

## Forest School Training – session 1

<b>Group:</b> Kindergarten. Annan Farm School, Halland.	<b>Age:</b> 3-5 years <b>Number:</b> 13 <b>Staff:</b> 5	<b>Date:</b> 23/04/2015 <b>Time:</b> 1.30 – 3.15 pm
<b>Location:</b> Cindergill Shaw, Slay's Wood, Halland. East Sussex.	<b>Main activity:</b> Making a flower press	<b>Risk Assessment:</b> site, bow saw, making a flower press, playing games in the woods (see Appendix 2)
<b>Curriculum links:</b> PSED: increasing confidence through 'high risk' activities, i.e. using saws. Completing a sequence of tasks to make a product. UW: Opportunities for construction using real tools and equipment. PD: develops fine motor skills through craft activities, understanding of safety measures.		

<b>Aims and objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising plants in our locality</li> <li>• Encouraging cooperation and teamwork</li> <li>• Developing sawing skills</li> <li>• Developing gross and fine motor skills</li> <li>• Reviewing boundaries and safety</li> </ul>	<b>Differentiation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance/guidance with younger children as required</li> <li>• 1:1 staffing ratio at sawing station</li> <li>• Choice to take part in main activity</li> <li>• Children allowed free play when initiated themselves</li> </ul>	<b>Resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily checklist</li> <li>• Basket</li> <li>• Green wood fallen logs (on site)</li> <li>• Rope x2</li> <li>• Bow saw x2</li> <li>• Prepared wooden disks</li> <li>• Craft tarp, pens &amp; scissors</li> <li>• Elastic bands</li> <li>• Squares of paper</li> </ul>
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Stage	Activity
Line up	Count children in Names / welcome new children
Log circle	Spring flowers Yellow, white, purple Not picking leaves: poisonous Bluebells protected – leave in woods Crow call Spring song
Guardian oak	Turn into flower fairy/flower elf
Magic archway	You are only safe if...silver birch
Oak tree meadow	You're only safe if....yellow flower Collect flowers: primroses, violets
Bluebell wood	Collect wood anemones on way Find logs Timber hitch Drag to storytelling tree

Storytelling tree	Free play Set up craft area Set up sawing area Sawing Decorating/labelling/ making flower press Drink break
Walk back	Fox is prowling
Magic archway	Form archway to walk through: what did you enjoy today?
Guardian oak	Turn back into children
Log circle	Review session: Gathering flowers/sawing/pulling logs Spring song

## Evaluation

I thoroughly enjoyed this session. I thought the main activity went well. All the children took part in picking flowers, sawing logs and making a flower press and they were all engrossed in each part of the activity. Those who chose to help to pull logs.

During the circle time at the beginning I had a feeling it may have been going on for too long, but on reflection I was glad we took our time because I remembered all the points I wanted to go through, i.e. name review, welcoming new members to the group, plant picking safety, protecting bluebells, crow calls and where to stop and wait on the way.

By reviewing boundaries and crow call at the beginning of the session clear boundaries and safety protocols were established, which I felt the children understood. Their crow calls are fantastic! Later on in the session I used crow call to regroup to show them a ready made up flower press and give them the choice of sawing wood. Some children came immediately, others took a while longer and others needed encouragement to regroup. I think practicing this regularly will be beneficial for them.

The children enjoyed the sensory nature of 'you're only safe if ...'. Lots of tactile vocabulary was elicited from the silver birch. I would like to include sensory play in future sessions, e.g. smelling and feeling mud, trees, bark, and grass and listening to forest sounds.

I like that this session had an activity focus. I had planned one activity, i.e. making a flower press, but it was broken down into many smaller tasks, i.e. picking flowers, dragging logs, sawing, making the press. Although it went well, on reflection I feel this was quite a lot to have in every session for this age level

and will be mindful of having only one or two tasks in future sessions to allow more time for free play and strike a balance between organised activity and child led play throughout the 6 sessions.

I noticed how the children were keen to climb trees, hide in large rhododendron bushes and generally engage in free play. Having a high staffing ratio allows the children to be able to explore freely, which they enjoy. Next week is Beltane, so we will celebrate that during our session with related activities. I would like the third session I run to have more free play, which will also allow me time to observe the children.

One child and member of staff returned to school early to use the toilet. This was possible due to high staff ratios.

The children responded well to 'Fox is prowling', which encouraged them on the walk back and helped them to stay together as a group. It would be useful to know a number of games of this type to be able to use as the need arises. Games are fun – they love games!

In the log circle at the end the children and I reviewed what we had done during the session. They were very enthusiastic, which was encouraging for me. Helen (the Forest School Leader) asked the children to say thank you to the flowers we had picked. This was a great reminder for me – to always thank the forest when it gives something to us. She also reminded them that this was a special session and that we do not usually pick flowers and would not be doing so next week. I will revisit this at the beginning of the next session to make sure this is clear.

Helen knows lots of lovely songs. I love singing and so do the children - I would like to learn more woodland songs as part of my on-going professional development.



You're only safe if  
you're touching a silver  
birch



Hug the biggest oak tree you  
can find!



Smelling flowers





Looking for primroses



Gathering flowers



Running free!



Dragging logs



Teamwork



Sawing discs



Preparing the flowers



Finished decorated flower press