

A photograph of two young children in a garden. One child, wearing a blue hat and a pink shirt, is using a small metal shovel to dig in the soil. The other child, wearing an orange shirt, is sitting nearby. The background is filled with green plants and soil.

WISE OWLS CHILDCARE

INTO THE WILD

We are wild about outdoor learning



wise owls
childcare

POWER OF OUTDOOR LEARNING

We aim to give children at least 180 minutes of outdoor activity per day (including structured and free play).

The benefits and possibilities with outdoor play are endless. At Wise Owls we believe it is essential that all young children have frequent and regular opportunities to explore and learn in an outdoor environment. Outdoor learning is an integral part of how we learn at Wise Owls, and is enjoyed through all four seasons.

By promoting good health and regular physical activity, we will positively contribute to early brain development and learning. We will actively promote effective communication skills including language, body language and non-verbal communication, e.g. expressions, during outdoor activities.

By creating games and providing opportunities for play outdoors, we will support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility.

Through outdoor play we will support every child's problem-solving skills and nurture their creativity, as well as provide rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness.



WHY LEARN IN A WOODLAND OR FOREST?

Forests and woodlands are an exciting place to learn. Not only do they provide enriching experiences across all seven areas of the Early Years curriculum, the rich array of smells, sounds and textures, the dramatic contrasts of light and dark, and the treasure trove of natural learning resources offer an inspiring sensory environment for children to spread their wings and grow.

Spending time outdoors builds resilience, encourages children to take well measured risks, builds confidence and enhances self esteem. It also teaches children about the important role our forests and woodlands play in our world.

A photograph of two young children in a forest. The child on the left is wearing a pink shirt with a strawberry pattern and a tan cap. The child on the right is wearing a white t-shirt and a colorful floral hat. They are standing on either side of a large, weathered log. Various tools, including a red saw, a blue saw, and a black saw, are laid out on the log. The background is filled with lush green foliage.

FOREST SCHOOL SESSIONS

- ✔✔ Group of 8 children
- ✔✔ Get ready for forest school – wet weather clothing /sun cream
- ✔✔ Wash hands
- ✔✔ Enter forest school
- ✔✔ Go to logs and sit down and read the welcome to the forest poem
 - ✔✔ Moment of mindfulness - sit and hold hands in a circle and welcome everyone to the forest and say hello to nature, look up, look down, breathe in, breathe out.
- ✔✔ Go through the rules – recap on rules and safety guidance.
 - ✔✔ Play 1, 2, 3, where are you?
 - ✔✔ Re-group and introduce today's activity.
 - ✔✔ Do activity
- ✔✔ Re-group and talk about what we have done and show the group
 - ✔✔ Back to nursery – take off wet weather clothing or sun hats and wash hands

Welcome to the forest,
To all the plants and the trees,
Welcome to the birds,
To the beetles and the bees.
Welcome me and welcome you,
To our outdoor learning space.
All are welcome and have a home
In this special nature place.

POEM BY...



BENEFITS OF FOREST SCHOOL

TO A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

PERSONAL

- ✔ Develop personal skills and discover how they learn best.
- ✔ Pursue knowledge that interests them.
- ✔ Learn how to manage failure as well as success.
- ✔ Build resilience and coping skills.
- ✔ Improve concentration skills.



SOCIAL

- ✔ Develop personal and social skills.
- ✔ Build positive relationships with adults and peers.
Expand vocabulary and communication skills.
- ✔ Develop a relationship with the world around them
and explore nature using all of their senses.

PHYSICAL

- ✔ Develop practical skills and engage in regular physical activity.
- ✔ Use tools to create, build or manage tasks.
- ✔ Improve physical motor skills such as climbing, balancing, running...
- ✔ Understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle.
- ✔ Explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth.



HEALTH

- ✔ Understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle.
- ✔ Learn how to assess and take appropriate risks
depending on their environment
- ✔ Build self esteem and grow a sense of achievement.

*The more risks you allow children to take, the
better they learn to take care of themselves.*

ROALD DAHL

ACTIVITIES IN THE FOREST & WOODLANDS

Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity and investigation.

Opportunities are endless and activities can include:

- Shelter building
 - Natural art
- Using knots and lashings
 - Fire lighting
- Animal tracking
 - Bug hunts
- Tree investigations
- Climbing and balancing
- Creating bug homes and bird feeders
- Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials such as leaves
 - Team games



*Bringing nature into the
classroom can kindle a
fascination and passion
for the diversity of life
on earth and can motivate
a sense of responsibility
to safeguard it.*

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH







ACTIVITY

1, 2, 3 WHERE ARE YOU?

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- One child is chosen to be the seeker
- All the other children are given a set time to hide
- The seeker then calls out '1, 2, 3 where are you?'
- The children hiding all have to reply '1, 2, 3 over here?'
- The seeker moves around repeating this call and listening to replies to help locate all of the hiders
- At any point the seeker can call 1, 2, 3 come to me and all the hiders have to reveal themselves and make their way to the seeker



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Different lengths of time to hide
- When found a child can join the seeker to look for the others
- Camouflage or hi-vis jackets could be used to make it easier or more difficult to hide.
- A whistle could be used instead of calling out. .

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Camouflage or hi-vis jackets could be used to make it easier or more difficult to hide.
- A whistle could be used instead of calling out. .



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Understanding the world



ACTIVITY

BUILDING A STICK PERSON

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Ask the children to find a stick
- Ask the children to make a stick person
- Ask the children to share what they have made with the group at the end
- Look at the story of the Stick Man
- Talk about the different sized sticks



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

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WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

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WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Understanding the world



ACTIVITY

DUPLICATES GAME

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- One child is chosen to be the seeker
- All the other children are given a set time to hide
- The seeker then calls out '1, 2, 3 where are you?'
- The children hiding all have to reply '1, 2, 3 over here?'
- The seeker moves around repeating this call and listening to replies to help locate all of the hiders
- At any point the seeker can call 1, 2, 3 come to me and all the hiders have to reveal themselves and make their way to the seeker



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WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Camouflage or hi-vis jackets could be used to make it easier or more difficult to hide.
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WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication & Language
- Physical Development
- Understanding the world

ACTIVITY

LEAF / BARK RUBBING

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Give each child some paper and a pot of crayons
- Ask the children to search around the forest to find leaves or bark they can rub
- Re-group the children and share our rubbings
-



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Depending on the ages/abilities of the children varying levels of support could be provided or children could be asked to work in pairs.

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Paper
- Crayons
- Leaves
- Bark



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Physical Development



ACTIVITY

LEAF & PEG PEOPLE

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Ask the children to explore the forest and find things they can make animals from
- Give the children some paper and glue and ask them to make animals from their finding
- Re-group the children and ask them to show and talk about what they have made.



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Depending on the ages/abilities of the children varying levels of support could be provided or children could be asked to work in pairs.

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Paper
- Glue



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Physical Development



ACTIVITY

LEAF TREE COLLAGE

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- *Ask the children to collect lots of leaves*
- *Ask the children to look at the trees and use the leaves to make a tree*
- *Ask the children to share their picture with the group at the end*



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- *Depending on the ages/abilities of the children varying levels of support could be provided or children could be asked to work in pairs or a small group.*

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- *Paper*
- *Glue*
- *Leaves*



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Physical Development



ACTIVITY

REFLECTION POEMS

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Ask the children to build a frame using twigs.
- Ask the children to use objects they find in the forest school area to build something that represents what they have done during the session and/or how they feel about the session.
- Once all of the children have finished called them together and ask if any of them would like to
- share with the group what they have built.

Try to keep the instructions as minimal and vague as possible and avoid using too much direction – i.e. asking them to make a picture

HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Depending on the ages/abilities of the children varying levels of support could be provided or children could be asked to work in pairs or a small group.

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Understanding the world



ACTIVITY

OUTDOOR ART - FIREWORKS

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- *An art activity for Autumn when there is an abundance of fallen leaves.*
- *Use twigs to create stars and shapes that represent fireworks.*
- *Use different coloured leaves to 'colour' the fireworks*



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- *The frame could be laid out for younger learners.*
- *Collect piles of leaves organised into colours ready to be used.*

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- *Wheelbarrows*
- *Bags*
- *Baskets*



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- *Communication and Language*
- *Mathematics*
- *Expressive Arts and Design*



ACTIVITY

ROPE SHAPES

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Tie the ends of the rope together and place it in a circle.
- Ask the children to stand around it and each pick up the rope.
- Ask the children to close their eyes.
- Call out the name of a shape and the children need to, with eyes closed, move so that the rope makes that shape.
- When they think they have the correct shape ask them to place the rope on the ground and open their eyes.
- Talk about how much (or little!) the rope represents the shape they were trying to make. Offer suggestions for how they improve on the next shape.

HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Ropes
- Blindfolds (possibly)



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Mathematics



ACTIVITY

SMELL DETECTIVES

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- One child is given a small amount of cinnamon on a spoon or in a pot.
- The rest of the children close their eyes whilst the cinnamon is placed somewhere nearby.
- They then have to try to locate the cinnamon using smell.
- Repeat with different smelling leaves/powders



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Depending on the ages/abilities of the learners the amount of cinnamon given, the time taken to hid or search for it and the area allowed to hide it in can all be adjusted.

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Cinnamon
- Mint leaf
- Cloves
- Ginger root
- Coffee beans



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Physical Development
- Understanding of the world

ACTIVITY

THREADING LEAVES

DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTION

- Ask the children to find lots of leaves
- Ask the children to holepunch their leaves
- Ask the children to thread their leaves onto a piece of string
- Ask the children if they want to paint their leaves



HOW CAN THIS ACTIVITY BE ADAPTED FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS?

- Depending on the ages/abilities of the children varying levels of support could be provided or children could be asked to work in pairs, or a small group

WHAT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT ARE NEEDED?

- Leaves
- String
- Paintbrushes & Paints
- Scissors
- Holepunch



WHAT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT COULD THIS ACTIVITY COVER?

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Mathematics