

Subject: Outdoor learning

Golden Concept: Learn through Experience

Purpose:

Learning through experience at forest school is grounded in the philosophy of experiential education, emphasizing hands-on, active engagement with the natural environment.

Holistic Development: Experiential learning in a forest school setting promotes holistic development—addressing cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and creative aspects of a child's growth. The immersive experiences in nature provide a well-rounded foundation for learning and personal growth.

The purpose of learning through experience at forest school is to provide a holistic, nature-based education that not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures a child's curiosity, creativity, and connection with the natural world. It emphasizes the value of hands-on exploration, intrinsic motivation, and the development of essential life skills.

Assessment:

Assessment for learning through experience at a forest school involves evaluating students' knowledge, skills, and development in a holistic and authentic manner. Since forest schools emphasize experiential learning in natural settings, traditional assessments may not always be suitable. The assessment methods should align with the principles of experiential learning and the unique characteristics of the forest school environment. Prioritize authenticity, reflection, and the application of knowledge and skills gained through hands-on experiences.

Cross curriculum:

Learning through experience at forest school is important for cross-curricular education because it seamlessly integrates various subjects, providing a holistic and interconnected educational experience. The forest environment serves as a dynamic backdrop for interdisciplinary learning, fostering a deeper understanding of concepts and encouraging a love for lifelong learning.

Real-world Context: Experiencing learning in a natural environment provides a real-world context for understanding concepts across various subjects. Children can apply knowledge gained in the classroom to authentic situations in the forest, making learning more meaningful and practical.

Intrinsic Motivation: Learning through hands-on experiences in the forest taps into intrinsic motivation. Children are naturally curious about the world around them, and the outdoor environment stimulates their desire to explore, ask questions, and seek answers, driving their engagement in multiple subjects.

Art and Creativity: The forest setting serves as a natural canvas for artistic expression. Integrating art into the learning experience allows children to use natural materials for creative projects, linking creativity with subjects such as science, geography, and environmental studies.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: Experiential learning in the forest fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Children encounter real challenges and apply their knowledge across subjects to find solutions, enhancing their ability to think critically and analytically.

Key Stage or stage breakdown:

Bronze: The forest school approach allows for pupils to learn through experience due to the hands-on approach of the subject. Pupils are able to explore for themselves and have new experiences outside of the classroom environment.

Silver: Pupils use the skills learnt throughout the bronze stage which allows them to develop further. New experiences are provided during this stage in preparation for the gold stage.

Gold: Pupils use all of the experience found within the bronze and silver stage and apply this in becoming a young leader.