



## Role play ideas and green careers

Role play encourages imagination and creativity – learners grow socially and emotionally by putting themselves in someone else's shoes, while improving their speech and problem-solving skills.

By setting up a role play area, learners can role play different green careers and solve imaginary environmental problems. Once designed, the space can be played in repeatedly with little adult input. An area of trees could be a perfect setting for a role play area, but there is always the possibility to bring nature into your indoor setting for learners to interact with.

### Teaching time

15–30 minutes

### Learning outcomes

- work and play cooperatively and take turns with others
- role play characters in narratives and stories
- have regular opportunities for spending playful time outdoors interacting with nature

### Occupational role play

- **Rangers station:** Learners can role play taking care of woodlands by planting new trees, axing down dead plant life, building log piles for bugs to thrive and keeping a look out for and protecting deer, foxes, hedgehogs, badgers and birds
- **Arctic explorer:** Learners can practise walking across the 'snow' pulling their sledges with food, tool and look out equipment. Make a 'fire' to stay warm and stay on guard to protect polar bears or practise sawing a hole in the ice to fish for survival
- **Landscape architect or gardener:** Learners can practise designing a new wildlife area, plotting which green improvement to put where and practise using gardening tools either in the earth or in a soil-filled tuff tray
- **Archaeologist:** Learners can use old toothbrushes, tiny trowels and play hammers to dig for historical artefacts
- **Inventor:** This could work well both indoors and out. Learners can enter the lab in their safety goggles and white coats to invent the next biodegradable plastic made from plants, seaweed or soil. They can put their materials through tough testing including melting point, time it takes to turn back into soil, how much weight it can hold and whether it is waterproof

### Fictional role play

Many books in your book corner will be set in a woodland or natural environment. Setting up a role play in your outdoor area can encourage learners to explore the narrative further whilst also connecting to nature.

### Green Skills



### Suitable for

Early Years

### Location

Indoors  
Outdoors

### Season

Spring  
Summer  
Autumn  
Winter

### What you'll need

An area to set up for role play  
Optional: nature-themed story books  
Optional: natural materials or loose parts

### Key vocabulary

Imagine  
Role play  
Names of roles



### Real life role play

This can be based in your construction or loose parts zone or with a pile of natural resources collected from a green space. Each week a new environmental scenario can be set, and learners can use the provided materials to work on it. Some scenarios could be:

- A storm has blown away the local hedgehogs' homes and we need to create a new safe space for the hedgehog family to live, be dry and explore from
- Worms eat dead things in nature and poo out soil. How can we encourage more worms to live in our setting and make more good soil for us?



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