



Planning our green future

This activity encourages younger learners to creatively explore their environment, think about what features they like and why and use these discoveries to make decisions about the changes they'd like to see in their outdoor space. This session creates the opportunity for children to share and reflect on their opinions and experiences, plan the changes they'd like to make on their site and vote on them to reach a decision.

Teaching time

Continuous provision station

Learning outcomes

- safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function
- share their creations, explaining the process they have used

Step by step

To begin with, learners can be invited to cut a heart shaped hole in a piece of paper. Using this as viewfinder, ask them to explore their outdoor space and hold up the heart to frame parts of their space that they like. Learners can be challenged to do this several times with a particular sense mind each time (sight, smell, hearing, touch). If you like, photographs could be taken to document these areas or features.

A circle time reflection activity can then provide the space for learners to share the elements of the outdoor space they liked the most and why.

Using the provided images (or creating your own), introduce these possible improvements for nature to support learners to understand their role in caring for and developing their outdoor space, valuing both the needs of wildlife and each other. Depending on the space you have available in your setting, you may choose to use all of the provided images, or just a few.

Show the group an image of each improvement idea and discuss how it may impact both themselves and wildlife.

Introduce a hand-drawn or printed map of your setting, for learners to take on a walk around your outdoor space to help them orientate themselves. Point to a spot on the map and ask learners to find it in real life – you can use an activity like **X marks the spot** to help familiarise learners with their map.

Now place smaller images of the ideas (approximately 2cm x 2cm) on a table with each child's map. Give learners time to arrange and stick the ideas they like on to their map, giving them the opportunity to design a potential new space. Encourage learners to look at each other's designs.

Green Skills



Suitable for

Early Years

Location

Indoors
Outdoors

Season

Spring
Summer
Autumn
Winter

What you'll need

A piece of paper for each child to make a heart-shaped view finder

A printed or hand-drawn map of your outdoor space for each child

Optional: a camera to document features in your setting

Multi-link counting cubes or other objects/tokens for voting

Key vocabulary

Vision

Nature

Wildlife

Support and extension opportunities

Place an image of each idea in a line on a table to create the base for a pictogram. Ask learners to vote on the idea they really want to see in their outdoor space using a counting cube. Encourage staff to vote too! A simple bar chart will form and the results can be discussed as a group. Learners have now voted on a positive change they wish to make, which can be taken forward in their Nature Park journey.

For more activities supporting the Expressive Arts and Design Early Learning Goal, see the Expressive Arts and Design overview page, or filter for resources by Subject.



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