



The Great Navigation

A joint research project with the Early Childhood Maths Group
and NRich



As part of our work to develop children's spatial awareness, we worked with the children on a range of map-making foci.

We wanted to see if the children would be able to transfer their knowledge of the 3D world around them to a 2D symbolic representation and retrieve this knowledge and apply it when reading a 2D representation to orient within a 3D provocation.



Together, we spent time looking at points of interest in our local area, that could be used as markers, to help us orient ourselves as we walked.

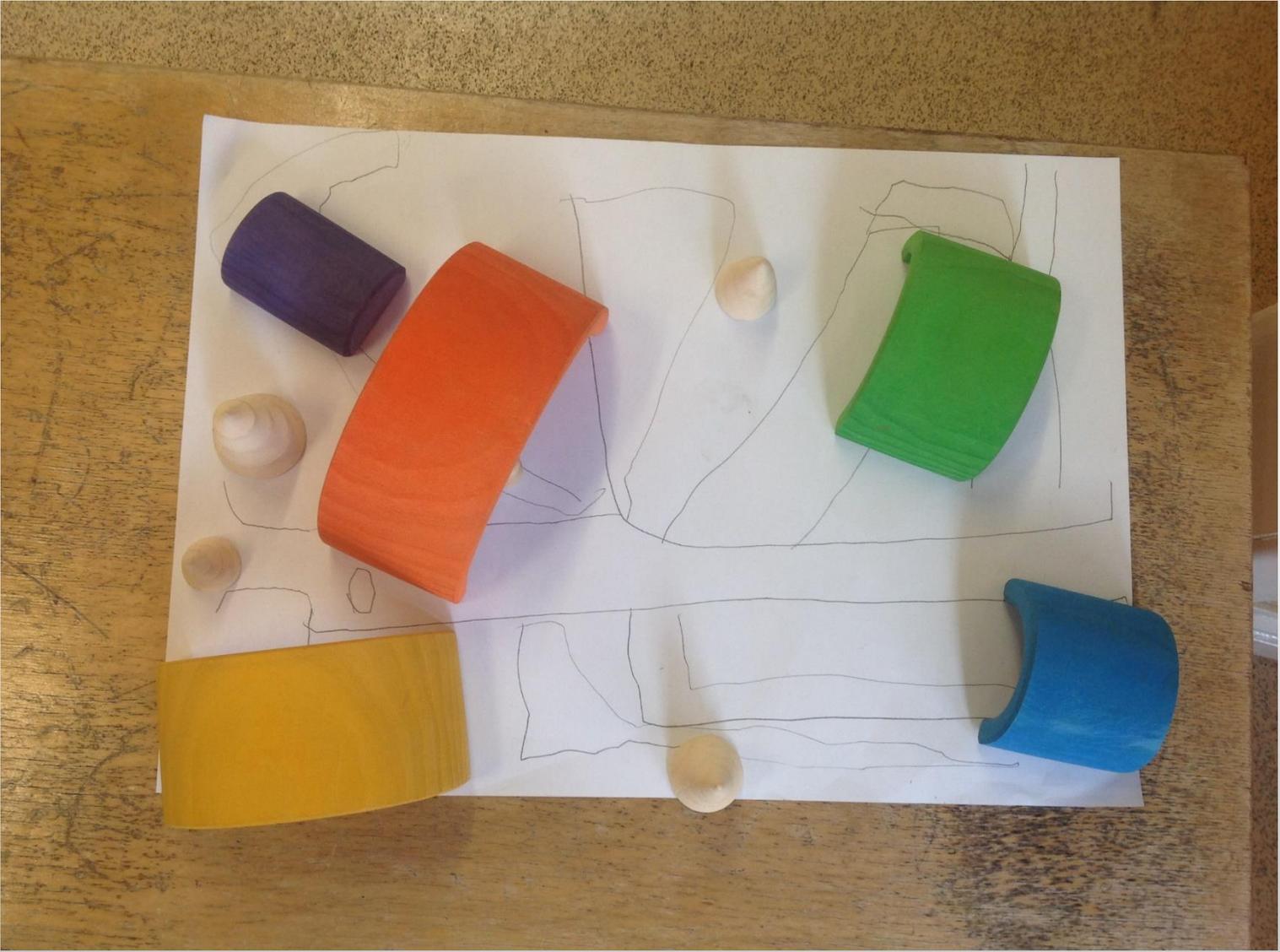
These were then presented to children in a simple map, which the children were supported to follow as they made their way in the local area towards a final goal.

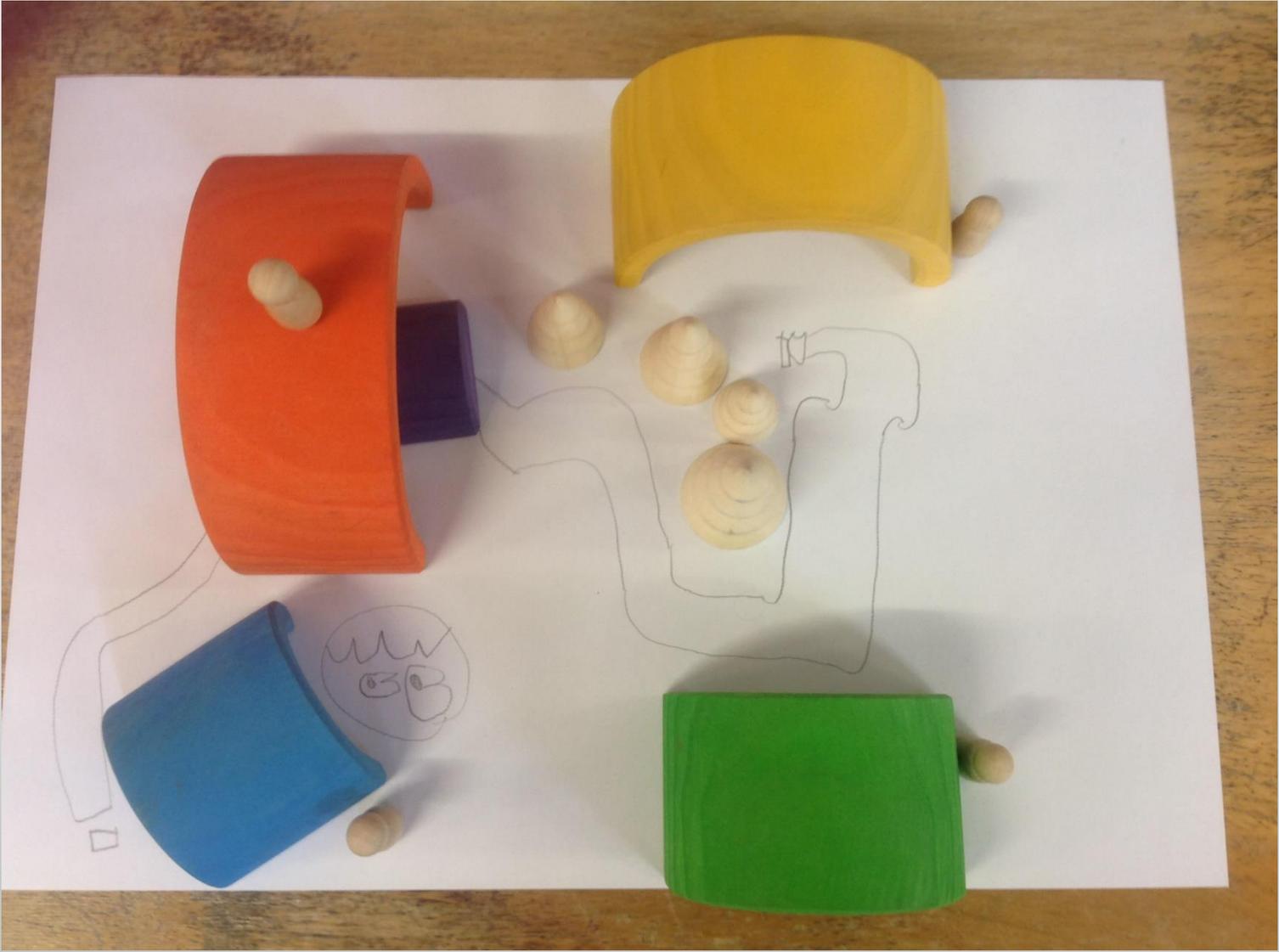






On return, the children began to become interested in exploring map-making as part of their small world play: developing roadways, routes and plans for buildings, using their prior experiences.







To continue to increase the challenge, a new map was created, which followed a different route, with a more complex pathway (i.e. turns of left and right, road-crossing and different markers). Children worked in pairs to follow the map as independently as possible.



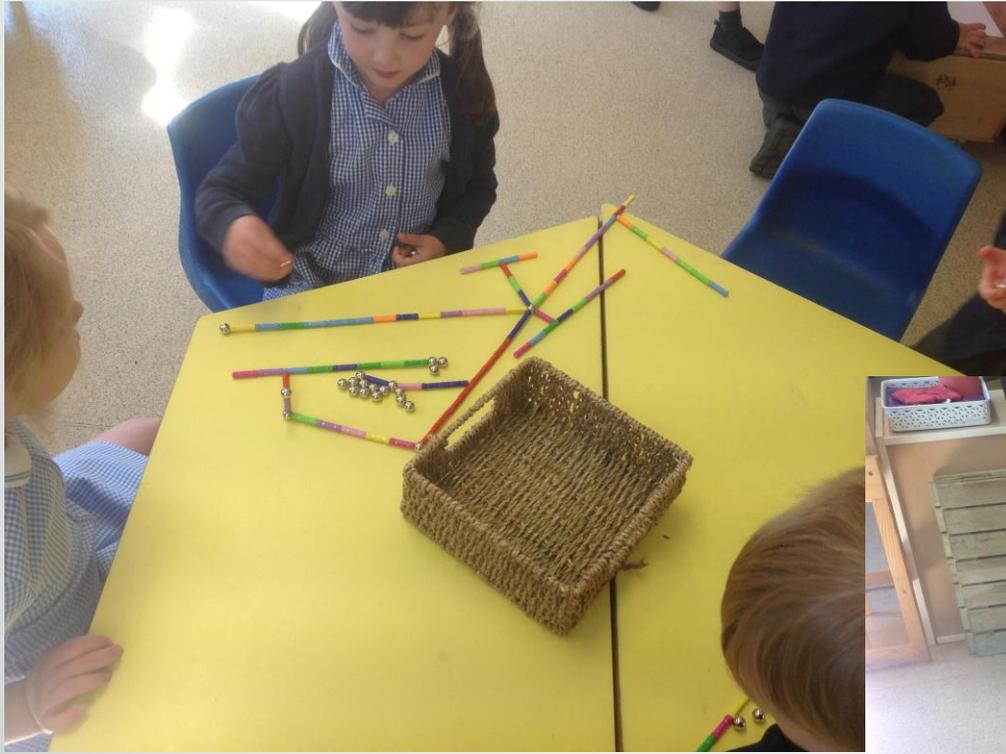


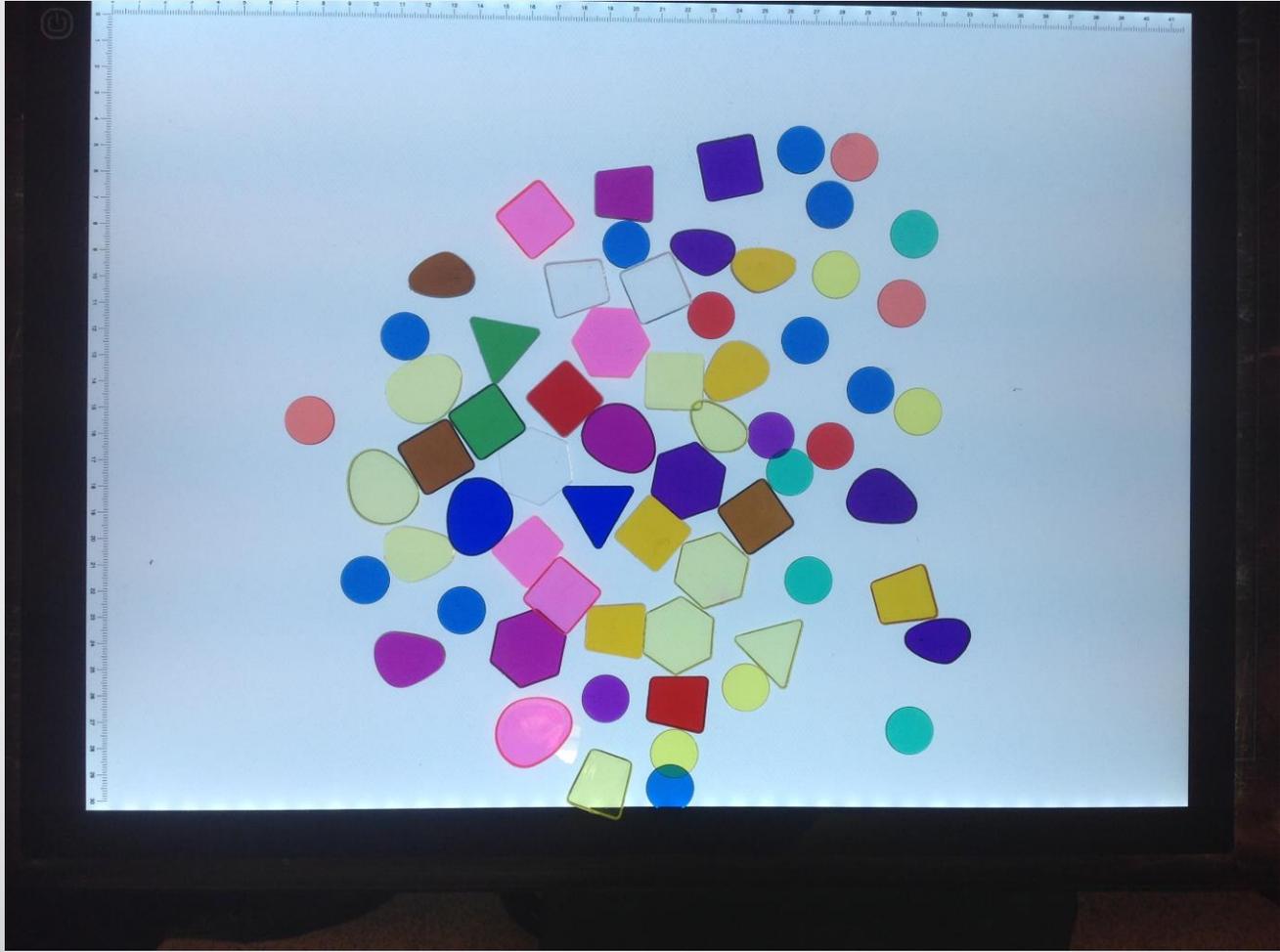






Map-making became a key feature of children's interests, as they explored symbolical representation of their physical world in a range of ways.









We talked about our routes to school.

As cartographers, we created maps to show the landmarks passed on each person's journey.

