

HORIZONS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN OUTDOOR LEARNING

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EXPLORE THE VALUE OF CHILDHOOD

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Inspirational reading

Resource:

Inspirational readings by Outward Bound International.

Why it's useful:

This is my favourite expedition resource (and day-to-day resource quite often). I was introduced to the Outward Bound Readings books during my PGCE year, and I have used them time and time again to set a certain scene, or to provide a backdrop to a lesson or a topic. On expeditions I will have a reading of the day, which we will read before leaving camp in the morning, tailored to what is going on with the group at the time. It can be used to relate to many different situations and outcomes, planned and unplanned, perfect for helping to choose what hat to wear!

Where to find it:

Further information and quotes can be found here:
www.outwardbound.org/blog/20-inspirational-quotes-from-the-outward-bound-readings-book/

Recommended by:

Aled Edwards, Outdoor Education Department, St David's College, North Wales.

Read Aled's article about the different hats we wear as Outdoor practitioners from page 31.



Positively natural

Resource:

The natural health service by Isabel Hardman (2020).

Why it's useful:

A fabulous inspirational read that gives the argument that having nature in our lives has a massive positive impact on our mental health and physical wellbeing.

Where to find it:

All good bookstores.

Recommended by:

Jeff Handley, Head of Centre, Plas Gwyant OEC, North Wales.

Go to page 18 to learn about Jeff's experience of skin cancer and the risks facing other Outdoor practitioners.



Prioritising play

Resource:

Can I go and play now? Rethinking the early years by Greg Bottrill (2018).

Why it's useful:

This book highlights the importance of play throughout the early years and ensuring children have the childhood they deserve.

Where to find it:

Available from all good bookstores, with further information here:
www.canigoandplaynow.com

Recommended by:

Sarah Seaman, The Muddy Puddle Teacher.

Go to page 12 to read Sarah's article sharing curriculum Outdoor Learning ideas for spring.

Resource recommendations by readers for readers

Unpicking meaning

Idea:

When encouraging participants to reflect on their experiences, I adapt my basic 'tool box' according to needs, interests and intended outcomes.

What to do:

I may try to use natural objects collected while in nature, for example, a pebble or sea shell. I might ask,

“What attracted you to this object? What does this object tell you about yourself? Who in the group will you give this to and why?”

I might ask participants to select an object that they have used during the outdoor experience and ask similar questions. I might use manufactured cards, although I prefer to make my own sets; these I can carry in my rucksack and take out if appropriate. All are designed to encourage participants to reflect on their time in nature, what they have learned about themselves or what they have learned about fellow group members. The key thing that we all remember as facilitators is to be sensitive and respectful to the needs of group members.

Where to find it:

52 ways to simplify your life cards are written by Lynn Gordon and published by Chronicle Books (image shown).

Recommended by:

Di Collins, Coach and Mentor for APIOL and LPIOL and a DofE Expedition Assessor.

[Read Di's article with Geoff and Barbara about the impact of childhood experiences on ageing outdoor enthusiasts from page 25.](#)



Practitioner-researcher journey

Resources:

1. *Learning in landscapes of practice: Boundaries, identity and knowledgeability in practise-based learning* by Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015).
2. For resources linked to communities of practice and boundary crossing visit Etienne and Beverley Wenger-Trayner's website.

Why these resources are useful:

1. My journey from Outdoor practitioner to practitioner-researcher resonates with the descriptions in *Learning in landscapes*.
2. Re the Wenger-Trayner website: living and working across boundaries of different communities of practice, in my case experiences as a sailor trainer and novice researcher, stimulates new ways of thinking about learning in practice.

Where to find them:

1. All good bookstores
2. <https://wenger-trayner.com/resources>

Recommended by:

Eric Fletcher, Research Associate, Newcastle University

[Eric shares his journey to practitioner-researcher from page 28.](#)

IMAGES

Images are sourced from pxhere.com. Hope image is sourced from freeimageslive.co.uk. Cards image supplied by Di Collins. Photographers retain copyright.

Life beyond learning

Resource:

Losing friends, moving home and being broke: Life after university by Shamaan Freeman-Powell, published by *BBC News* (2018).

Why it's useful:

It gives an understanding of the feelings once leaving university.

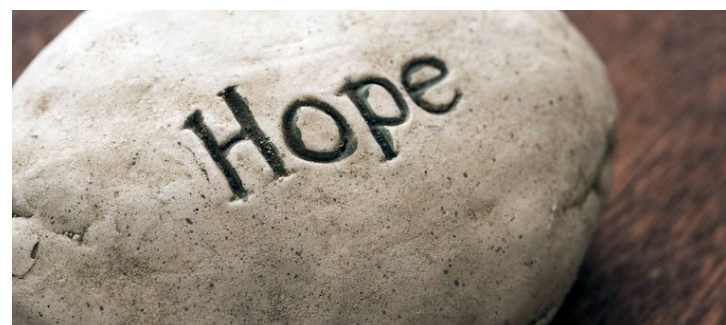
Where to find it:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-45652600

Recommended by:

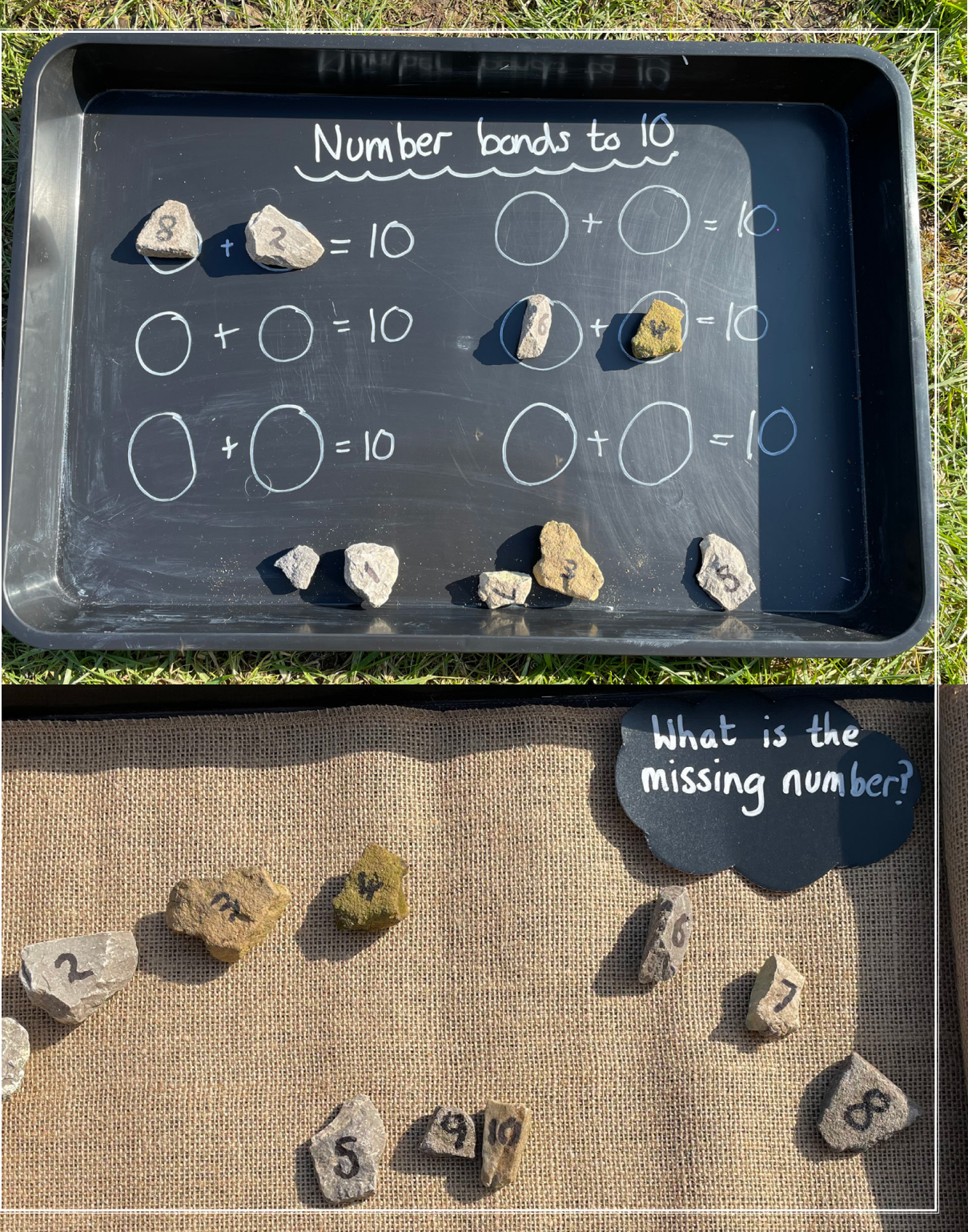
Ethan Joseph Williams, Student at the University of Central Lancashire.

[Ethan shares his thoughts about leaving university during a pandemic on page 39.](#)



CURRICULUM IN SPRING

Key Stage ideas to take learning outside



Spring is such a fabulous season! The sensory experience that we gain from spring is, essentially, the smells, the sights, the sounds and the new textures that we can touch and taste and that brings us endless joy.

Every season, The Muddy Puddle Teacher spends time reflecting on change. Unlike the indoor classroom, the outdoor classroom changes and, with that, so does the weather and the materials we use. Spring is going to bring you sunny, yet cold days, rain and maybe wind. By using what's out there we can save time and connect children with nature. It is an invaluable tip so stick with it. So, with spring our materials change. We have a lot more green 'stuff' available to us, as well as sticks and rocks, but fewer fallen leaves to use. Many of our teachers stock up with rocks on their Sunday walks as we prepare and transition to a spring outdoor curriculum.

Here are some ideas per Key Stage that will help you to take your curriculum outside this Spring.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Maths: The bunny hop

Collect up some rocks and number them from 0 to 20. Maybe start this task as a whole class, then move to the children doing it themselves. Place the rocks in a row and let the children count while hopping over the rocks, like a bunny. Then take one away, then another, then another. See if they can remember the number. Try also going backwards, to add mastery to their learning and take a more in-depth look at this area of learning. Ask the children to take the even or

SHARE THE POWER OF LEARNING

Keen to be inclusive? Go to page 34 for ideas on how to include children in Outdoor Learning decision-making.

odd numbers out. Maybe, take the numbers that are multiples of 10, 5 or 2?

Phonics: Sticky sticks

For all of you Muddy Puddle-trained teachers out there, you will know that sticky sticks are a phonics favourite. Hand chalk to the children and ask them to write words from the sound you are working on, then ask them to read that word back to themselves using the sticky stick.

The sticky stick can be any stick found in your space or it can be one you have personalised (warning: the children can become very attached). The child then has to tap the sounds out and scrape to blend the word together. Then, ask them to find another person's word and to use a sticky stick to blend their word. Full lesson packs can be found on our website.

KEY STAGE ONE

Maths: Number bonds are bonding

Using rocks, write the numbers 0 to 10 on them. If you are doing this as a whole class, you may want to write three or four sets of these. Then, spread them all over your outdoor space. Give the children a timer and ask them to find the rocks and place them with their number bond friend. Then, send them away to make their own games up. Dive in deeper by extending these to number bonds to 20. Hand out markers and see if this can be achieved.

English: Sticky storyboards

Refer to a text that you have already taught in class. This lesson will help children with the ordering of a story. Put the children in teams and ask them to make a three-box storyboard from sticks. How big they make that is entirely up to them. They're outside so let them go big if they have the space. They then need to create a picture, using natural resources for each stage of the story. Hand out marker pens if they want to make characters from leaves. Dive in deeper by asking children to add captions on leaves or speech bubbles using leaves.

KEY STAGE TWO

Maths: The great outdoor shape challenge

Place children in groups and give them this challenge.

“Your challenge is to make a row of houses that are made completely out of 3D shapes. All you have to complete this are sticks around you and some clay.”

Dive deeper into the learning by then asking the children to think about other ways 3D shapes could have been used to create a similar format.

FIND CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Visit The Muddy Puddle Teacher website for curriculum resources and to join for free: <https://themuddypuddleteacher>.



English: Persuasive writing. Go natural and dodge the plastics

Take the children outside and set them a small challenge. Is there anything out here you could use that would be useful to you back in the class? Hand out some clay, sellotape and string. Give them some time to explore this and have mini-breaks to discuss the impact it could have on the cost (in money terms) and the cost to the world if we stopped buying plastic goods and, instead, replaced them with natural ones.

Once the children have had this time, and maybe their eyes opened and their creative minds thinking, go back inside and ask the children to write a letter. The letter is to persuade others to re-think their plastics purchasing and to question whether they truly could replace it with natural. Dive in deeper by allowing children to research influential individuals in our world who are also campaigning for change. Take a look at the inventors who are creating world-loving products that could make a massive reduction in the amount of new plastic being created. It may be a great idea to also join in on our 'Ditch the plastic' day. Find a whole school pack on our website ■



AUTHOR

Sarah Seaman, The Muddy Puddle Teacher

Sarah has been a teacher for 12 years and created The Muddy Puddle Teacher approach. Sarah is an author, blogger and trains and consults throughout the UK. <https://themuddypuddleteacher.co.uk>