

# The Firebird – suite (1911) (Finale) by Igor Stravinsky

## Activity ideas for young people with sensory impairments

The story of the Firebird centres around good over evil, and an icy enchanted garden being brought back to life by the Firebird. The following activities give some suggestions as to how pupils with SEND can develop a physical and sensory awareness to aspects of the story. For each module a suggested focus is given, with outcomes that can be worked towards. These can be further individualised for the pupils.

### Module 1: Sensory exploration of “The Firebird” *(This could work as a standalone session)*

*Outcome: pupils are able to make choices using their senses, demonstrating like/dislike*

*Outcome: pupils start to develop an awareness of contrast and opposite.*

Pupil can focus on one sense or combine them together.

Sense	Cold	Hot
Taste	Lemon, Ice pops	Ginger, Vanilla
Smell	Mint, Pine, Eucalyptus, Rosemary	Garlic, Cinnamon, Amber
Touch	Ice, Rough, Spiky	Warm heat pad, Smooth, Padding
Audio	Triangle	Drum beat
Visual	Blue, White, Green	Red, Orange, Yellow
Environment	Fans, Bright light	Soft glow orange lighting, Hairdryers

### Module 2: Physical development through Gross Motor Movement (Preparation/warm up for Write Dance/Fine Motor) *(This would work well as a session repeated weekly over a half term/term block to develop responses to the music and actions over time and if it was followed by the fine motor session)*

*Outcome: Pupils develop a range of physical movements and strengthen upper body core strength*

*Outcome: Pupils learn to anticipate movements and may develop some independent movement*

*Outcome: Pupils learn to anticipate a movement linked to a piece of music or a sound.*

Character	Music	Contextual link	Action	Impact
Koschei	Simple beat	Evil/Ice	Isolate each finger with downward pressure from knuckle to finger tip	Pupil are able to straighten fingers and develop awareness of independent finger movement
Prince Ivan	Secondary theme	Good/Strength	Hand over hand support pupils to curl and stretch fingers	Pupils develop the skills and strength to grip/hold

Firebird	Main theme	Power/Wings	Arms stretch out to the side and move up and down	Develop range of purposeful arm movement and control
The Garden	Relaxed theme	Resolution	Stroke arms from shoulder to wrist	Relax and reflection

**Module 3: Fine Motor development through tactile exploration** *(This would work well as a session repeated weekly over a half term/term block to develop responses to the music and actions over time and if it was preceded by the gross motor session)*

*Outcome: Pupils are able to locate an object with their hands*

*Outcome: Pupils can hold/grasp/grip an object*

*Outcome: Pupils can use fingers in isolation*

Character	Music (optional)	Tactile object	Activity	Response	Extension
Koschei	Simple beat	Ice cubes, cold packs, blue/white satin material, rosemary, mint	Place objects under pupils' flat hands. Place objects/material on/over pupils' hands.	Pupils stretch and curl fingers to "explore" the feel. Pupils attempt to move hands to uncover them.	Place different tactile objects under each hand to see if pupils engage more with one than the other to make a "choice"
Prince Ivan	Secondary theme	Parachute	Pupil in a circle with parachute lifting and lowering overhead.	Pupils look up. Pupils attempt to remove parachute (peek-a-boo)	Pupils may hold the edge of the parachute independently or with support and maintain a grip with relaxed arms that move up and down with the parachute.
Firebird	Main theme	Feathers, heat pads, ribbons (bunched together at one end like a pony tail) Focus all on colours red, orange, yellow	Brush pupils' hands back and palm with different objects	Pupils stretch and curl fingers to "explore" the feel. Pupils attempt to hold an object.	Simultaneously brush both hands with different tactile objects to see if pupils engage more with one than the other to make a "choice"
The Garden	Relaxed theme	Scented flowers, branches with leaves	Place objects in a wider area for pupils to "find" objects	Pupils move arms to locate objects within reach	Pupils pick up objects with palmer or pincer grip. Pupils consistently return to a favourite tactile object.

**Module 4: Sensory awareness through physical interaction** *(This works well as a repeated session so pupils have the opportunity to build up responses over time and develop independent movement)*

*This session can be adapted for pupils to be positioned in wheelchairs, in postural management equipment or working on mats on the floor.*

*Outcome: Pupils develop an awareness of self*

*Outcome: Pupils develop an awareness of others*

Music	Response skill	Method	Extension
Simple beat motif  Awareness of self	Reacting to the beat on the body. Using eyes/head to locate where the beat is on their body or track the direction.  Different limbs move in response to the beat.	Using claves, place one on the pupils body and gently tap it with a second clave  Use a tone block (B) as per clave above	Start with the left foot and gradually move up the LH side of the body, across the shoulders and down the RH side, ending with the right foot. Repeat, always starting of the left.
	Playing as part of a group		Record a beat or a musical pulse using low B onto a switch which pupils can activate with any part of their body (learning to anticipate a cue)  Pupil can have a choice of different percussion sounds which can be recorded to support interest led learning.
Secondary theme  Awareness of others	Turn taking	Use flat hands tap out rhythm on pupils' body. Repeat 4 times and then wait for pupil to initiate a physical response. "Reply" by tapping the rhythm again on the specific limb the pupil responded with.	Move the position of your hands to encourage pupils to focus on other parts of their bodies and to move these in response to your tapping the beat.
Main theme  Awareness of others	Pupil initiates physical response from an adult	Gently push against the pupils' flat hand or foot to flex the limb. Once bent, hold in that position and encourage pupil to push back against you to straighten the limb.	Use instruments that are activated with movement such as wind chimes, sound beam and keyboard positioned so that extension movement activates keys.
Relaxed  Awareness of self	Reflection	For the start of the music run flat hands down pupils' arms and legs from top to bottom several times. This allows pupil to develop the awareness of themselves as a whole.	

		Stop all physical contact and allow pupils the opportunity to reflect on the session.	
--	--	---	--