

Topic based resource

School Grounds

Foundation Phase



Background information

School grounds are an important part of school life, they provide a safe and accessible space for children, who are spending less time outside than ever before, have increasingly sedentary lifestyle and less contact with the natural world than previous generations. This can have an impact on children's physical health and emotional and social wellbeing.

Outdoor space in school grounds can offer a wide range of benefits – fresh air, space to move freely, the chance to play and connect with nature, help to raise achievement and improve self-esteem, behaviour and develop skills. Thoughtfully developed, engaging, well used school grounds can enrich teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and provide opportunities to develop links with the wider community.



Climate perspective

Climate change is the change weather patterns across the world, contributed to by human activities such as deforestation and burning fossil fuels, which result in the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the earth's atmosphere. Scientists believe that these activities are contributing to global warming. Climate change is already having an impact on the lives of children globally, affecting their food security, access to water, clean air, education and healthcare. The effects of changing weather patterns are causing rising sea levels, flooding, drought, water

pollution, all of which are putting children's health and wellbeing, and ultimately their future at risk.

We have a responsibility to help future generations to care for and protect the natural environment and to understand the challenges of climate change through education.

"No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced," David Attenborough.

Hapa-zome

Foundation Phase

Hapa-zome or Tataki-zome is the Japanese art of dyeing fabric (or hammer dyeing) using the natural pigment from leaves and flowers. It is a great way of exploring your school grounds or local area and using the natural materials you find to get creative and make decorative items for your outside area. It is also a purposeful way to introduce children to simple plant identification when they find the leaves and flowers to bash. It is important to teach children to be respectful and to pick leaves and flowers with care, only taking what they are going to use from plants they know it is safe to touch.

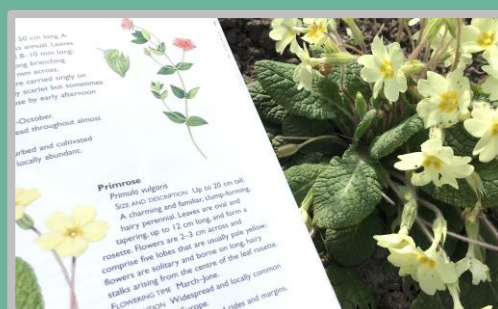
Materials needed:

- Plain white (or light-coloured) cotton fabric – re-purposed bedding or table cloth, muslin squares, calico – cut into squares or rectangles
- Mallet, hammer, rolling pin or large smooth pebble to bash with
- Leaves and flowers from around school grounds if possible – juicy/fresh leaves work best
- Plant and tree identification sheets, books, apps or website
- String or ribbon, pegs, glue gun or method of attaching fabric to string if making bunting



Step 1

Discuss the activity with the children and establish which flowers and leaves it is safe for them to collect. Use identification resources to find out the names of some of the plants and trees in your school grounds. You may wish to provide additional natural materials depending on the time of year and resources available to you within your grounds.



Step 2



Arrange chosen flowers and leaves on top of a piece of fabric on a flat surface. Place another piece of fabric over the top of the natural materials. It is also possible to fold one piece of fabric in half to sandwich the flowers and leaves inside.

Step 3



Bash the surface of the fabric gently and evenly until the pigment from the flowers and leaves is released into the fabric. Repeat until desired effect is achieved.

Step 4



Peel off bashed material and dispose of in a compost bin or suitable outdoor area to decompose. Leave to dry.

Step 5



Cut into triangles or squares to make bunting if required. Attach pieces of fabric to ribbon or string. Use to decorate outdoor areas of school grounds or create a collaborative piece of art to use as the background of a display about your school grounds, a table cloth for a role play area or curtains for an outdoor play house.

If the designs start to fade over time or after exposure to the weather it is easy to repeat the process again using new flowers and leaves.

Curriculum Links

Areas of Learning and Experience - Science and Technology

Statement of what matters:

The world is full of living things which depend on each other for survival

Areas of Learning and Experience - Expressive Arts

Statement of what matters:

Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individuals

Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination.

Areas of Learning and Experience - Humanities

Statement of what matters:

Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by processes and human actions.

Next steps and other ideas

- Investigate patterns and symmetry in nature
- Experiment with using colour from other plants found in your school grounds
- Explore the work of artists who use natural materials and natural dyes

- Find out about other ways of using natural dyes – onion skins, beetroot, red cabbage
- Think of ways to introduce more plants and trees in to the school grounds

