

Nature Explore Classrooms

Support Children's Skill Development



The following lists have been compiled based on direct observation of children's work over time in Nature Explore Classrooms.

Science Skills

Science skills are a natural fit with outdoor classrooms. These skills include classifying objects into groups with common characteristics, predicting, experimenting, and drawing conclusions. Hands-on learning also occurs about natural cycles, seasons, environments, and how things live and grow. Children develop a sense of wonder and appreciation for the world around them, especially as they help care for living things.

Close Observation Skills

Through regular contact with nature, children develop close observation skills such as noticing details, finding patterns, and recognizing shapes. These skills are foundational for later math, science and literacy learning.

Literacy Skills

Children's work in the natural world inspires them to learn new words, write signs for the garden, or create poetry. Experiences such as these are especially important for children who struggle with traditional methods of teaching reading and writing.



Social Skills

Well-designed outdoor classrooms also offer endless open-ended possibilities for discovery. Children who are engaged and active are far more likely to exhibit positive behaviors and build stronger social skills. Children share ideas, negotiate, make decisions, decide on tasks, and problem-solve together in an outdoor classroom.



Math Skills

The outdoor classroom allows children to incorporate math skills, like counting, predicting and estimating as they see how many pine cones can fit on a stump or determine how many sticks it takes to create a fort. As children explore measurement concepts such as length, area, perimeter and volume, these experiences lay the groundwork for later, higher math skills in subjects such as geometry.

Visual-Spatial Skills

Visual-spatial skills become highly developed in outdoor classrooms. Visual-spatial skills give people the ability to negotiate well in space: to follow maps, or design and engineer buildings. These skills are developed as children climb, build, create... and look at the world from multiple perspectives.



Music & Movement Skills

In music and movement areas children learn about sound, pitch, rhythm and tonality. Using a variety of musical instruments made from natural plant materials gives children a chance to experience nature and native cultures.

Art Skills

Children create beautiful three-dimensional works of art from nature. And they can sharpen their observation skills by transforming three-dimensional objects into two-dimensional works of art.