



Measuring in nature

This activity will encourage learners to think about distances and how they relate to the space around them. They will become more confident exploring outdoors, combining maths and physical activity to learn more about their site.

Learners will lie down head to toe between and around features such as trees, planters, or even the playground, counting the number of people around/between the features. This introduces the concept of measuring accurately in an outdoor space, and will help learners and educators better understand their grounds and what they have within them.

This activity can be used alongside our other mapping activities, to help capture information about biodiversity on your school grounds for the National Education Nature Park.

Teaching time

30 minutes

Learning outcomes

- Use simple non-standard units of measure to gather data
- Use a range of measures to compare distance and size of outdoor features

Step by step

Walk around your learning site to explore the space with learners. Ask them to point out any significant features, like big trees, play equipment, etc.

Explain that you will be measuring spaces in your site together. If you can demonstrate, this will help! Ask learners to lie down between two features, or around it. They will need to be lying on their back, head to toe.

Ask at least one learner to stay standing, as they will be counting how many learners there are in the measurement. If you have enough people, you could try to measure around the whole space!

Repeat in different locations around the site so that every learner can have a turn measuring.

Reflection

Do you have big distances/spaces between nature on your site? Do you think there is room for more nature?

Green Skills



Suitable for

Early Years

Location

Outdoors

Season

Spring
Summer
Autum
Winter

What you'll need

Optional, if recording measurements:
Plain paper
Pencils
Clipboards
Chalk

Key vocabulary

Measure
Distance
Size
Height
Length
Numbers up to 20
Space

Support and extension opportunities

Learners could draw the outlines of their bodies with chalk, so that they can visualise the space between two features.

Learners can measure by holding hands, and measuring around things like trees, or measure using natural objects, such as the length of a stick, using pebbles, etc.

Learners could be asked to investigate their heights and how this might change how many children there are between objects. Get them to sort themselves in a line from tallest to smallest.



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