



OUTDOOR ART

Who are these resources for? Natural Connections resources are aimed at teachers who are new to outdoor learning and are intended as an initial helping hand to get started. Teachers with more experience in taking lessons outside will be able to adapt them and take them to the next level. Resources are available to cover all subjects of the KS1 and KS2 new national curriculum.

Why were they produced? These resources were produced in response to teachers' feedback via the Natural Connections Demonstration Project. [<hyperlink to landing page>](#) The 3 ½ year project aims to increase learning in natural environments across in schools across the south west, and draws valuable learning from evaluation of the delivery model and the diverse benefits of using local green spaces for education across the curriculum. Many of the teachers involved in the project were new to taking learning outdoors, and requested some simple lesson ideas to help build their confidence and to link outdoor learning to the curriculum. These resources have been produced by Plymouth University's Institute of Education, and have been trialled in Natural Connections schools.

Can I get involved with Natural Connections? The Demonstration Project element of Natural Connections concludes in March 2016 but a number of legacy initiatives are under development. Natural Connections has been working with over 120 schools since 2012 in the South West and we are now able to offer our service to all schools.

The Natural Connections Team can support all aspects of outdoor learning in primary, secondary and special schools throughout the UK and overseas. We are an experienced group of experts in curriculum development and outdoor learning practice across all curriculum topics. We draw on a range of specialists to tailor our services to the particular needs of each school. Our service to schools includes:

- Specialist professional development & training for teaching staff, governors and volunteers
- Bespoke Curriculum design to integrate outdoor learning into learning, teaching and Improvement Plans
- Practical outdoor learning activities and ideas to support lessons that engage pupils, develop skills, enhance attainment and offer creative lesson ideas
- A comprehensive set of resources for schools to build exciting lessons
- Advice on funding and partnership development
- Local support and access to a range of outdoor education providers who can help enhance your lessons
- An evaluation and research package to suit each school setting, based on many years' experience
- Access to the wider Natural Connections network, conferences, research papers, contacts and offers to support you in the long-term

Whatever the scale of your plans and whatever stage you are at with outdoor learning, please return to our home page and contact us to discuss how the Natural Connections Team can help.

What will children learn from this activity?

ART DISCOVERING EXPERIMENTING TALKING AND LISTENING

'Wizard and Witches Potions'

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 1

- to use a range of materials creatively to design and make products
- to develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can use my senses to make my own paint from natural materials

TIMESCALE:

1 lesson (1 hour)



ACTIVITY:

This activity is particularly appealing to young children, especially if you can link it to a story that involves witches and wizards, e.g. Room on the Broom by Julia Donaldson or Harry Potter, etc.

Children are encouraged to explore the outdoor environment and collect natural materials from around the school grounds – mud, grass, daisies, bark from a tree, leaves, etc and put into their own individual pot (yogurt pot/plastic pot).

Children can have fun exploring the outdoor, natural environment and inspire curiosity and creativity by seeing who can make the strangest potion, the prettiest potion, the smelliest potion, etc.

Then you can add PVA glue to their potion and they can stir it up and paint a picture with their concoction.

EAL/SEN:

A very active, practical lesson. Lots of opportunities to work alongside peers and adults. Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION:

Extend questions to children with extensive artistic skills and HA. What colour do you think you'll paint will be when you mix all the natural colours together? Talk to the children about all paint



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originally being made from natural resources? What natural things can they think of that would make a red paint? A black paint? A Yellow paint? Etc.

Cross Curricular: English – Julia Donaldson stories.

Possible Resources: a plastic pot/yogurt pot to make their paint, outside wear for the children (wellies/coats), pva glue, paper

PREPARATION:

(Things to do before the lesson)

A safety talk about what is safe to touch and not touch outside in the playground.
Follow up with exploration of different ways to make marks with natural resources (see also next lesson)

LINK:

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Lead on to more Forest School experiences
Link to materials and purposes.

What will children learn from this activity?

ARTISTIC SKILLS SPEAKING AND LISTENING CREATIVITY USING SENSES

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 1

- to use a range of materials creatively to design and make products
- to develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can discover a range of different natural materials to make a beautiful piece of art.

TIMESCALE:

1 lesson or a series (1 hour)



ACTIVITY:

This activity is fun as it has a fun factor or being a detective. Tell the children they have a mission to explore the outside environment (if lacking add a lot of things to find, e.g. pine cones, leaves, flowers, shells, etc.) and discover some materials to make art with.

They may wish to use a camera and photograph what they view as art, they may wish to collect a lot of objects and draw them or use them – glue them onto a scrap book, they may want to make a sculpture out of stones or a building out of sticks.

Inspire the children with some ideas, but also encourage them to use their own imagination.

You can photograph and copy their work and produce a detectives' line up of art.

EAL/SEN:

A very active, practical lesson. Lots of opportunities to work alongside peers and adults.

Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION:

Children to work independently. Ask them lots of questions. Discuss colour, shape, texture, etc.

Cross Curricular: Drama – acting out as Detectives.

Possible Resources: magnifying glass, detective props, camera, paper, paints, glue, tape, etc.



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PREPARATION:

(Things to do before the lesson)

A safety talk about what is safe to touch and not touch outside in the playground.
Look at artists' work using different materials. What do they think they were trying to show in their work?

LINK:

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Get children to articulate the thinking that led them to choose resources
Lead on to thinking about what decisions artists make in creating their work – what do they consider?

What will children learn from this activity?

ART THE PROCESS OF TIE-DYE DESIGNING

'Tie-Dye with Natural Materials'

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 2

- Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can design and colour a piece of clothing using natural materials

TIMESCALE:

1 lesson (1 hour) + leaving it to soak and visiting it another lesson, perhaps to do further work on it.



ACTIVITY:

Children can explore the natural environment and select a plant, fruit or flower to provide the colour for their tie-dye.

Using a cotton t-shirt/material they can help to make the mixture that is needed to tie-dye the material and also design where they want the pattern to be on their material.

There are many 'how to' videos online and the Eden Project provides a great step by step instruction.

Natural materials that produce a good colour are: blackberries, carrot leaves, grass cuttings, onion skins, red cabbage, blueberries, raspberries, etc.

EAL/SEN:

A very active, practical lesson. Lots of opportunities to work alongside peers and adults.

Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION:

Extend questions to children with extensive artistic skills and HA. What natural materials can you think of that would make your t-shirt brown? Talk to the children about all dye that colours fabric originally being made from natural resources? What natural things can they think of that would



make a red dye? A black dye? A Yellow dye? Etc.

Cross Curricular: Design and Technology – children could make a very basic t-shirt/vest/skirt out of material before hand or a tea towel for at home, etc. if made out of a very simple cotton then you could go on to extend this by colouring it with tie-dye.

Possible Resources: www.edenproject.com

- An old, light-coloured cotton t-shirt
- Elastic bands
- A big pan that can go on the hob (and isn't going to be used for food)
- An old pair of tights
- An old jam jar
- Natural ingredients to colour – e.g. raspberries/ beetroot/coffee
- A fixative, such as:
 - washing soda (1 tablespoonful)
 - vinegar (any clear vinegar – 1 tablespoonful)

PREPARATION:

(Things to do before the lesson)

A safety talk about what is safe to touch and not touch outside in the playground.
Safety talk about hot water and fire

LINK:

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Evaluation
Think about the colours produced
Challenges that they experienced
How would they tell others to do this?

What will children learn from this activity?

ART

WORKING WITH CLAY

DESIGNING

CRAFT SKILLS

'Woodland Clay Sculptures'

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 2

- Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can use clay to produce a woodland animal to decorate our School grounds.



TIMESCALE:

1 or 2 lessons.

ACTIVITY:

Clay is a very natural material and due to its messy nature it is very suitable for working with outside of the classroom. On the school field will be very manageable if every child took a board with them and if it's a sunny day the clay can be left to dry outside too!

A woodland theme where children can design their clay into owls, squirrels, foxes, badgers, mushrooms, leaves, etc. looks very appealing around the school grounds and also fits into the natural environment well, especially if your school has trees and lots of greenery.

Children can pound, pinch, roll, flatten, poke, tear, squeeze, coil, stretch, squash, twist, and bend their clay into all sorts of shapes and sizes. Making it a really enjoyable material to work with. Ask children if they know where clay comes from? How it is made?

EAL/SEN:

Working with the clay will provide a good break from using pencils, crayons, paint brushes, or other tools as the children are all free to express themselves and take their time over making what they would like. A very active, practical lesson. Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION:

HA children – gifted and talented at Art and sculpting could be asked to make a solid 3D clay model to extend their skills. Provide them with different tools to use with the clay instead of just their hands. Different texture clay. Question children – what is working well? How could you make the



edge look straighter? Etc.

Cross Curricular: Science – learning about woodland habitats and the animals that occupy them.
English – the animals made could be woven into a group story

Possible Resources:

PREPARATION:

(Things to do before the lesson)

Teacher models how to use the clay.
Children could try out design ideas with plasticine.
Research animals on internet and in books to observe their key features.

Follow up could be positioning their animals outside for another class to find them either developing their observational skills or in a orienteering exercise to guide them to where they are.

LINK:

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Encourage reflection on what properties the clay had – what was it useful to express?
How did it feel to work with it? Consider the change when the clay is left – what has happened to it?

What will children learn from this activity?

ART WORKING WITH WILLOW DESIGNING CRAFT SKILLS

'Working with Willow'

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 2

- Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can plan, design and build a willow structure.

TIMESCALE:

Ongoing art project – 4 or 5 lessons.



ACTIVITY:

This requires an expert coming into school – which can be costly, but it is very worth it as the products made are beautiful for the school grounds and can then go on to be used in the playground thereafter for Forest School projects and outdoor learning.

Willow structures such as domes, tunnels and arbours can be constructed. Children are encouraged to be fully involved in the process of planning, designing and building their structure giving them a real sense of achievement when the project is completed.

EAL/SEN:

A very active, practical lesson. Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Learning a new skill. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION:

Cross Curricular: Science/Geography – learning about willow.

Possible Resources: creativestarlarning.com and outtolearnwillow.co.uk

PREPARATION:

LINK:



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(Things to do before the lesson)

Knowledge of working with willow, an ongoing project – remind children of health and safety.

Think of what children would like the willow sculpture to be and what they would like it to be used for. The planning stage could involve surveys of staff and pupils that they could report on (English) using graphs (Maths)

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Encourage them to write down and/or photograph different uses of the structure over the year to create an ideas bank.

What will children learn from this activity?

ART GARDENING PLANTING DESIGNING LIFE CYCLES OF PLANTS

'Art and Gardening'

Year 1/2

Year 3/4

Year 5/6

NATURAL CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S): ART Key Stage 2

- Pupils should be taught to develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S):

- I can plan, design and create a garden landscape.

TIMESCALE:

Ongoing art/gardening project –4- 5 lessons. Plus continued maintenance to the garden.



ACTIVITY:

Children can be given a small flowerbed in groups or be designated a small area of the school grounds to plan, design and plant. With art and design at the forefront of their minds children will be asked to consider colour, texture, shape and the structure of their garden.

Do they want to evoke the senses? Smell, touch, taste. A herb garden for example, or a rainbow garden. Children can keep an art sketch book of their plans, cuttings of the plants they grow, photographs of the development. Consider who is it for?

EAL/SEN:

A very active, practical lesson. Opportunities for speaking and listening for EAL. Learning gardening skills. Appealing for SEN due to lots of touching and feeling of resources and the practical element.

DIFFERENTIATION: HA children to consider the art and design factor of creating a landscape/flower bed more significantly. Designs and diagrams to have elaborate labels, a project where children can investigate what plants grow well together, look nice together. To make it more artistic make a colour pallet of all the colours used in their garden or create a small art sculpture to sit in amongst the plants.

Cross Curricular: Science – growing plants



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Possible Resources:

PREPARATION:

(Things to do before the lesson)

Health and Safety.
Model gardening – planting. ‘How to’ videos.

LINK:

(Bringing back into the classroom)

Science – diary of looking after plants,
gardening.
Ongoing art sketchbook through seasons.