Let's get surreal!

Salvador Dalí’s Lobster Telephone is one of the most famous sculptures in the world. Dalí was known as a Surrealist artist. Surrealism is an art movement from 1920s France.

It was made up of artists who used their imaginations to create dream-like (or sometimes nightmare-ish!) artworks. Lobster Telephone is a great example of how the Surrealists would transform everyday things into weird and wonderful (often very funny!) objects.

This week’s activities will have you putting unusual things together, playing surreal games and even hosting your own Dalí inspired dinner party...!
Activity 1: Let’s get sur-real!

Make a surreal creature combining shapes, colours and body parts that don’t usually go together!

If you have magazines that you have permission to cut up:
- Cut out a mix of pictures of animals, body parts and everyday objects.
- Put them in a bag or a box.
- Shake them up and randomly choose a few parts.
- Put them together to create a new surreal collaged creature!

If you don’t have any magazines or newspapers:
- Ask your grown-up to write down 10 random words on a piece of paper. They could be animals, types of food or objects from the home...
- Without looking, pick up to three things
- Put them together to create your new surreal character!

You could
- draw or paint a picture of your new creature
- create a collage of it using magazine images, or cut out your own drawings
- sculpt it from plasticine or salt dough (see last week’s activity if you’d like a recipe for paint or salt dough!)

...don’t forget to give your surreal creature a name!
Activity 1: Let’s get sur-real!
Activity 2: See, Think, Wonder

Use these questions as prompts to think a little bit deeper about Dalí’s Lobster Telephone.

Look
- What do you see?
- Where has the artist positioned everything?
- Describe the shapes, pattern, colours and textures – what do you think is unusual about the telephone and the lobster?
- What would you add, remove or change about the sculpture?

Technique
- What materials, tools and techniques were used to make this? What stages do you think the artist went through?

Mood
- How does the sculpture make you feel and why?
- What kind of person do you think made it?
- Where would be a good place to display it?
- What do you think/love/hate about it?

Context
- When, where, why do you think this was created?
- Can you see any symbols or metaphors?
- What’s it about?
- What could it mean?

Remember: there are NO wrong answers. These questions are here to help you think a bit more about the process and decision-making that people might go through, to encourage your own art making!
Activity 3: a mid-week challenge for all the family

This week we’ve been inspired by Dalí’s Lobster Telephone. Our mid-week activity is a game loved by the Surrealists!

It’s called Exquisite Corpse, but you might know it as consequences...

These suggestions are for two players, but you can adapt this to the number of players that you have at home – and add in extra stages if you like!

1. On a piece of paper, draw a head and shoulders. Don’t overthink it! It could be a real animal, a creature from your imagination, an object from your house or anything you can dream up!
2. Fold the paper down, hiding everything you just drew but leave two small marks for the next player to show them where to carry on from your drawing.
3. Pass your paper to the other player and pick up the other paper to draw the shoulders to the waist and legs to the feet!
4. Open up the paper to reveal a strange new collaborative creature!
5. Share it with us VIA facebook or Twitter!

What was it like to draw without seeing the other parts? Were you pleased with the end result?
How do you think your drawings would have differed if you could see what came before your drawing?
Activity 4: WATCH

In 1941 Salvador Dalí hosted a dinner party for his friends. He hosted the party on a huge bed!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vg6i4E0Woak

He has encouraged all of the guests to dress up in costumes that represent bad dreams. The fish course was served in satin slippers. The main course is jumping frogs! He invited some very famous guests from the time... Alfred Hitchcock, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby.
Activity 5: dinner with Dalí

We challenge you to design your own Surreal dinner party. Watch the clip above for inspiration before plotting out your plan!

- What food would be on the menu?
- What would the food look like?
- How would you serve it?
- Who would you invite?
- What would your guests wear?

Write it up as a to-do list or menu and add illustrations to bring your plan to life! Can you create any of the elements in real life? Maybe next time you share a meal, your family could all wear a silly hat or give the food a funny name?

For under 5s!

Collect these objects from around the house and enjoy reading this dream-like surreal sensory story together!

- metal spoon
- torch / mobile phone torch / fairy lights
- a glass of water
- spinning top / spinning a coin / or a wee spin around the room! glass cup, leather shoe, copper penny
- small bowl and wooden spoon

The story is all about a girl called Poppy and a very magic porridge pot!