

# Outdoor learning essay

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



“ Better learning will not come from finding better ways for the teacher to instruct but from giving learners better opportunities to construct. ” – (Seymour Papert, Professor Emeritus , MIT Media Lab). There are many ways teachers and schools can make the curriculum more enjoyable.

In my essay I am going to explore the ways that this can be achieved and the benefits it will have on children, teachers and schools. One way that teachers and schools can develop children’s enjoyment towards learning, is by introducing outdoor learning. Outdoor learning is a way to get children interactively involved in their learning.

It also helps break up the repetitiveness of day to day classroom routines. There can be many benefits to outdoor learning, as stated by (Dillon J 2006) outdoor learning can include; knowledge and understanding; attitudes and feelings; values and beliefs; actions and behaviours; personal and social development. Also another benefit from outdoor learning experiences, is that it enables the children who struggle in class to excel to their full ability by performing hands on tasks. In addition, it allows all children to develop team work, leadership and social skills. Evidence for this can be taken from my personal off site experience to Orms Arbour. While being randomly paired and blindfolded we had to guess the tree that our partner had taken us too. This task helped me develop my social skills and gain confidence when meeting new people.

In addition working as a team was the only way out task would work, so it encouraged my partner and I to place trust in each thus helping develop team work, leadership and social skills. These are all skills that can be taught

and developed to children and will therefore have a positive impact on those who learn them. I also found that this activity enabled us to use senses such as touch. This would be an effective learning task for children who are kinaesthetic learners, who would perhaps normally struggle with other tasks. Also another benefit is that it broadens the children's horizons, and allows them to have an enjoyable learning experience. This point can be backed up by using evidence by (Dillon J 2006). He quoted a teacher saying "I think it is being somewhere unfamiliar; it can be unnerving but exciting as well," "It also encourages them and they will go home full of it to their parents and say 'I want to, it's not far'". Personal evidence I have gained for this was during my work placement at my local primary school.

Year 4 students were studying habitats of creatures and were taken to a local field to explore and find different habitats of different creatures. This form of interactive learning, got the children involved and provided exciting ways for them to learn about a new topic. Once back in the classroom they were given two different tasks; drawing the habitat and creature they found in it and writing a detailed description of what they found. Then again a weakness of outdoor learning is that it needs to be recognised more.

(Dillon J 2006) proposed in his article that "it is short-sighted to try to increase the amount of time spent in the outdoor classroom without also seeking to maximise the extent to which such work is integrated with other work in schools". This links to another way of making learning enjoyable is by integrated learning. "Many schools are moving towards a more integrated curriculum, following the ideas in the Rose Review" (Bridge, C 2010). Bridge

suggests in his article that children gain “ transferable skills” from learning from an integrated curriculum. Our offsite experience showed us how we could discover outdoor learning, but then transfer it to the classroom, for example in subjects such as Art, Science and Literacy. However Bridge also explores the weakness of an integrated curriculum and says “ it may be superficial and unrelated” . An additional way to seek the main aim is by the use of ICT to develop learning.

(James, M. and Pollard, A. ) suggested in the Primary Review that using ICT can develop children’s “ operational skills, as well as hand to eye coordination” . Also it “ provides a broad range of ICT skills, including digital still and video cameras, mobile phones and electronic keyboards and toys” and “ promotes more opportunities for learning. ” All these skills are ones that a child can develop and use in everyday and will find useful throughout life.

A different way of making learning enjoyable is through “ Visual representation techniques” ( Witt. S 2010) . Her article explains how the use of Scrapbooking can “ sought the individual emotional responses and ideas about places. Witt concluded in her article that “ Scrapbooking provides pupils with the opportunity to stabilise what is ephemeral and fleeting, to hold on to their thinking about places, to externalise the internal and to explore and discover. ” Also that it can be “ successful when linked to clear learning objectives. ” However a disadvantage that is outlined in the article is that Scrapbooking could merely become a “ cutting and sticking exercise.

” The art of Scrapbooking could be linked to our offsite experience. It could have been used as a method to record our journey to Orams Arbour and describe the activities that took place on our trip. I feel that this method could be very effective among children as it is a way of using “ integrated learning” in lessons but also entertaining for the pupils thus enabling them to enjoy learning. In conclusion, looking at the evidence provided in this essay, developing the enjoyment of learning for children will be very effective on both the children and teachers.

If children develop a love of learning through different experiences such as; outdoor learning, integrated curriculum, the use of ICT and visual representation techniques, then children can develop a variety of new skills.