Building, mending and testing existing kites

Ask pupils or staff to bring in a kite that they have at home and see if you can rig them up and even get them flying. Maybe work in small groups, each with a kite to look at.

1   Try to construct the kite.
Are there any instructions to use?
Are there any parts missing or broken?

2   Study the kite – what can you write down about it. Here are some things you might note …….

- What shape is the kite?
- What size?
- Materials - What is it made of?
- is it in working order, is it complete?
- What would you need to do to make it fly-able, viable?
- Is it symmetrical?
- What construction method has been used? How is it made?
- How long do you think it took to make?
- Is it decorated, how is it decorated?
- Does it have a frame? What job does the frame do?
- Does it have a flying line attached? If not, where would you attach a line
- Does the line fix to the kite at more than one place? – why?
- Does it have a tail? Does it need a tail? What could you use?
- Does it have a bow – i.e. a line tied across the back to allow it to present a curved front to the wind

3   Make up the kites
make up a few different kites before you try flying them – that way you will have a good idea about what type of kite you are dealing with. Some are simple to build and some and quite complicated.
Before going out to fly the kites – check each kite as much as you can to see that everything seems to be in the right place.
Assess whether you think it might fly.
Does it have a flying line? - have you attached it well?
If it has no line – what do you think you could use to fly the kite on? How strong does the line need to be for this size of kite?
What could go wrong? If you are not sure – then don't fly the kite in windy conditions.

4   flying the kites
First of all – read the safety notes (kite safety doc) and check the weather conditions. Check with an adult before going out to test fly the kite you have made up. Look at the tips on flying doc.

When you have tried a few kites – go back inside and make a note of what worked and what didn't. What could be changed or fixed?

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