

# Get out and Play



# Get out and Play

Here at Learning through Landscapes we love to spend time in the outdoors.

Being outside is brilliant, we think it's a great chance to have a proper run around and use up some of that extra energy.

We believe that a day out with your friends or family doesn't need to cost a lot of money. We don't think that every trip needs to include an entrance fee.

Spending time outdoors can be totally free, but that can involve thinking of ideas, which can be difficult if you don't know where to look. That's why we've put together this booklet. It has lots of ideas! Sometimes you just need a wee pointer to get started.

All of these ideas are low cost, either free or requiring simple resources. These materials are usually common household items or things that can be picked up easily at the pound shop or somewhere similar.

One of the great things about the outdoors is that you can get out in any weather. Sometimes you may need extra layers to stay warm and on other days you may need a jacket to stay dry.

With the ever changing and unpredictable weather in mind, we have included lots of different activities in this booklet. These are suitable for a whole range of different weathers.

We hope that these ideas inspire you to visit the outdoors with your family and friends.

We would love to see if you have tried out any of these activities. Please get in touch with your pictures and any ideas of your own, we're always interested to see what you've been up to!



# At the Carwash

Get a bowl or tub and collect some water

Add some washing up liquid and a sponge or cloth and you are ready to get started washing the car.

Look around you – what else could you clean? The bikes, a dolls pram or even the house!



## Useful tips

- Try using brooms and mops to ‘wash’ the ground
- Brushes and rollers are good for you to pretend to ‘paint’ the fence, wall etc. As it is only water you don’t need to worry about cleaning up!
- Introduce using coins so you can ‘pay’ for your car to be washed

# Big Art Attack

Roll out some big sheets of paper – old wall paper is great! Add some paint and some brushes to get started on your masterpiece

Experiment with different techniques to create marks on the paper. You could try using leaves, Lego, sticks, cars and small world animals.

Use some paper plates for the paint so you can dip your feet in and make some foot prints on the paper. Walk forwards and backwards, run, jump, hop and skip to make lots of different patterns.



## Useful tips

- Try hanging the paper up on a fence or wall and dip light weight balls in paint to throw at the paper and make a splat!
- Add some paint to bubble solution (or washing up liquid) and blow bubbles toward the paper. When they pop you will see the colour explode over the paper!
- Remember to use water based paints for easy clean up!

# Bin Bag Toboggan

Tie some rope to a heavy duty bin bag and make your way to the top of grassy hill. Get ready!

Remember to hold on tight as you slide down the hill on your homemade sledge.

Why not try making some more sledges with seats made from different materials. This fruit box is perfect!



## Useful Tips

- Try going up the hill instead.
- Are you strong enough to pull someone all the way to the top?
- You can always add some water to make it extra slippery!
- Experiment with different ways to slide down, you could go on your tummy, your knees, or even backwards!
- Make sure to check the ground is clear of hazards

# Bowled Over

Collect some empty bottles and decorate them using coloured paper and tape. These will be your skittles. You could also try painting them or drawing on them with markers.

Find a long flat bit of pavement or path and line up the skittles.

Take aim and roll!

Who can get the most strikes?



## Useful tips

- Try filling up the bottles with different materials such as small stones or mud to make it more of a challenge!
- Experiment with different sized bottles and explore new games.
- 500ml bottles work well for bowling but bigger (2lt) bottles are good to use as bats for baseball or clubs for golf

# Box of Ideas

Find a big cardboard box to play in. Boxes are great for just sitting in and climbing in and out of.

What could your box be? Could it be a fire engine, castle or even a space rocket? You can decorate your box with paint or coloured pens to make it come to life.

Try adding other materials to your creation. What about milk bottle tops for buttons? Pieces of string for the lifeboats on the Titanic? What else could you use?



## Useful tips

- Try to collect lots of boxes to make the best use of the extra space outdoors and build something on a much bigger scale for example a train with separate carriages
- If you don't have any boxes ask at your local shop for any they are throwing away. They will be more than happy to give you them for free!

# Creature Creations

Go out and find some natural materials to use as features i.e. twigs for legs and stones for eyes to help you make your creature.

You can use clay or thick mud to make a body or head, and stick on the resources you have found to create your model.

What will you make? A spider? A hedgehog? Or use your imagination to create something else! The possibilities are endless!



## Useful tips

- Use mud instead of clay as a free alternative.
- If you have only used natural materials, you could leave your finished sculpture in the space where you made it for someone else to find and enjoy.
- Try finding a tree with interesting markings or shapes which look like a facial feature. A short branch sticking out could be a pointy nose. Then use the clay or mud to stick your natural materials around it and make a funny face.

# Eggsellent Fun

Look up at the trees and see if you can spot any birds nests.

Collect some leaves, twigs, grass and other natural materials. Have a go at creating your own nest.

Decorate some eggs and find a hill to roll them down. You could use real hard boiled eggs, Styrofoam ones from a local arts and craft shop or even some small tennis or bouncy balls.



Hide some eggs around your local area and go an egg hunt! You could give clues or make arrows using sticks to find them. Remember to count how many were found and collect any that were not discovered.

## Useful tips

- When it gets dark early in the winter you could try your egg hunt in the dark for an extra challenge! Wrap them in foil and use a torch during your hunt. The foil will reflect the light and help you find where they are hiding!
- Have an egg and spoon race and see who will be first to cross the finish line without dropping their egg!

# Insect Inspection

Take out a magnifying glass and go for a walk to your local area to see what minibeasts you can find. You can often buy them at the pound shop or online.

Look around in all the places that insects could be hiding. Check under leaves and in flowers to look for caterpillars and butterflies.

Try under rocks or logs on the ground. You can also peel back the bark on fallen trees to see if there are any insects hiding underneath.



## Useful tips

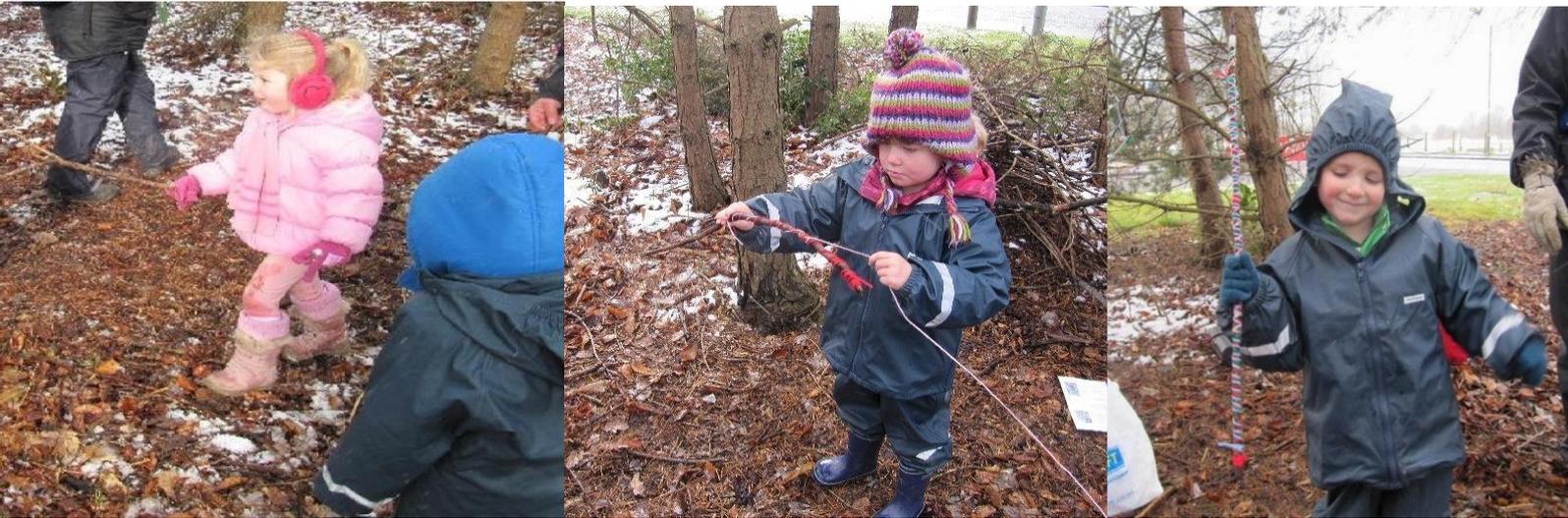
- Take a small tub (and a spoon if you don't want to touch them). You can gently scoop them up and have a closer look.
- Make sure to put back any rocks, logs or bark that you move. This is the minibeasts home!
- Why not make a mini home for your minibeasts using a bundle of hollow bamboo canes or sticks tied together with some string. Hang this up out of the wind and rain. On a tree, railing or balcony can work well.

# Journey Stick

Take some coloured wool out with you and a look for a special stick to decorate on your walk.

Wrap your wool around the stick to represent things you have seen along the way. You could use blue wool for the sky or yellow for some daffodils.

Try adding things to your stick you find along the way such as leaves and petals. Then you can take it home to remember your journey.



## Useful tips

- Look for a stick with a fork in it (so it looks like the letter 'y') and weave your wool in between the two branches to create a dream catcher.
- Try adding colours which show how you are feeling for example yellow for happy, orange for excited or blue for sleepy.
- You can make up your own there is no right or wrong way to make a journey stick!

# Let's go fly a Kite

You can make a really simple kite with some household materials such as bin bags and bamboo barbecue skewers.

You can find instructions on <http://www.my-best-kite.com/kite-for-kids.html>. On a nice windy day have a go flying your kite.

It takes a bit of practice and you have to run really fast! Watch your kite fly up into the air.

How high will your kite go?



## Useful tips

- Make sure you don't fly your kite near any overhead wires or railway lines.
- For a quick and simple alternative just tie some string to the handles of a carrier bag and hold on tight
- Decorate your kite with paint or markers to add some colour and make your kite unique
- Don't worry if you can't get it to fly straight away just try again another day it's still fun to run and pull it along behind you!

# Lovely Leaves

As the leaves fall and cover the ground it's the perfect time to go out and play. Try and find a hill to roll down and see who can get the most leaves stuck to them!

Scoop up the leaves and let them fall, throw them or kick them. How far can you make them travel?

Make a big pile of leaves to jump in or cover yourself in leaves and hide before jumping out and giving everyone a fright!



## Useful tips

- Cut a strip of card (the outer edge of a cereal box works well) long enough to fit around your head. Use tape to join both end together. Look for some lovely leaves to stick onto your card with the tape and make a beautiful leaf crown
- How many colours of the rainbow can you find?

# Music Maker

Use some empty bottles to make shakers and fill them up with things from the cupboard, like pasta or lentils. You can also use things you can find outside, like pinecones and stones.

Make bracelets using pipe cleaners and bells – then tie them round your wrist or ankles and have a jingle jive!

Play games such as following the leader where you have to copy the actions of the person in front. Music is always more fun outside because you can be as LOUD as you want



## Useful tips

- Explore your environment to make more instruments. Sticks make good beaters for a drum or gather a few and line them up to make a xylophone.
- Listen to the music of nature and play I hear (just like I spy but with your ears) and see if you can mimic all the sound you can hear i.e. the birds calling or the rustling of the trees.

# Natural Art

Go for a walk to your local park, woodland or field to find some natural materials like flowers, leaves, twigs and cones.

Stick your materials to a piece of card using tape. You could cut one of the sides from a cereal box for your card.

Take your picture home and find a nice place to display it. You can do this each month to replace the materials as they naturally decay.



## Useful tips

- Try this in different seasons to explore how the natural materials change and find out what grows at different times of the year
- Frame your masterpiece by using sticks and string to make a rectangular shape and create a border to go around the outside of your picture.

# Play Ball

Use some old wire coat hangers to make loops in the ground and have a go trying to kick the ball through them.

Stick some card on top and number them 1 to 9 to make it like a mini golf course. Can you roll the ball through the targets?

You can use the wire hangers to make throwing targets too. Just bend the coat hanger into a circle and hang from a tree with some string.



## Useful tips

- Use coloured tape (electrical tape from the pound shop) to cover the wire and make it easier to see
- Attach a bell with string or tape and try it blindfolded then you can hear if you have hit the target!
- Space the targets further apart, make them smaller or do it backwards for an extra challenge. Can you do all of these?

# Play like a Pirate

Every pirate needs a hat.

Create your hat using a paper template and decorate it by sticking natural materials on it with tape or children's craft glue i.e. PVA glue.

You could use sticks to make a skull and cross bones or find a feather for the top! You could also use a leaf and some string to make an eye patch.



Now you're ready to play like a pirate. Try out some game such as 'captains coming' and 'musical islands'

## Useful tips

- Pirates wouldn't be pirates without their trusty sword.
- Find a long stick and a shorter stick and tie them together with some string to make your cutlass.
- Try hanging a scarf on a tree branch for target practice.
- Remember to take care not to hurt each other using the sword!

# Potty about Planting

First you'll need to fill a plant pot up with soil. If you can't get one, try making one from recycled materials like an empty plastic bottle.

Push your seed down into the soil. Sunflowers are great for your first time as you will see the results quickly, usually after a week.

You can decorate your pot and find a nice sunny spot for it to sit. Remember to water it when the soil is becoming dry and watch it grow!



## Useful tips

- Why not try using a bucket instead of a pot. Then you can take your mini garden wherever you go to look after it and show it to others when you are visiting.
- Find the recipe for your favourite soup. You could plant all the ingredients you need, like carrots, tomatoes and basil. Can you grow your very own pot of soup?

# Puddle Potentials

Add some washing up liquid and make some bubbles as you splash the water with your hands (or feet!)

Pour in some food colouring and watch as the puddles magically change colour. You can use a stick to mix them together and create new colours. Can you make all the colours of the rainbow?

Find a big puddle or make your own and collect some rainwater to fill up an area which will hold the water. Jump in and make a big splash! See who can get all the water out of the puddle!



## Useful tips

- Use a ruler and a marker pen to draw measurements on the back of your welly boots. Then you can find out how deep each puddle is by walking through it!
- Use a bucket and spade to see if you can move the puddle from one area to another.
- Experiment with putting natural objects in the puddle to find out if they sink or float.

# Rhyme Time

Going for a walk is a great time for singing. You could do some marching to 'The grand old duke of York'.

Or what about '10 in the bed' (you can just pretend there is 10 of you and keep taking extra turns to roll until the end of the rhyme)

'Going on a Bear Hunt' is great outside as you can really do some of the actions like squelching in the mud. Use other spaces in your area to extend the rhyme, like going over a hill!



## Useful tips

- Make up a song book to write down all your favourite rhymes and take it with you when you are out on a walk.
- Sing songs about the weather such as 'incy wincy' when it's raining.
- Have a go at making up your own rhymes, sing what you see and what you do.

# Scavenger Hunt

Go for a walk and see if you can find all the things on the bingo card. This is just an example you can adapt and change to match the things in your area and the changing seasons.

If you have access to the internet you could try searching for more nature bingo cards or nature identification sheets!

Look high and low. They could be hiding behind a tree or under the ground. Make sure you search everywhere!



## Useful tips

- Make it into a game of nature bingo the first one to get all the items on the board wins!
- Try looking for descriptions of things instead of specific items for example can you find something round or something tall?
- If you have access to a laminator you can print out your bingo card and laminate it so that can use it again and again!

# Set Sail on the Seas

Use a juice or milk carton to make your boat and use a stick for the mast. Add some card or paper for the sail.

You can decorate your boat with different colours and symbols to create your own design such as a pirate ship.

Set sail in a nearby river, stream or even a big puddle! Don't forget to tie on some string so you don't lose it on the high tides!



## Useful tips

- Always supervise children when near water to prevent accidents.
- Experiment with different materials to see what works best, aluminium takeaway containers float well and you could try fabric for the sail and a wooden skewer for the mast, with clay to hold it in place. Have a go with other household items too!
- Remember to always take home any non-natural objects when you are finished!

# Slip and Slide

On a rainy day have some sliding fun!

First lay out some plastic sheeting on a slope. Old shower curtains are brilliant for this activity! Squirt on some water and have a go!

Washing up liquid can make it even more slippery. Have a race and see who reaches the bottom first!

Wheeeeeee!



## Useful tips

- Check the ground for sticks or stones to prevent any injuries
- Use tent pegs to stop the sheet from moving
- Perfect for a warm day to cool down or when it's colder make sure you are wrapped up well and have a waterproof layer on top

# Spot of Nature

Watch out for birds in your local area of greenspace, you could try to identify them using books or the internet.

When out walking look on the ground for animal tracks. Can you tell what kind of animal made them?

Trees and flowers come in all shapes and sizes. How many different types can you find?



Local forest rangers often do tours and talks in parks and woodlands so find out what's going on in your area to find out more about what lives near you and how to recognise their signs.

## Useful tips

- Listen very carefully to the calls of the birds, can you imitate their sounds? See if the birds will answer you back!
- Why not try to make a plaster cast of any footprints you have found to take home?
- Create a log book or journal to note down all the things you see when you are out and keep a record to see how things change.

# Teddy Bear Picnic

Pack a lovely snack and take your teddy bear out for a feast.

Bring an old sheet or picnic blanket to sit on during your teddy bear picnic. After your picnic you can turn it into a parachute and play teddy bear toss. How high can your teddy go? Can you catch him again?



## Useful tips

- Play some games for example ‘bear and the honey pot’ or ‘going on a bear hunt’
- Do you know any stories with bears in them that you could tell? How about “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”?

# Top Tepee

Tie five or six sticks together with string to make a tepee shape. You can use sticks you find outside or bamboo canes from the pound shop or garden.

Add some material, like an old bed sheet or shower curtain. Wrap it around the structure and fasten it on with string or pegs.

Explore your den! Great for hiding, relaxing and role playing – will yours be a shop, house or magical shelter for the woodland fairies and elves to live?



## Useful tips

- Experiment with different designs for your den once you've mastered the art of tipi making
- Decorate your tepee with natural materials you find.
- Can you make a camouflaged den by covering it in leaves and twigs?

# Tweet Treats

Gather some pinecones, lard, birdseed and string. Using your fingers, push the lard into the spaces around the pinecone. Then sprinkle some seeds on top and squeeze them down so they stick!

Next tie some string to the top of the pinecone and hang it from your favourite tree.

Keep watching to see if any birds come and visit or check back in a few days to see if the seeds have gone!



## Useful tips

- Use gloves if you don't want your hands to get messy and keep some baby wipes nearby for cleaning sticky fingers afterwards
- Make some breakfast feeders for your feathered friends using cheerios threaded onto string and hang them up too.
- Remember to keep feeding your new visitors they will come to rely on the food source especially during the winter.

# Witch's Wood

Perfect for Halloween - why not go for a spooky walk in the woods. Take a cup and some water to start your 'witch's potion'. Collect items such as leaves, daisies and dandelions and mix them altogether with a stick

Find a long stick and lots of smaller thin sticks to create your own broomstick! Tie the sticks together with some string and say abracadabra! Now you're ready to fly!

Find a big open space to get ready for take-off!



## Useful tips

- Get creative with your magic potion and create a spell to say while you are making it. You can pretend the natural materials you add are special ingredients like cobwebs and goblin teeth
- Why not have a go creating some land art and make your very own witch using natural materials by laying them out on the ground. For example you could use sticks for legs and add leaves to make a skirt.

# Woodland Tales

First find a nice quiet space or make your own. Gather some branches and stack them together to create your own story telling area. You could even make some seats or bring a mat to sit on.

Next you could make some puppets to tell your story. You can use art and craft resources from home as well as things found lying around outside - it's up to you!



Use your imagination and make up a story. Start off by telling a familiar story and then use your surroundings for inspiration to create new characters and events

## Useful tips

- Use twigs with mud or clay and natural materials to create your own marotte (a stick with a head on the top) or you can use a lollipop stick and a paper plate
- Look out for interesting things as you walk around outside to spark ideas for your stories. For example a prickly branch fallen from a pine tree looks a lot like a Gruffalos tail, and a feather could be from a pirates parrot!

# Wormery

Create a temporary wormery to find out how worms move around underground!

The RHS has some great ideas on how to make a wormery here!  
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Activity/Mini-wormery>

Now all you need are some worms to observe! Go out on a rainy day and have a look in a grassy area to catch some worms!



## Useful tips

- Remember to put the worms back after a couple of days
- If you can't find any worms try digging up some dirt (gently) to see if they are hiding under the surface
- Try stomping the ground with your feet, the vibrations encourage worms to come to the surface. This is what birds do to catch the worms for their lunch!