Rock, or informal ones like assessments of activities, conversations and visits to their homes. Their response to pack life in general and indeed what they say about their involvement in non-pack activities should be borne in mind when carrying out a pack assessment.

To make this assessment as complete as possible, you should also consider other relevant information or opinions about the pack as an educational concern. These may come from parents or teachers, or may take the form of suggestions made by the sponsoring institution, guidelines from the association's training system or the group committee; or the goals and actions established in the group plan.

The assessment is a

short process

The assessment phase is not intended to be time-consuming. The whole process -also including deciding on the emphasis of the next cycle, pre-selecting the activities and preparing the proposal to be made to the children- should be kept practical and simple.

This phase can be carried out in a single leaders' team meeting, providing they have all the relevant information and tasks are clearly defined for each individual leader to carry out immediately after the session.

It is a general overview

This assessment is intended to look at the pack and its members **as a unit**, to ascertain how much progress was made in the previous cycle and where the children currently stand in terms of progress in general. It is not intended to look at the results of any individual activity or the progress of any individual child.



This process scans the type of activities that are carried out, how they are carried out, their impact on the children and the leaders' overall approach to stimulation and co-ordination. It does not evaluate the different activities that were carried out during the cycle, even though it will draw on the evaluations of individual activities that were made at the time.

It is an overall analysis of the children's participation, their level of interest in group life and how quickly and thoroughly they have internalised the types of behaviour envisaged in the objectives. It is not an assessment of the personal progress of each child, although it will draw on the leaders' conclusions about each individual child.

It concerns the scout method and especially the objectives and activities

This is an assessment of an educational nature, concerning the application of the method, the development of the activities and the achievement of the children's personal objectives.

The assessment should therefore produce answers to some basic questions:

- Does our pack life show that we are applying all the elements of the scout method?** 
- Is there a good balance between fixed and variable activities?** 
- Are our fixed activities interesting and meaningful for the children?** 
- Have our variable activities proved to be attractive, challenging, useful and rewarding?** 
- Do our activities offer opportunities for balanced development in the different growth areas?** 
- Have we taken an individual interest in the personal growth of each boy and girl in the pack?** 
- Can the children be seen to be gradually attaining the types of behaviour envisaged in the objectives?** 

Each team of leaders will no doubt word these questions in their own way. They can even add to the list or change some of the questions for ones of their own. There is no single right way of doing this assessment. However, the content should not vary all that much, since this set of questions refers to the pack's core activities.

Likewise, leaders may consider that some aspects of any of these questions are not strictly necessary, depending on the scope of the assessment they propose to carry out.

The assessment concludes by establishing the emphasis of the next cycle



After the leaders have completed the overall assessment in line with the questions opposite, it is a good idea to write it down in a simple, brief and concise form.

They must then immediately establish the *educational emphasis* of the cycle to come. This emphasis is a global vision in response to the assessment, in order to try to reinforce the positive aspects, eliminate the negative ones and take any required corrective action in the next cycle.

Let's look at an example of an assessment and the emphasis that results from it:



ASSESSMENT

- * The children are enthusiastic about the activities and they turn out well
- * There is a good balance between fixed and variable activities
- * All the growth areas are covered
- * The children don't show much interest in others' problems
- * Individual monitoring is not constant
- * because of this, recognition of objectives is not totally reliable and we're not absolutely sure how each child is doing



EMPHASIS

- * Keep up the variety and the standard of the activities
- * Increase the number of activities which help to improve the children's attitude to others
- * Each leader to improve individual contact with his or her cubs
- * so at the end of each cycle we will have a more reliable basis on which to assess each child's development

Everything seems to have gone well for the pack in this example, except for the specific problem of the children's attitude to other people, and the more general lack of monitoring of personal progress.



The first of these problems would be serious indeed if it were to become a permanent attitude, but does not matter much if it is only temporary, since children's development in different areas of the personality does not all happen simultaneously, nor to the same extent. However, we need to act quickly to encourage activities which give the children the opportunity to learn about other people's lives and be more open to others.

The second problem is more worrying, since all the effort that has gone into applying the method and programming the activities has not been followed up through the ongoing monitoring of the children's personal progress. This is a pack that works well as a group and has good activities, but there is no certainty that these two factors have produced the enriching individual experiences that contribute to each child's development.



Let's look at another example of how an assessment might turn out and the emphasis that would result from it:

ASSESSMENT:

- THE PACK IS DOING WELL, BUT WE DO MANY ACTIVITIES IN THE DEN AND THE CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENTS SHOW THAT THEY HAVE NOT HAD MUCH EXPERIENCE OF LIFE IN THE OUTDOORS.

EMPHASIS:

- STRONG EMPHASIS ON ACTIVITIES WHICH HELP THE CHILDREN TO DISCOVER LIFE IN NATURE.

This team of leaders did not go into much detail: they simply stated that the pack led too much of an "urban" life and without further ado proposed to correct that situation in the coming cycle.

This could well be a very new pack, which wants to deal with one thing at a time and has therefore limited its assessment to the issue of life in the outdoors. But it might also be a very experienced pack, in which all the other aspects of the assessment are understood to be implied in the statement "the pack is doing well", and they have decided to concentrate on improving their relationship with nature.

This is clearly a much less descriptive assessment than the previous one, but this does not mean it is not as good or as useful, since it accurately singles out an educational problem that is serious in terms of the scout method, and it proposes to take appropriate corrective action.

As soon as the emphasis is established the activities are pre-selected

Once the educational emphasis has been defined, the activities to be proposed to the children for the next programme cycle are pre-selected. This should take place during the same session as the pack assessment. Alternatively, the leaders could divide the task up among themselves to be carried out immediately afterwards.

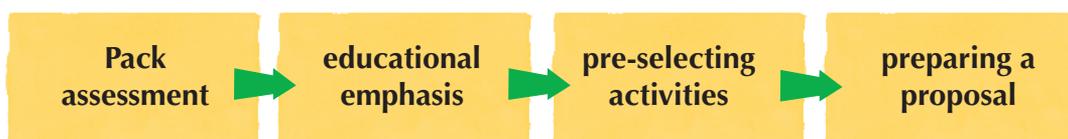


If you are following the action plan suggested for linking two cycles together, this task must be carried out at the beginning of the week between the party celebrating the recognition of objectives and the pack meeting in which activities are selected.

If you have managed to bring the pack assessment forward to the week before the party you will have a little more time to present the emphasis to the children and put the activity proposal together.

In any case, at this stage of the cycle you have to **work fast** and keep up the **momentum of the activities**, avoiding interruptions or gaps in the programme.

And working fast is quite possible, bearing in mind that the sequence of concepts which operate during this phase, which are...



...is only a theoretical exercise that we use to identify the various components of a process. In practice these stages fuse into a single process. When we identify achievements and deficiencies we usually think at the same time about what we can do to consolidate the first and eliminate the second. Likewise, when we think about the activities that we intend to offer to the children, we naturally also think about how to present them in order to arouse their enthusiasm.

The whole process is simple and simultaneous and in practice a lot less difficult than you might imagine.

The activities are pre-selected according to certain

criteria



The pre-selected activities must be consistent with the emphasis that has been established and **appropriate to the children's ages**.



They must be **consistent with the emphasis that has been set**, which can be checked by establishing or reviewing their objectives as explained in detail later when we look at designing activities.



The set of activities as a whole must contribute to the achievement of objectives in **all the growth areas**, even though the emphasis established for the cycle favours activities in one or several particular areas.



Only the variable activities and possibly some aspects of the fixed ones are pre-selected, such as the venue of the pack camp. In the great majority of cases there is no sense in the children going through the process of selecting fixed activities, so there is no need to pre-select them either. The leaders simply incorporate them into the calendar when they are at the stage of "organising" the activities, as we will see in chapter 14.



With a few exceptions, **it is not a good idea to repeat variable activities which have been carried out recently**; and when the children are offered activities similar to those carried out in a previous cycle, the new ones should have an additional attraction, be more challenging or refer to different subject areas.



You need to **pre-select at least 50% more activities than you can actually fit into a programme cycle**, so that the children have a variety to choose from, even in the worst case scenario that they don't have a single idea to add to your list.



You should **pre-select activities of varied duration**, and avoid too many long ones.



We can never remind ourselves too often that variable activities must be **challenging, useful, rewarding and attractive**, as described in chapter 10.

As leaders we cannot rely solely on our natural ability to invent things which meet all these criteria. We need to be able to draw on a wide repertoire of proven activities. The **activity sheets** and **technical appendices** produced by the association are very useful, as they bring together the best ideas and experiences of many leaders from all sorts of different backgrounds.

Once the emphasis is established and the activities are pre-selected we must think of a good way to present them to the children

Why do the children need to know about the emphasis?

Because if they don't know what it is, they don't know what kind of activities they need to think up. It would be silly to ask the children to think about what they could do for the next three months only to cast their ideas aside because they were outside the parameters created by the emphasis.

However, **the children only need to know the part of the emphasis that relates to activities.** It would serve no purpose to tell them about the leaders' approach to the method or about how personal growth is assessed.

How is the emphasis worded?

In a way that is readily understood by children and which motivates them. This is different to the way the leaders express the emphasis for their own purposes.

In the case of our first example of pack assessment on p. 204 the emphasis on "increasing the number of activities which help us to improve the children's attitude to others" might be expressed in one of these ways:

**We hardly know anything
about other people!
We need to do something
to help us get to know others.**

**We're all here together in the pack
but we don't know each other very well.
Who can think of something
that we could do about it?**

**Let's do something
to meet new people!**

**There are people who need us
all over the place.
What can we do
to find them?**

**There are lots of interesting people
living in our neighbourhood.
We need ideas
to help us meet them!**

**On our own
we cannot do very much:
let's look for others
to help us to do our best.**

**Let's do something
to make more friends every day!
Where can we begin?**

**To be happy,
we have to make others happy.
Is there anyone nearby
who we could help to be happy?**

Your team will think of lots of attractive ways to put your emphasis to the pack. You will need to use words, images, turns of phrase and even the sense of humour that children themselves would use.

**Is it a good idea to do the same
with the activities that we have pre-selected?**

Of course it is - a proposal needs to be more than a list of names and numbers! No-one tries to win people over by making a proposal that sounds like a shopping list!



The way the proposal of activities is worded for the children will determine whether they are keen and enthusiastic or not. Most importantly, well done, it can fire their imaginations and spark off other ideas.

With this in mind, the proposal must give them a clear but minimal idea of what is being offered: enough to arouse their interest without giving the whole game away. The children themselves can then complete the ideas, add things and make changes. This way they take part in generating the activities even if they haven't had any original ideas.

If a boy or girl contributes a "little part" of an idea, even if only once, and that contribution is recognised, the child will feel a sense of satisfaction and will try to do it again on other occasions. This will help him or her to gradually make a greater contribution and doubtless sooner or later he or she will surprise us with something totally original.

In the case of the second example of pack assessment on p. 205, the emphasis was on "activities which help the children to discover life in nature". Our proposal to the children might therefore look something like this:

In the next few months we're going to try to do lots of things in the open air and discover new places.

What if we went camping for, say, 3 days? Shall we take tents or go to a hostel? Is 3 days too long? What if we go twice for a weekend each time? Of course, if we went for 3 days we could build an oven and make our own bread.

We could go on a bicycle rally. Those who don't have bikes could borrow one. We'll go somewhere not too far away and take the tents in a van. Imagine everything we could do with bikes! We'd have to learn to look after them and perhaps do some repairs. Does anyone know about that?

Each six can take a camera and we can go on a photo safari from camp. We can have a photo competition!

It would be a good opportunity to make a pack plant album. Could we find 15 different leaves? And where would we put them? We could make a plant album on our own home-made recycled paper.

Maybe an insect collection would be better. At this time of year there are places full of amazing insects.

What if there are animal tracks! We could make moulds!

There's lots of things we could do, so we'll have to decide which ones we'd like best.

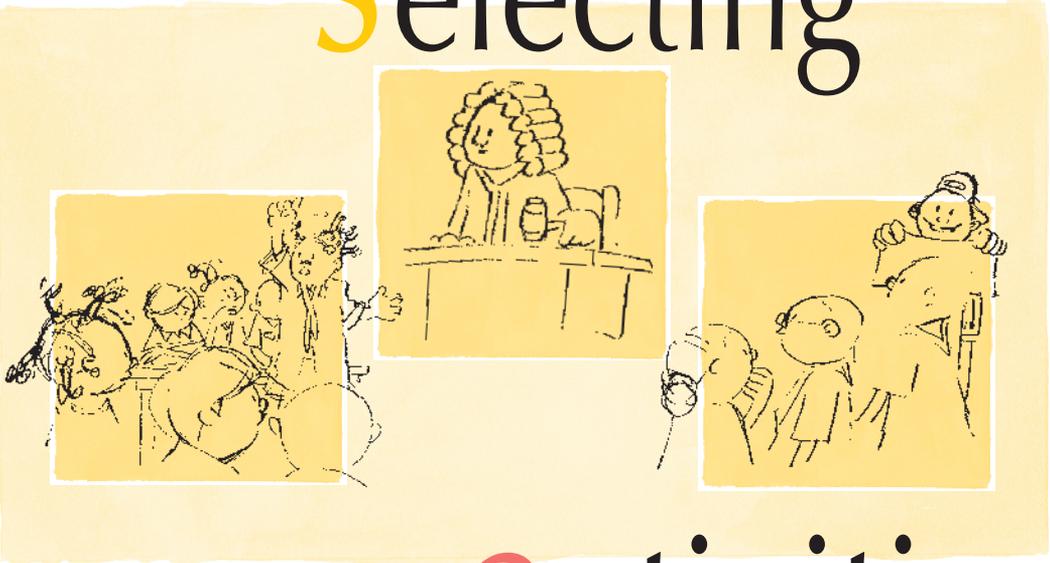
Again, your team will certainly be able to put their activity proposal to the children in a way that catches their imagination. And it should be easier for them than it was for us to write this example and hide nine different activities in it, since you can refer to concrete situations and mention real places by name, and you are doing it for real children whose interests, needs, tastes and ways of expressing themselves you know very well.

In the next chapter we will look at how to present the emphasis and the proposal; as well as different ways for the children to make the final selection of activities.



chapter **13**

Proposing and
Selecting



activities

The emphasis creates a framework and the proposal of activities is an offer within that framework

The educational emphasis establishes a framework within which to develop the programme cycle. The children are not involved in developing that framework, since that is a decision of an educational nature for the leaders to make on the basis of the pack assessment. The children are only shown the part of the emphasis relating to the educational activities, so that they know what kind of activities to propose.

However, the children's involvement at the stage of the proposal is much greater. At this stage, the leaders are offering the children a set of activities and asking them directly if they would like to do these ones or if they would prefer others. As we saw in the example at the end of chapter 12, the proposal is intended to arouse the children's enthusiasm, offer them interesting activities and suggest ideas, but it does not impose activities.

Consequently, the *emphasis* marks out the playing field and the *proposal* is a challenge to play a certain game or propose an alternative.

Generally the emphasis is presented together with the activity proposal, but they can also be presented separately. It all depends on when the assessment was carried out and the proposal was prepared and the time available for presenting it to the children.

Emphasis and proposal are presented to the children in a way that motivates and inspires

We have already seen that the children only need to know about the part of the emphasis relating to the activities, and that it is explained to them in a simple and attractive way. We have also seen that the same goes for the proposal of activities, which must make the children keen and enthusiastic, as well as giving them the opportunity to make changes, suggest additional activities or propose new ideas.

We also made some suggestions of the kind of language suitable for expressing the emphasis and the activity proposal, on the basis of our examples in chapter 12.

Now, how do we present the emphasis and proposal to the children?

There are many alternatives, the only condition being that they stimulate the children's curiosity, awaken their interest and encourage debate. **Some ideas to help you:**

-  You can write the emphasis and the proposal on cards to fit in a normal envelope and give at least one to each child in the pack.
-  The cards describe the proposed activities briefly and simply. It is even better if the cards are decorated with colours, drawings or cartoons.
-  You can put the cards in individual envelopes addressed to each cub and deliver them by hand or drop them off personally at the children's homes. Perhaps at the end of the school day the teacher may surprise a pupil with some "correspondence", and perhaps that pupil will be even more surprised to receive a phone call that evening from another sixer saying that she found a letter under her pillow when she went to put on her pyjamas. Mystery is part of the excitement of the game.
-  The cards need not all be the same. Some can have the emphasis and others the proposal. Some may outline the full proposal and others only part of it. Some may promote one particular activity and others may point out the demands they involve. Each child should receive only some aspects of the proposal, so that there is input from lots of different angles at the subsequent debate in the sixes.
-  Each child can be given one card or several, once or on several occasions. If the proposal has been prepared before the end-of-cycle party, the first envelopes can be passed out then, and a few more will arrive at their homes the following week ...preferably by original means. If the proposal has been prepared only the week before the activity selecting meeting, the cubs may receive a mysterious letter marked "confidential" the day or even the night before the meeting.

Of course you could hand out the cards at the beginning of the meeting to select the activities, with no names, no decoration and no mystery. But why do it this way when there are so many ways to make the proposal into a hugely enjoyable game that will delight the children?

The leaders' proposal is discussed in sixes

and each six decides what it will suggest to the pack

The pack meeting allotted to proposing and selecting activities begins promptly with meetings in sixes, each one accompanied by a leader.

Each member of the six tells the others about the "correspondence" they have received. The first few minutes will be occupied with the children simply relating their experiences and enjoying the originality of the situation. Then the leader with them explains the emphasis and why it was chosen for the coming months.

Then the children say what they think about the proposal they have received and the activities they would like to do. This is the time to clear up any doubts, set aside some ideas and add others. If it is an experienced six, the leader can leave the children to discuss this on their own. At the end of this discussion a decision should have been reached about what the six wants to do.

The six ends their meeting by deciding how to present their resolution to the rest of the pack and how they will try to win the others' support for their own proposal. Will they put forward all their ideas or only the ones which will raise most enthusiasm? What arguments will they use? Will they support the ideas of other sixes? How will they react and decide on their tactics if the proposals of other sixes surprise them or they like them more than their own?

The leader may rejoin the six at this point to help them obtain the materials for the "strategy" they have chosen: cards and markers to make signs, materials for making a small stand or whatever else their ideas require. The leaders, of course, will have provided for the kind of materials the children will need.

The way the sixes propose their option to the rest of the pack depends on the *democratic game* being used to make the decision. This will have been explained to the cubs at the previous meeting, on the cards they received or at the beginning of this meeting.

Democratic games

The democratic games are simulations in which the children play a certain role to try to obtain the support of the rest of the pack for their proposal, acting in accordance with the rules of the chosen environment.

The democratic games are given this name because they are a mechanism by which the will of the majority is expressed using a game, even though they are not always activities associated with democratic life as such.

The association has produced several activity sheets which can be used as *democratic games* for choosing activities. Some of them, and their role in choosing the activities, are summarised below:

Activity	How the proposed activities are represented	How the result is determined
The session is open! A parliamentary session in which each six is the front bench of an imaginary political party.	The benches present draft laws and try to win the others' approval for them.	Approval and the order of priority among the draft laws are determined by the number of votes received by each.
Going, going, gone! An auction in which the sixes, which have each been given a small amount of capital, buy and sell.	Pictures and <i>objets d'art</i> which are auctioned.	The sum paid for each object places a value on it, and the objects are then prioritised by value.

Activity	How the proposed activities are represented	How the result is determined
<p>A day in Court</p> <p>The pack becomes a Court of Law.</p>	<p>The ideas are put on trial and prosecutors and defenders speak in favour or against.</p>	<p>The number of votes by which the Court (the whole pack) declares an idea innocent.</p>
<p>A morning at the market</p> <p>The cubs are provided with some notes, and become buyers and sellers in an improvised market.</p>	<p>The ideas for activities are products which are bought and sold.</p>	<p>The products which sell most.</p>
<p>Election day</p> <p>Each six presents their candidate and wages a campaign for election to a community organisation.</p>	<p>Each idea is a candidate, and the candidates compete for votes.</p>	<p>The number of votes obtained by each candidate.</p>

We will look at these five democratic games in more detail in the coming pages.



The session is open!



A session of Parliament is simulated with "benches", speakers and a chair which keeps order and offers the floor. To complete the game, the leaders explain beforehand how our parliamentary system works, so that the activity serves the dual purpose of selecting activities and helping the cubs to learn about this important democratic institution.

Each six is the front bench of an imaginary parliamentary party and takes their turn to present their draft law as a whole or in parts according to the different activities they are proposing. They may rely solely on the eloquence of their members or may use simple audio-visual means " *...as the honourable members will agree is appropriate for a party of modest means such as our own.*"

Once the debate has begun, the members of parliament may ask for clarification of other proposals, answer questions and respond to contradictions, argue in favour of their projects and negotiate agreements. Like all parliamentarians concerned with the common good rather than the particular interests of their own party, they acknowledge and approve the good ideas of other benches if these will improve the quality of life in the pack.

The leaders attend in representation of the executive body as advising Ministers, and they can "veto" activities which are beyond the pack's abilities, which are not safe or which deviate too much from the educational emphasis. They can also encourage the benches to forge agreements to give the children experience of dialogue and democratic consensus.

The ideas are voted on separately and each member of parliament has the right to several votes, divided equally into two different colours. With votes of one colour the MP's can only vote for the ideas of other parties. This encourages the children to acknowledge the good ideas of other sixes and facilitates agreements between benches "...Madame Speaker, by my colleagues' generous votes we are attempting to maintain the credibility of this honourable House..."

Going, going, gone!



The sixes prepare boards to present and describe the activities they propose, simulating works of art, which they put on show to the pack before auctioning them. The cubs take a few minutes to look at the different works, ask questions and form an opinion.

All the cubs then receive the same amount of money in notes of two colours in different proportions. The notes of one colour are more numerous than the notes of the other. With the notes of the more numerous colour, they can only buy objects from other sixes. With the notes of the other colour, they can buy objects from the other sixes or their own six, as they wish.

The sixes can plan the amount of money they intend to invest in the different ideas under auction. Since all the money offered for a work must be handed over to the auctioneer, who will add it up and announce the total amount paid for that activity, the cubs must be careful not to spend all their money at once.

Once everything is ready, the auction begins! Each six has their own auctioneer to sell off each of their activities, not necessarily always the same person, and the pack goes round the stands of the different sixes, auctioning one or two objects at each until everything has been sold.

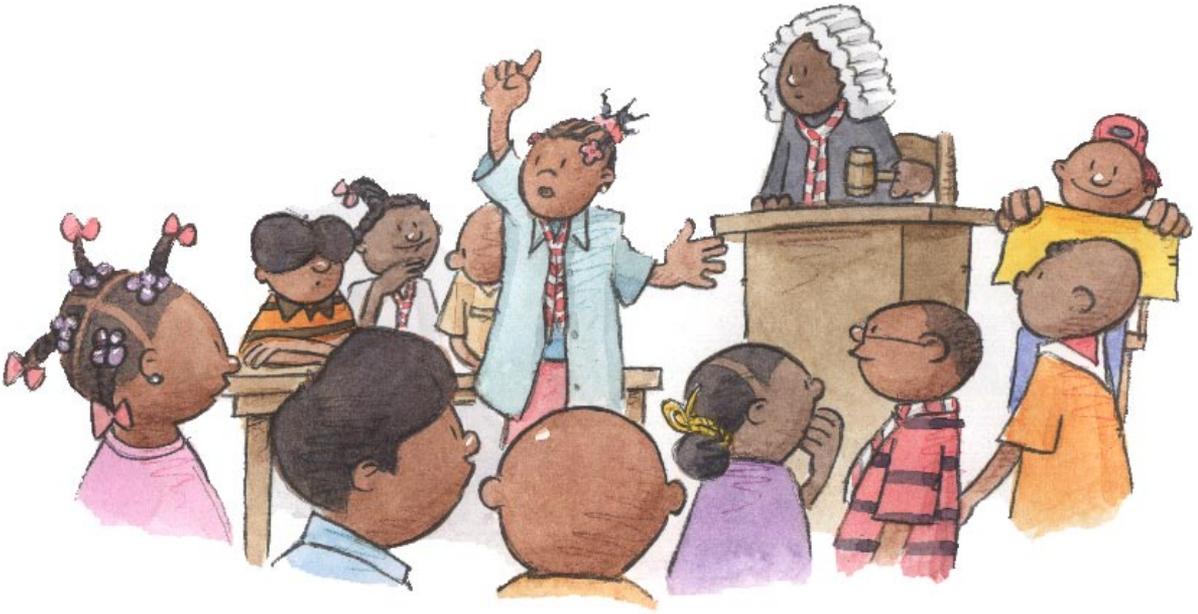
The auctioneers must know how to sell their wares: *“Ladies and gentlemen, just look at the wonderful ideas that the grey six have for us here today! For starters this two-hour visit to “The Yellow Bird” ice-cream factory with the chance to taste the ice-cream at the end ... who would like to savour this refreshing aspect of our national industry? You there at the back! How much do I hear you offer?”*

Once the auction is over, the activities are put in order of the amount of money paid for each one.

A day in Court

The activities proposed by the sixes are taken to Court to establish if they deserve to be carried out in the coming months. If an activity wins the support of half plus one of the Court’s votes, it is declared innocent, which means that it has been selected to be carried out. The selected activities are put in order by the number of votes they receive. Those which do not obtain half are declared guilty and are not included in the programme.

The Court is made up of all the cubs in the pack. One of them, who for the purposes of this game is the *Judge*, offers the floor and keeps order in Court.



Each activity is presented impartially by a *Court Reporter*, its disadvantages are pointed out by the *Prosecutor* and a *Defence Lawyer* from the six presenting the activity argues the case in favour. The Court Reporter may be played by a leader, while the Prosecutor is of course a cub from an opposing six or one who has been chosen to point out its disadvantages. To manage to try all the activities it will be necessary to allot times to each one and avoid long debates. One of the leaders is the *Clerk of the Court*, whose sole function is to ensure that the Judge's decisions are respected.

The lawyers may present written evidence for their case, *"this which you see before you is the latest bulletin from the association which says that lots of packs have found this activity excellent!"*. They may also call on witnesses: *"Have you something to say? Yes Mr Prosecutor! ...in my old pack we did an activity very like this one and it was so boring we never managed to finish it and no-one even wanted to know why..."*

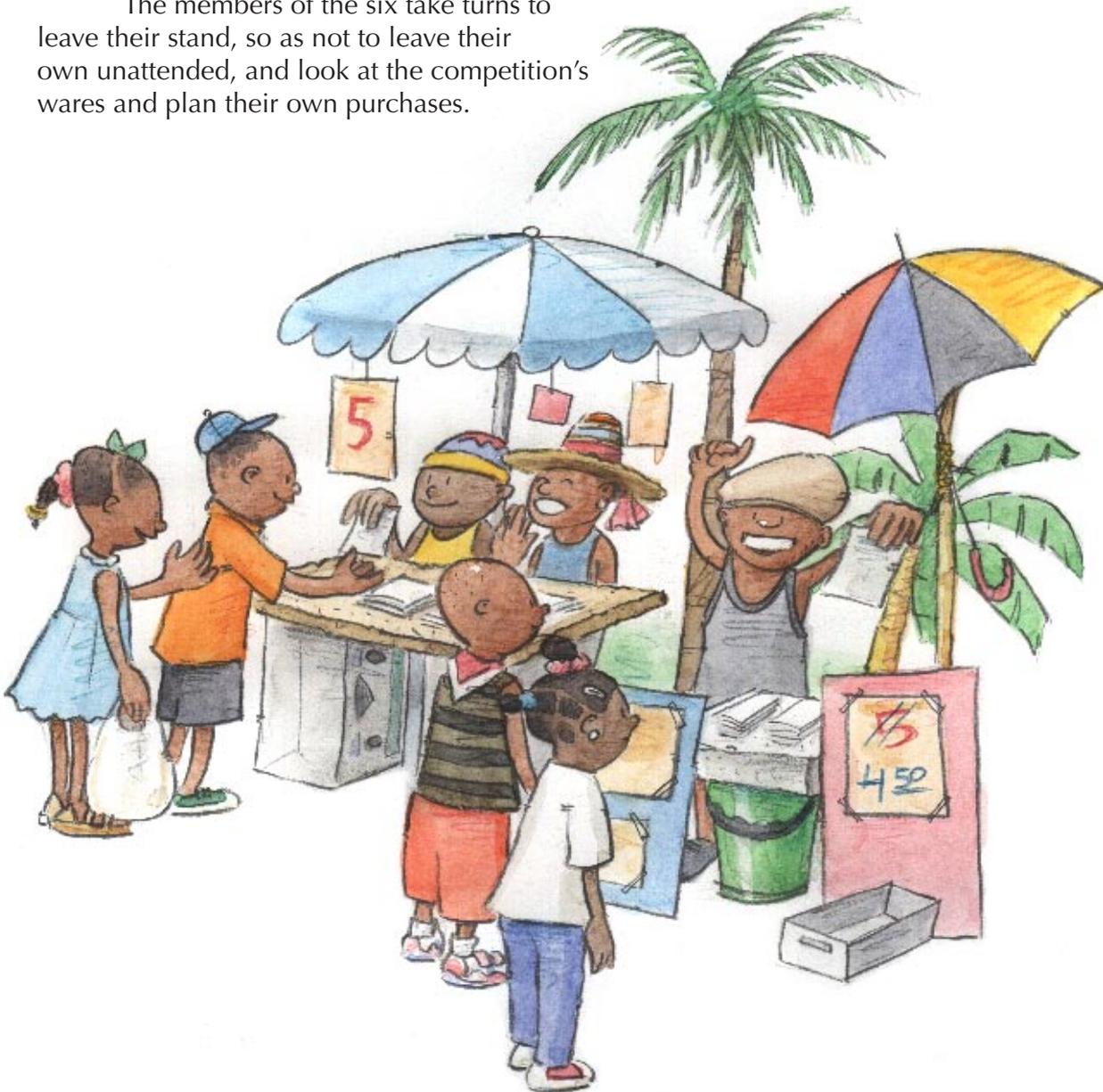
Those whose activities have been turned down can take their case to the Court of Appeal at the end of the trial if they wish, where they will be heard by the same tribunal, i.e. the members of the pack!

As you will no doubt have realised, our Court violates several fundamental legal principles, such as that an interested party cannot be a judge, and it is very likely that your pack will flout plenty of other Court rules when you put this idea into practice, but... *"the authors of this Handbook, Your Honour, declare under oath that we have used this activity many times to select activities and it has been fabulous. Proven beyond all doubt!"*

A morning at the market

In this case the proposed activities are turned into attractive goods to be bought and sold amidst the hubbub and fun of a market. Each six sets up and decorates a simple stand, where they put their activities on show and market their wares. *“Ladies and gentlemen, come and see this lovely activity we have here! Make and eat your own delicious bread in camp! Half a day is all it takes to learn!”*

The members of the six take turns to leave their stand, so as not to leave their own unattended, and look at the competition’s wares and plan their own purchases.



This mechanism serves to develop marketing and commercial skills and the ability to compete with other children. Those who are proposing the bread-making activity, for example, might offer little pieces of home-made bread to taste, baked that day by one of the mothers.

Like in the auction, all the children receive the same amount of "money" in two different colours and amounts. With the more numerous notes they can only buy goods from other sixes, and with the less numerous notes they can buy everything from themselves if they wish.

When they buy a "product", they write its name on the note before giving it to the stall-holder. Then when the market is over and the sellers count their money, they will know how much they received for each activity. The ones which sold the most will be the ones selected for the programme cycle.

The leaders can set up a *Consumer Rights Committee* with various powers, including removing from sale any product they judge to be dangerous or unsuitable for young consumers. They must use all their tact and powers of persuasion for this task, since the use of force is not allowed in this market.

Election day

This is the simulation of an election of local Councillors or Members of Parliament. Of course, like any election, there must be a campaign, propaganda and of course political groupings. To make the game more real, the leaders explain beforehand how elections are carried out in our country, taking the opportunity for the children to find out about the electoral process as an important part of the democratic system, with all its virtues and defects.

Each six, this time transformed into an electoral office, puts up stands, hands out leaflets, talks to people on a one-to-one basis and engages in all kinds of propaganda, trying to convince the other cubs of the benefits of their proposal.. Each proposal is a set of "candidates" which compete for the electorate's favour... *"because I assure you, my friends, that the more outings we go on, the fewer meetings we will have."*

Like all elections, there is a set time allotted to the campaigning, promotion of ideas and forging of electoral pacts. Our campaign finishes with a final session in which the last arguments are put forward and the campaign is closed. Then the voters suspend their campaigning activity, head for the ballot boxes and cast their votes.

To encourage them to acknowledge and value the positive things in other people's initiatives, the cubs can only vote for activities proposed by other sixes. If their own six's ideas are interesting and attractive, the other cubs will vote for them. Each voter therefore receives a voting slip with the number or symbol of their own six on it. The leaders decide beforehand how many activities each cub may vote for, which should be slightly more than the number of activities that can be carried out within a programme cycle.

The children write the name of their preferred activities on their voting slip, or the activities can be identified by number on a list in plain view. Votes which contain more than the maximum number of preferences or which include their own six's activities are declared null and void.



The leaders act as *Ballot Officers* to make sure that the activities proposed respond to the educational emphasis that has been established, do not raise safety concerns and are actually feasible for the pack. These officers are in charge of overseeing the transparency of the elections, supervising the vote count and proclaiming the successful candidates, i.e. the activities that most cubs preferred.

We promise that you will have very good results with this game.
Candidate's honour!

The outcome of the democratic game must be adhered to

From the children's point of view, the democratic game which is used -any of those described or another of your own invention- is just one more activity, as attractive as any other and part of the pack's ongoing programme. As leaders we know that it is *something more than just another activity* since it enables the children, still through play, to express clearly and precisely what they want to do, with no room for doubts or adult interpretation.

Gradually, as they grow, children will discover the value of these games and, without ceasing to enjoy them, will attribute more importance to them. They will begin to understand that this is one of the ways in which they contribute to the running of the pack.

This is why it is so important for the leaders to adhere rigorously to the results of the democratic game. If for any reason any activities have to be postponed or others added to the programme, the alteration must receive approval from the Council Rock (see chapter 14). Only this way can we show the cubs that their opinion is important to us and that we take it into consideration.

If, in spite of promoting the emphasis, proposing activities and establishing reasonable parameters -which you have the opportunity to do both in the proposal and during the game itself- the will of the majority has led to a result you are not totally happy with, you must nevertheless adhere to their choice and be as enthusiastic about the activities they have chosen as you would have been about your own choice. If we correct their options, the children will never have the experience of facing the consequences of their own decisions.

Now we know what activities the children want to carry out and we realise how important this decision is. Now we must organise and design these activities and involve the children in preparing them.



14

chapter

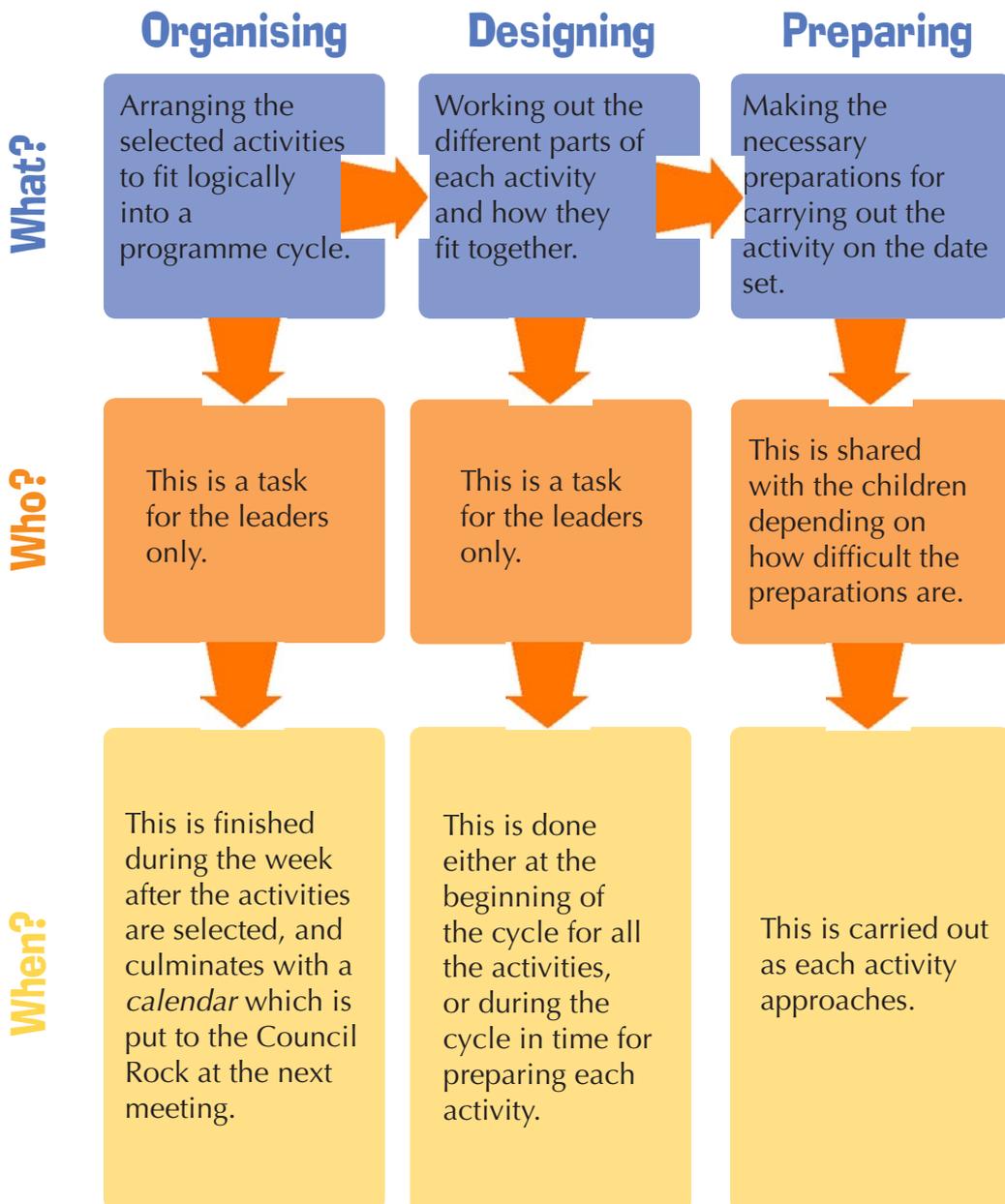
Organising, designing and



preparing the activities

The activities are organised, designed and prepared

The success of the activities depends to a great extent on your ability to organise, design and prepare them.



Criteria for organisation

The leaders organise the activities in accordance with certain criteria, some of which reinforce concepts we saw when we talked about pre-selecting activities:

 **All the activities selected by the children must be included.** Respecting their decisions shows them that their participation is valued, raises their self-esteem and stimulates their confidence in the democratic system.

 If there are good reasons for not being able to carry out all the activities chosen by the children and some have to be postponed, this should be done by consulting the order of priority established in the selection and **the changes must be approved by the Council Rock.**

 Although the emphasis refers to particular growth areas, the cycle should **include activities which enable the children to make progress in all the areas**, even if to a lesser degree. Concentrating on some areas more than others does not cause an imbalance, since the attention given to different dimensions of the personality is balanced and compensated from one cycle to another.

 It is essential to **keep a good balance between fixed and variable activities** and, in the variable ones, between short and long duration activities.

 Even when our activities concentrate on one growth area, **there should be diverse types of activities**, and you should avoid carrying out similar activities one after another. For example, you do not need to programme one hike after another to encourage physical development, since you can achieve the same objective by programming different sports interspersed with hikes.

 If the balance and diversity of the programme of activities has been lost or not achieved for whatever reason during the selection process, **at this stage the leaders may incorporate some activities to correct that, provided these variations are minor and do not substantially alter the children's selection. The children will have the opportunity to give their opinion about these variations** when the Council Rock approves the calendar at the end of the organisation phase.

There is a **sequence** for **organising activities**



How are the activities organised to meet all these criteria and make the most of the time available?

This task might seem difficult, but after organising 2 or 3 programme cycles, any team of leaders will have acquired the skills to do it easily and quickly and, more importantly, will have found the way that suits their style of working. In this as in almost everything, there are many ways of doing things.

In the meantime, here is a sequence of tasks that it will be useful to check each time you organise a cycle.

- Identify all the days, public holidays, parts of working days and special occasions that can be allocated to activities in the next 2 to 4 months.
- Then work out the main fixed activities that will need to be carried out during the cycle in accordance with the established emphasis: camps, hunts, celebrations, Council Rock meetings and gatherings around the red flower. It is not necessary to consider the short duration fixed activities, back-up activities or proficiencies at this point, as will be explained later.



- On a *calendar* previously prepared for the purpose, provisionally plot the main fixed activities, bearing in mind that some of them have to be carried out on specific dates, such as birthdays, and some take a weekend or several days in a row such as the pack camp. On the days that are still free you can programme the usual pack meetings, on the normal day and time. 
- Then look at the variable activities which the children have selected -and any aspects of the fixed ones that were included in the consultation- and work out how much time is needed for all of them. 
- Add that time to the time needed for the fixed activities you have provisionally plotted and see if the result is compatible with the recommended length of a programme cycle. If there is not enough time, you need to remove or postpone some activities or slightly lengthen the programme cycle. If there is too much time, you need to add activities in accordance with the established emphasis or slightly reduce the length of the programme cycle. 
- Once you have established the length of the cycle, you can complete the calendar by scheduling the different variable activities. Remember that some activities can take place in parallel and that during some fixed activities, such as camps, hunts and the usual weekly meetings, you can carry out several variable activities. 
- When you programme the variable activities, you will almost certainly have to make a series of alterations to the original distribution until the calendar hangs together properly. 
- Among the variable activities, it is a good idea to distribute the longer duration ones first. If you start the other way round, you will probably have to move a lot of shorter ones when you start putting in the longer ones. 
- **The finished calendar is submitted to the Council Rock for approval at the next pack meeting. In the case that any selected activity has had to be postponed or any others have been added, the reasons for these changes must be clearly explained.** 

Recommendations for drawing up a coherent calendar of activities

When you put an activity into the calendar, it has not been designed yet, and so -unless it comes from an activity sheet or you have done it before- you don't know all the details involved in preparing it.

However, at this stage you will need to consider some of these details, many of which you will have looked at when you pre-selected the activities. To put an activity in the calendar you need to know roughly how long it takes; and to slot it in among other activities you need to know what equipment, materials and technical knowledge it requires, and whether any third parties are involved. You will need to know how long it will take to obtain these materials and knowledge and involve the appropriate people.

You will also need to have an approximate idea of the cost of each activity, since an activity that does not have funding needs another activity to raise the funds for it.

The great variety of fixed short duration activities -games, songs, dances, story telling and sketches- cannot be planned in detail. It is sufficient that the meetings, camps and variable activities, especially the medium and long duration ones, are programmed with enough leeway to slot shorter ones in when necessary.

The same goes for the back-up activities and proficiencies, the individual nature of which prevents them being programmed in detail in the cycle calendar, although there must be space to develop them.

You must also consider the time that the leaders will need at the end of the cycle to conclude the process of assessing the children's personal progress.

You also need to allocate time for the leaders to design the activities and prepare them together with the children, as we will see shortly. It is not enough to plan activities, you also have to programme the action to prepare them.

It is a good idea to intersperse fixed and variable activities, as well as short ones and medium and long duration ones. Likewise indoor activities and outdoor ones, dynamic ones and quieter ones, day time ones and night time ones, activities just for the pack and others in which the parents can be involved, excursions to the mountains and to the countryside, in the den and out, etc. This way you will generate a variety of themes, places, occasions and styles so that everyone is interested and keen to miss nothing.

It is strongly recommended that you always keep some short term activities in "reserve": surprise activities, games, songs, dances, artistic evenings and others which can replace, for example, a planned activity that had to be suspended because "it was raining on the day of the outing" or to complement one that finished sooner than expected because "the children only took half the time we expected to learn the technique".

Insofar as the balance between different kinds of activities allows, it is a good idea to programme the activities that need more preparation for the second half of the cycle and keep the simpler ones for the early weeks. This means you need not be racing the clock all the time.

The process of drawing up the calendar will also show if the current team of leaders is sufficient to carry out the task in hand at the rate required. If not, there are several options: reduce the number of activities, slow the programme down or build up the team.

Writing all this down in a notebook or portfolio on a regular basis will be extremely useful for the collective memory of the pack and for the continuity of the work, however often the leaders change. These notebooks or portfolios will come to enshrine a great part of the history of the pack!

**All these recommendations
should give you a flexible calendar,
which will allow you to
redistribute activities in unforeseen situations.**



When the calendar is finished you need to **design each activity**

As we have already seen, when you pre-select an activity you have a general idea about its objectives, content, duration and the resources it will require. You had your reasons for selecting it! And so did the children!

However, when you are facing the prospect of carrying it out on a given date and you start designing and preparing it in detail, you will find that to do so successfully you will also need to deal with some tasks that you might not have thought of before.

This work is easier, although it can never be avoided altogether, when the activity in question has been carried out before or if it comes from the activity sheets produced by the association. In these cases you either have personal experience or some sound indications on how to proceed. Especially in the case of the activity sheet, since all the variations on it have been well thought out and tested in the field by a specialised team.

But this will not always be the case, since often the activities selected will simply be the general outlines of an idea and many details will still have to be thought out.

In any case, you will always have to give some thought to the activity whether it has been done before or not, to adapt it to the individual children and conditions in your pack.



Although an experienced team of leaders can design several activities in a short period of time, you will usually need to repeat the process several times during a programme cycle, as the respective dates draw near. Bear in mind that long duration activities need to be planned further in advance than short duration ones, and more complex ones sooner than simpler ones. The ones which need lots of materials will need to be thought out sooner than those which don't, those which need external adult resources sooner than those which do not, and those which are being done for the first time sooner than those which you have done before.

In all these cases, it is recommended that the design should follow a certain order.

First, you have to specify or review the objectives of the activity

The activity has probably been selected and slotted into the calendar with an implicit or general idea of what it is intended to achieve. This is the last opportunity to define precisely what its objectives are.

This definition, which should be written down, is fundamental for evaluating the activity afterwards, since evaluation is about seeing if the proposed objectives were achieved. If no objectives were ever specified, there is nothing to base your evaluation on; and if you have to guess at the objectives, the evaluation will be confusing and ambiguous.

Let's look at a few examples of the objectives of an activity, expressed in a **simple** and **precise** way.

Food Poker

During a pack meeting, the children are encouraged to learn about the different food groups by means of a card game, with cards that they make themselves.



Objectives

- To learn about the different food groups
- To recognise which groups the main foods belong to
- To understand how important a healthy balanced diet is

Fantastic Tales

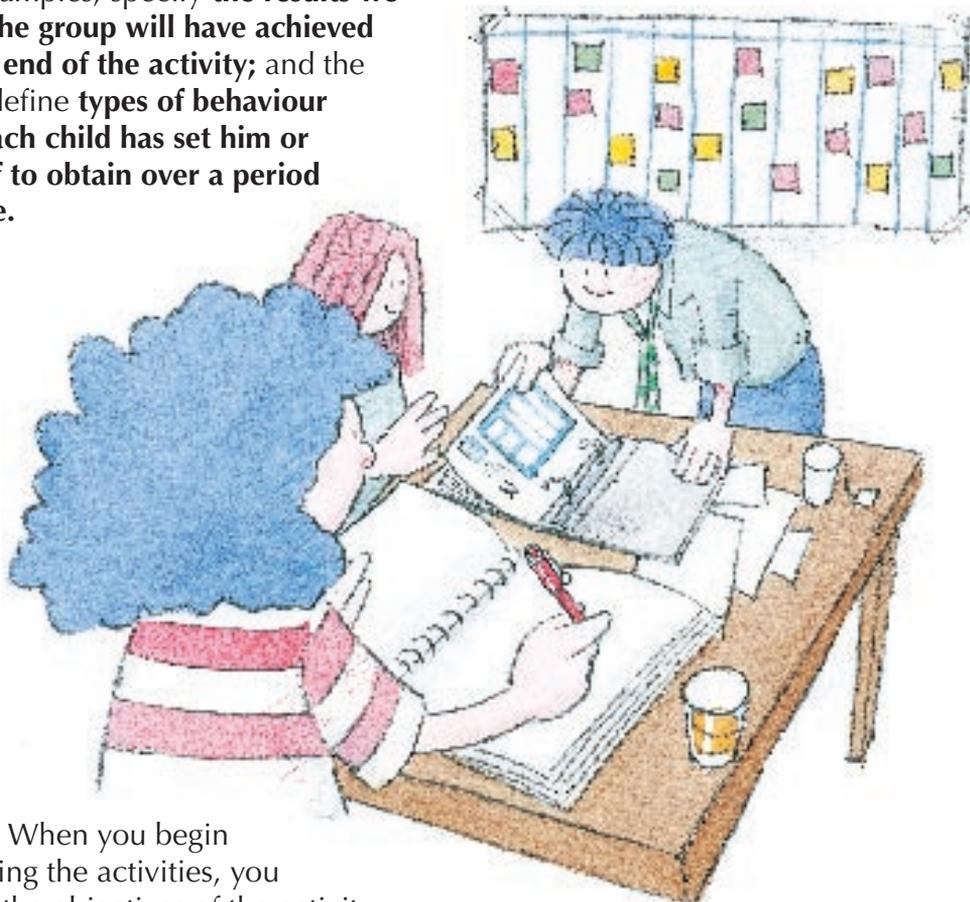
In an hour of activity, the children create fantastic tales by arbitrarily joining together short phrases they have written about different subjects.



Objectives

- To stimulate the imagination
- To develop literary skills
- To discover the creative possibilities in one's own language
- To develop group skills of literary composition

Once again, we must remember that the objectives of an activity **are not** the educational objectives of each child. The former, of which we have given a few examples, specify **the results we hope the group will have achieved by the end of the activity**; and the latter define **types of behaviour that each child has set him or herself to obtain over a period of time**.



When you begin designing the activities, you define the objectives of the activity, **not the educational objectives**, since it is not essential at this point to establish exactly which personal educational objectives the activity contributes to. It is sufficient to have a general idea about which growth area benefits most from the activity.

Thus *Food Poker* in the example over the page is aimed at the development of a healthy diet, and so is located in the area of physical development; while *Fantastic Tales* develops the ability to think and be innovative, so it could be considered to contribute most to the area of creativity.

Although it is a task for the pre-selection phase properly speaking, identifying the growth area that the activity would preferably be located in can be repeated at this point to check that we are programming and carrying out activities in accordance with the emphasis that we have established. This is also the time to do so for those selected activities which were proposed by the children, and which obviously could not be analysed by the leaders during pre-selection.

Once the objectives are defined the other elements of the design are completed

Once you have defined the objectives of the activity, you have to design the other components:

- What kind of place would be best for the activity? ✓
- Do we know how long it will last? ✓
- How do the children take part? ✓
- What kind of adult resources and materials do we need and in what numbers? ✓
- Do we know how much these materials cost and where we can obtain them? ✓
- Is the activity done "all in one go" or does it have several phases? ✓
- Are there any risks that we must guard against? ✓
- Are there any possible variations? ✓
- How is the activity evaluated? ✓

