

COLLAR & CUFFS CO PRESENTS

Caged & Free

Part 2 of the Strings & Things sensory story suite

Commissioned by



Mainspring
Arts

Supported by AOK Trust

**time to change
champion**

helping to end mental health discrimination



Family Arts
Standards

with Family and Childcare Trust

2. Caged & Free

Resources Required

A ball of string

You will need this for every story in the suite; it doesn't matter what colour or material the string is made from: it just needs to be sufficiently long to wind into a ball and so you can make multiple sensory effects with it by trimming pieces off and still have enough left to keep a ball, and it needs to be reasonably strong too. Alternatively, you could use wool or ribbon.

A device to stream audio tracks & sound effects on

Click the link: <https://soundcloud.com/julia-collar/sets/caged-free>

Optional - a device to play a YouTube video on

Click the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeZoL_axCRA If you don't have a suitable device or screen, then just use the audio and your imaginations.

A white bin bag or carrier bag, a white or grey sock, dried beans/rice/lentils etc, 2 sticks and a clothes peg or other pinching clip

These are to make a dove. Fill the sock with the dried beans and tie securely, leave in sunshine/airing cupboard to warm, or cover in foil and place on a low heat in the oven; watch closely to make sure it doesn't burn. Cut a dinner plate-sized circle from the bags and cut in half. Cut lots of slits along the curved edge to create a feathery fringe. Wrap the straight edges around the sticks and tape down to seal it inside a seam, when secured break one of the sticks in the middle to give the feel of a broken wing.

A metal grid

A cooling rack or the grid from a grill pan would work well.

A brush

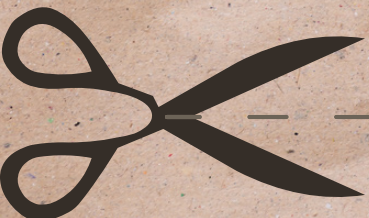
A prickly texture, any size - hairbrush, nailbrush, etc.

Black and white fabrics, and a brightly coloured scarf/t-shirt

Furry would be ideal for the black and white, but any will do - these are to create badger stripes.

Cut grass, hay or straw

If you don't keep animals, then visit a lawn/verge to cut some and let it dry out a bit before using.



To Start the Story

The preface to every story in the suite

Each story starts and ends the same way, creating routine and consistency that orients the person you're sharing the tale with and supporting transitions in and out of the experience.

If you use Story Massage then download the strokes for the poem by clicking the image:

If you don't, then follow the actions overleaf; the words in **BOLD** are the ones you read, the words in normal are the actions.



We found a magic ball of string,
It came to us from Who Knows Where.
With it we can make most anything:
A telephone, a flight of stairs.
A hole in a tree, the moon in the sky,
A fishing line, a butterfly.
With our string we explore both
Known and unknown -
The whole world awaits!
But, without leaving our home.



**We found a magic ball of string,
It came to us from Who Knows Where.
With it we can make most anything:**

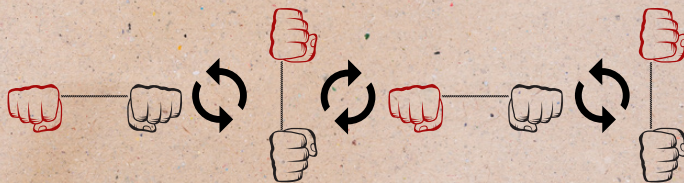
Roll the ball of string slowly and rhythmically on the person's palm

A telephone,

Hold the ball to the person's ear

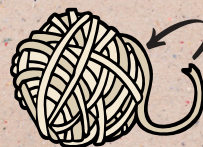
a flight of stairs.

Hold a short length of string horizontally between your hands and keeping your left fist stationary, rotate the string 90 degrees left to vertical; then, keeping your right fist stationary, rotate 90 degrees right back to horizontal whilst raising your arms to give the impression of stairs - invite/assist the person to hold the string in the middle while you move. See diagram below.



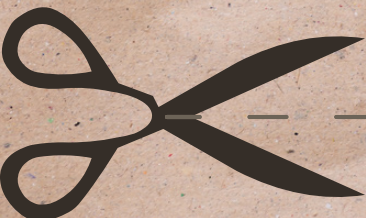
A hole in a tree, the moon in the sky,

For the hole, pull some string from the ball and touch the free end back onto it to create a circle; your person may like to feel the circle, or you could peep through it. Vary the size of the circle by making big ones you could fit your whole body through and small ones that slip over a finger like a ring. For the moon, lift a circle up above your heads.



A fishing line, a butterfly.

For the fishing line, use the free end and 'cast' the line out across the room or gently on to the person's hand or lap - can they catch it? For the butterfly, take the free ends of the string and make it into two floppy loops. Hold the loops in your fist and flap them like wings.



**With our string we explore both known
and unknown -
The whole world awaits!**

Return to rolling the ball of string around your person's palm.

But without leaving our home.

Close the person's fingers over the ball of string with yours over the top, and rest.

Song: We've Got A Tale To Tell

Clap, tap, bang, or stamp along - focus on rhythm and anticipation: use instruments or pots and pans, or just your bodies.

**We're going to tell a tale,
We've got a tale to tell
We don't know where it ends,
We just know that it ends well.**

**It may roll round the sofa,
It may roll out to sea
We're going to chase that tale
And see what we can see!**

**Hey, ho, and let's pretend
Unravel the tale, see where the yarn ends
Hey, ho, and let's pretend
Unravel the tale,
And see where the yarn ends!**



Caged & Free

Sensory Story

The words in **bold** are the ones you read out, the ones in normal describe sensory activities and experiences to support the story.

One day, everything was different. We had to stay at home. We couldn't go out, not even to school/swimming/day centre, etc. We couldn't see our friends. We couldn't even see our family unless they lived in the same house as us. We missed everyone lot.

Staying at home felt strange, but we knew we had our magic ball of string, and with string we can do most anything!

Roll the ball of string on the person's palm or lap. After a few repetitions, shake the ball on the person's hand, leg or chest to create a vibration, and get ready to add a sound effect.

What's that sound?

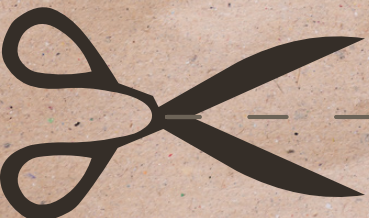
Play the sound effect of the dove cooing.

That's a funny noise, I wonder what it can be. It seems to be coming from our ball of string - if we make a big loop with the string, perhaps we can go through it and travel to somewhere else?

Make a big loop and fit yourselves through it. Play the sound effect of the dove again.

This is a strange place. It's a room full of metal cages.

Handle the metal grid together, feeling the shape, temperature, etc.



Suddenly, a door opens and a lady comes in.

Open and close the nearest door. Drape the colourful scarf/t-shirt over yourself to change character.

Hello! Lovely to have you visiting us today - this is a wildlife hospital. These cages are full of animals that are sick or injured. When they're better, we release them back into the wild. Would you like to help me do my rounds and check on them?

Use the metal grid to create a door. Play the clip of the cage door and swing the grid to let your person feel the cage opening.

This cage belongs to Huffle. Huffle is a hedgehog. He's very nervous and often hides, but we can usually tempt him out with his favourite food: he loves eating worms! We also need to be really quiet and calm to help him feel safe: can you breathe along with me? Low and slow, low and slow.

Hide the brush under your hand, enable your person to stroke the bristles poking out and gradually bring the brush out more and more until they can put their whole hand on it. As you offer the tactile experience, focus on your breathing and make it as audible to your person as possible: breathe in through your nose for three, and blow out from your mouth for five. When you feel the calm settle, unravel lots of loose loops of string and coil them into your person's hand, play the sound effect of the hedgehog eating and make the brush snuffle and nuzzle at the string worms.

He likes you! Listen to him chomping! Worms are really crunchy! Huffle is feeling lots better and will be ready for release next week. Let's put him back and move onto the next cage. This one belongs to Gerald. Gerald is a badger - he's always asleep! Listen:

Clear away brush and string. Use the metal grid to create another door opening. Play the sound effect of the cage door, followed by the clip of the badger snoring.

He likes being here: he feels comfy, warm and safe. Some animals can become very slow and sleepy when they're here - they can find it very boring - so we need to give him a little shake up so we can get him going and then we can change his bed.

Place the black and white fabrics in a bundle on your person's lap/chest and play the clip of the snoring again. Place your hands flat over the bundle and shake vigorously applying firm pressure. Drape the fabrics on your person to create stripes, and rub their forearms and upper arms applying firm pressure to invigorate and create



vibration. Depending on what your person likes, you may like to rub their back, shoulders, legs, etc too.

We've woken him up, and he's moving around getting some exercise: well done! Now, we can use hay to make him a fresh and cosy new bed.

Feel and smell the hay, then spread it out and lay the fabrics on top in a bundle to put Gerald back in his cage - make the bundle wriggle as you put it away, inviting your person to help.

The next cage, well, this one can be a bit grumpy. This is Dolly, she's a dove - she's broken her wing. Careful, she also pecks!

Play the sound effect of the cage again and open the door with the metal grate. Play the cooing clip once more. Place the warmed sock filled with beans in your person's hands to feel Dolly's body, let them feel the feathery wings and help them find the break in one wing. Use the peg to nibble on their fingers. Remove the colourful scarf/t-shirt.

Dolly's making the noise we heard before we used the string to come here. If we listen very hard, we will be able to understand what she's saying: let's use the string to help.

Hold the ball of string up to your ears and unravel a piece to touch Dolly with.

Dolly says: I need to get out! I hate it here: all cooped up with nothing to do all day. I know I'm here to keep safe and well, but I miss being free so very much, and I don't like waiting! Every night I have the same dream: once, there was a rock festival in the park where I roost at night. I didn't know what it was - but when the sound of the wind turned into thousands of people cheering and the band played those first chords, I knew what freedom sounded like. In my dream, my wings have healed, I'm flying and it's my song I can hear on the breeze.

Play the sound effect of the wind and crowd. Turn out any lights, draw curtains/blinds, etc, to darken the room. Play The Heart Of The Dove video or audio. You could enhance this section by adding some colourful sensory lights, glow sticks or torches to create the feel of a rock concert. Wave your arms and lights in the air in time to the song or stomp your feet, pat a leg or hand. Consider using a loud volume to immerse the room in the sound.



Don't worry: Dolly's wing is healing and she will be released back to the wild. It's hard to be patient when you feel like you're trapped. We noticed early on that Dolly seems to like rock music, so every day we put on the radio for her and take her to look at the sky through the window. She coos when she's happy and calm as well as when she's anxious. When we feel stuck and trapped, looking at or being under the sky can help us feel better.

Drape the scarf/t-shirt over yourself again to change character. Play the sound effect of the dove cooing once more. Open the curtains/blinds, take Dolly to the window to see the sky. Play Heart Of The Dove again at a lower volume like it's on the radio. Look at the clouds - what can you see? Can you see the motion of the wind? Can you see any birds? Who or what else is out there?

It's time to wind back the ball of string and go home now.

Take off the scarf/t-shirt, make a big loop of string and fit yourselves through it.

Hang on, we didn't catch the lady's name or say thank you!

Hold the loop open with one hand and the scarf/t-shirt with the other.

Thank you for showing us round the wildlife hospital - we hope Huffle, Gerald and Dolly all get better and can be released soon. We didn't catch your name though, what are you called?

Shake the scarf/t-shirt out, and wave good bye to it.

My name? My name is Hope:

Hold the scarf/t-shirt in front of your face, then throw it through the loop and let fall it to the floor out of sight.

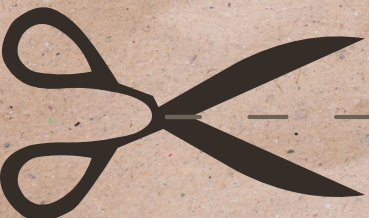


To End The Story

The epilogue to every story in the suite

**We used our magic ball of string,
That came to us from Who Knows Where.
With it we made most anything:
A telephone, a flight of stairs.
A hole in a tree, the moon in the sky,
A fishing line, a butterfly.
With our string we explored
Both known *and* unknown.
The whole world was ours!
But, without leaving our home.**

Repeat Story Massage or movements used in the prologue, adjusting for the word changes.



Song: The Tale That Was Told

Rock or sway to the song, repeat as required. Alternatively you could roll the ball of string in your person's palm again as a calming massage.

**The tale that was told,
It was told to last.
We called up Hope and a dove
We created our past.
For now it is done,
It rests in our reverie;
For the tale that was told
Is made of nought but a memory**

line changes depending on story

**And here the tale ends,
And here the tale ends.
And here, and here,
And here the tale ends.**

