

Mathematical moments: Pattern with 4 & 5 year olds

Children's arrangements



Children often make patterns with radiating arrangements. Zelekah has placed the leaves with stalks towards the middle of the tree stump, echoing its shape. He has also made an alternating pattern in the colour of the leaves.

Eloise's pattern below is developed from the idea of Rangoli patterns, which her teacher has discussed with the class. As her pattern grows, Eloise makes choices about shapes and positions for the next layer and so creates her own rules for expanding the pattern.



This kind of pattern also includes mirror symmetry. After making her pattern, Eloise enjoyed investigating with a mirror and seeing how many different ways she could place it to see the whole pattern. Her teacher planned to create some half patterns which the children could complete with the aid of mirrors, developing the idea of reflection.