

WildPlay Kitbag



Compiled by LILY HORSEMAN and JO POLACK
Edited by CHRIS HIGH for CATCHER MEDIA



<http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/hereford/wildplay/>

<http://www.catchermedia.co.uk>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Table Of Contents | i |
| A Place For Play | 1 |
| What is play? | 1 |
| How does 'environmental play' fit within these definitions?..... | 1 |
| Best practice..... | 2 |
| A natural place for play..... | 3 |
| Environmental Play Work..... | 4 |
| Best play criteria | 4 |
| Types of play | 4 |
| Props And Books | 6 |
| Props | 6 |
| Books | 7 |
| Thinking tools..... | 9 |
| Wildlife Exploration..... | 11 |
| Wildlife exploration worksheets | 12 |
| Tips for outdoor exploration..... | 15 |
| Games for wildlife exploration..... | 17 |
| Parachute games..... | 19 |
| Exploring safely..... | 20 |
| Activity Seeds | 22 |
| Exploratory activities | 22 |
| Observational activities | 23 |
| Arts activities..... | 24 |
| Earth-Ed: Exploring The Senses..... | 26 |
| Earth-Ed: Exploring The Senses..... | 27 |
| Earth-ed story | 27 |
| Earth-ed worksheets | 32 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Evaluation..... | 34 |
| Evaluation games..... | 34 |
| Children’s questionnaires..... | 36 |
| Health And Safety | 37 |
| Setting ground rules | 37 |
| Children and tools..... | 38 |
| Forest school training..... | 39 |
| Risk Assessment | 40 |
| Examples of risk assessments..... | 40 |
| Activity-based risk assessments | 41 |
| Other risk assessments | 53 |



A PLACE FOR PLAY



What is play?

‘Play is an essential part of every child’s life and vital to development. It is the way children explore the world around them, developing and practising skills.

Play is essential for physical, emotional and physical growth; for intellectual and educational progress and acquiring social and behavioural skills.

Play is a common term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviours that are satisfying for the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child.

Children’s play may or may not involve equipment or have an end product. Their play may be boisterous and energetic or quiet and contemplative, light hearted or very serious’

**The New Charter for Children’s Play
(The Children’s Play Council definition of play)**

‘Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child’

**Bob Hughes and Frank King
From Best Play – What play provision should do for children.**

‘The main characteristic of play, child or adult is not its content, but it’s mode. Play is an approach, not a form of activity.’

**Jerome Bruner
From Best Play – What play provision should do for children.**

‘Play has been described as scientific research conducted by children.’

**Paraphrase of Eibel-Eibesfeldt
From Best Play – What play provision should do for children.**

How does ‘environmental play’ fit within these definitions?

Environmental play should not differ from other sorts of good play practise. It involves mixing two things: a natural approach to play and an open playful approach to nature. If play is how children explore what is around them, then it is crucial that nature can inspire and host that exploration. This is essential for both the development of the child and for the future conservation of nature.

Environmental play can cover a range of play opportunities. The critical factors are where the play takes place and the enthusiasm it creates.

Best practice

The Wildlife Trusts Children For Change project has tried and tested the participative approach to environmental group work for young people, and the project evaluation provides many pointers for successful use of this approach. Allied to this, the Worcestershire LEA pilot of the Forest Schools initiative for pre-school and year 1 children has proved very successful. This pilot has shown the value of free and structured play in the natural environment, with elements of risk (using fire, and sharp tools, etc.) and has led to huge benefits in self-esteem and attitudes to learning particularly in boys.

There are many factors that limit children's opportunity to freely choose outdoor play. These include:

Real and perceived dangers:

- Fear of strangers
- Increase in road traffic
- Fear of crime and street bullies

Poor spaces for play:

- Closure of run down playgrounds
- Play areas located in places that do not feel safe or are hard to get to

Public policies and planning practices:

- The sale of outdoor spaces for development especially in some urban areas.
- New buildings and roads in what were previously open spaces

Public attitudes to children and the outdoors:

- Complaints from adults
- Our concerns about children's safety out doors
- Adult to child ratios



A natural place for play

Play is an approach as much as it is an activity.

Education can be playful and play can be educational. This approach is to do with discovery...

‘What is this?’

‘-What does it look like?’

‘It looks like a little ball. I found it fastened to that tree.’

‘-There is a hole in it. How do you think that was made?’

‘It is something’s home. That hole is how it gets in...’

Education is often oriented to pre-set outcomes such as the fulfilment of a syllabus. Play is able to follow leads from both the children and the changeable environment. The natural environment can be experienced as something inclusive, active and ongoing. These things that characterise Nature also happen to characterise play: a place for adventure, taking risks and shared discoveries.

Do you go outside to play?

Lily Horseman. WildPlay. Herefordshire Nature Trust
Tel: 01432 356872. Email lhorseman@herefordwt.cix.co.uk





ENVIRONMENTAL PLAY WORK



Best play criteria

In the Best Play criteria for an enriched play environment, it is recommended that play providers should give opportunities for the following sorts of environmental play:

- **A varied and interesting physical environment.**
E.g. places to hide, trees and bushes as well as things that have been made, places to inspire mystery and imagination.
- **Playing with the natural elements- earth water, fire and air.**
E.g. campfires, digging, playing snowballs, flying kites
- **Manipulating natural and fabricated materials.**
E.g. materials for art, cooking and making, building dens, making concoctions, using tools.
- **Experiencing change in the natural and built environment.**
E.g. experiencing the seasons through access to the outdoor environment; building, demolishing or transforming the environment

From Best Play - What play provision should do for children.

Types of play

In addition, environmental play creates specific opportunities for 14 of the 15 play types:

- **Symbolic play: play which allows control and increased understanding without the risk of being out of one's depth.**
E.g. Using wood or stones to represent animals and people or leaves to represent money.
- **Socio-dramatic play: the enactment of real and potential situations.**
E.g. organising an expedition to the woods.
- **Social play: any social or interactive situation which contains an expectation on all parties that they will abide by rules or protocols.**
E.g. games conversations or making something together.
- **Creative play: play which allows a new response, the transformation of information and an element of surprise.**
E.g. crafts using natural materials junk modelling of real or imagined creatures.
- **Communication play: using words, nuances or gestures.**
E.g. a debate or discussion about the future of a wildlife area. Songs and poems written about the seasons.

- **Dramatic play:** which dramatises events in which the child is not a direct participator.
E.g. the interaction of prey and predator, or housing developer and conservationist.
- **Deep play:** which allows the child to encounter risky or potentially life threatening experiences, to develop survival skills or conquer fears.
E.g. leaping across streams, climbing trees or handling snakes and spiders.
- **Exploratory play:** manipulative behaviours such as handling, throwing or banging objects, assessing it's properties, possibilities and content.
E.g. using microscopes to look at plants or stacking logs to create wildlife habitats.
- **Fantasy play:** that which rearranges the world in a child's way which is unlikely to occur.
E.g. playing at being a scientist who measures trees or a big game hunter.
- **Imaginative play:** where the conventional rules which govern the physical world do not apply.
E.g. imagining you are, or pretending to be a tree or an insect or interacting with a bird or animal that is not really there.
- **Locomotor play:** movement in any and every direction for it's own sake.
E.g. . Tree climbing, or playing chase games with sticky burrs.
- **Mastery play:** control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments.
E.g. digging holes, changing the course of streams, constructing shelters, and building fires.
- **Object play:** play which uses infinite and interesting sequences of hand-eye manipulations and movements
E.g. examination and novel use of any object e.g. a mirror used to examine treetops, making boats out of driftwood
- **Role play:** exploring ways of being, although not normally of an intense personal, social, or interpersonal nature.
E.g. using masks to be different animals, building nests out of sticks.

Based on the 15 play types and explanations given by Hughes (1996)





PROPS AND BOOKS



Props

Magnifying glasses: makes you feel like a real wildlife detective
Available from key craft ☎ 01779 478078 comes in packs of 24. 30p or 45p each

Bug pots: useful pots with built in magnifying lids
Available from key craft ☎ 01779 478078 triple bug viewer comes in packs of 12 @£2.12 each bug box in packs of 24. 95p each.
Also available from school suppliers.

Cardboard tubes: Use for focusing children's attention. Especially handy when the wildlife isn't obvious.
Available from scrap stores or save up kitchen roll middles

Mirrors: place under the nose to get a squirrels eye view of the tree canopy.
Make sure they are well mounted and preferably have a handle. Cost approx £1 or plastic mirror available from school suppliers. Put mirrors into CD cases to make them safer.
Available from Chemists.

Dental mirrors: use to see the under side of leaves and get a bugs eye view of the world
Available from some hardware stores, school suppliers, friendly dentists! or the Institute for Earth Education ☎ 0845 4583017 ✉ office@earthed.org.uk

Wooden whistles for bird noises: owls nightingales, blackbird etc.
Available from Flights of Fancy ☎ 01926 423436

Binoculars:
Cheap versions available from ELC
posh versions from Alana Ecology
Tel (01588) 630173, e-mail: sales@alanaecology.com

Pond nets and trays etc:
Dippers from school suppliers approx £4 each,
nets and trays and from Alana Ecology

Bat detectors:
Also from Alana Ecology see above. Cost about £60

Plastic insects for unnatural trails
Available from ELC, toy shops

Kalidabug and other fab insect products:
Insect Lore ☎ 01908 563338 ✉ www.insectlore.co.uk



Books

Books for Identification

FSC Guides : Foldout charts -Woodland name trail, Freshwater name trail, British mammal tracks and signs and many, many more £2.50 - £3.25
Field Studies Council ☎ 01743 852140 ✉ www.field-studies-council.org

Collins: Complete British Wildlife
ISBN 0-583-33638-8

Collins Gem: Insects, spiders, Butterflies and Moths £4.99
ISBN 0-00-472269-8

Animal Tracks and Signs: Preben Bang
ISBN 0-19-850796-8

Collins nature guides : Wild Flowers Mammals, birds, etc
ISBN 0-26-167403-x

Horrible Science series: Nasty Nature and Ugly Bugs £3.99
ISBN 0-590-55808-0

Books for Activities

Lets enjoy nature: Mildred Masheder
ISBN 1-85425-084-1

Sharing Nature With Children
ISBN 1-8832220-73-4

Themes for the Early Years: Minibeasts
ISBN 0-590-53685-0

Discovery World: Keeping tadpoles alive
ISBN 0-435-09458-0

Play lightly on the Earth: Jaqueline Horsfall
ISBN 1-883220-68-8

Let your children go back to Nature: John Hodgson and Alan Dyer
ISBN 1-86163-17-2

Storybooks:

How rabbit stole the fire : Joanna Troughton
ISBN 014 050667 5

Up the Garden Path: Are you... an ant? A bee? A butterfly? A dragonfly? A grasshopper? A ladybird? A snail? A Spider?
ISBN 0-7543-0669-1



Ecology Story Books: The Flower, The Nest, The Old Boot and the Picnic
ISBN 0-7112-1483-2

The case of the missing caterpillar: Sam Godwin (for younger children)
ISBN 0-7500-2654-5

Why should I protect nature?
ISBN 0-7502-3683-3

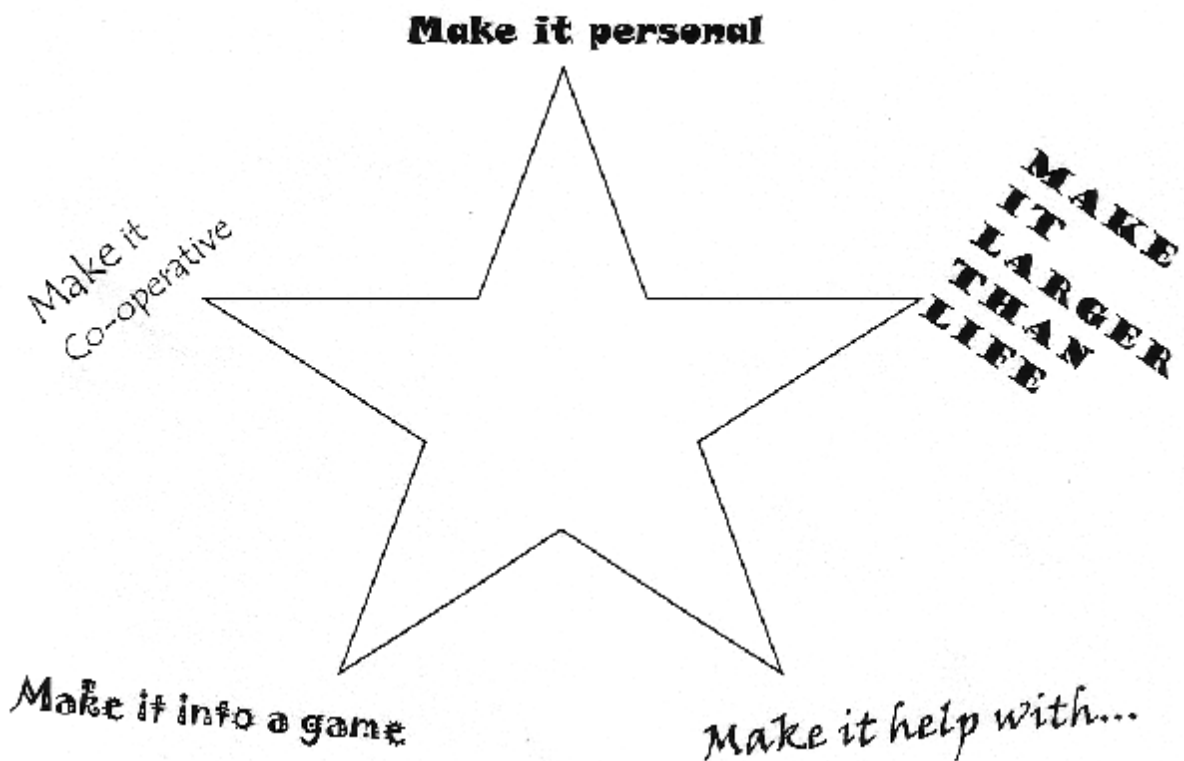


Thinking tools

S-T-R-E-T-C-H Diagram

We all fall too easily into thinking in ruts —
Leading the same activities in the same old way.
This can get tedious for us, as well as for the
groups we work with.

Here is a simple way to S-T-R-E-T-C-H ideas:



Put the activity (painting, nature walk, etc) into the star then S-T-R-E-T-C-H it in the five ways shown.

You might not use all of your ideas (don't worry, they'll keep) but it will certainly help.

You can use copies of these sheets when planning any activity.

Ladder of participation

Ladder of Participation



The diagram shows a ladder with six horizontal rungs. Each rung is associated with a text box describing a level of participation. The rungs are arranged from top to bottom, with the top rung being the highest level of participation and the bottom rung being the lowest. The text boxes are positioned to the right of the rungs, with the top rung's box being the highest and the bottom rung's box being the lowest.

Child initiated – shared decisions with adults.

Children provide ideas, adults follow their lead and provide support.

Adults introduce activity or project but children able to influence the direction and make decisions.

Children are consulted and their ideas incorporated. They are informed of progress and plans.

Children not involved in the planning of an activity or project. They are given activities to do.

Where are you on the ladder in your work with children?

On different days and with different activities you will be at different levels.



WILDLIFE EXPLORATION



DON'T LOOK FOR WHAT YOU WON'T SEE

But what can you expect to see?

Wherever you are you will not be far from minibeasts (insects and molluscs) so look out for them. Also look for signs of wildlife rather than the wildlife itself. Signs include animal tracks, feathers, evidence of things that have been eaten and that favourite of all small children... pool!

We have been doing minibeast hunts on housing estates and school fields and once you know where to look....there are 20,000 species of insect in the British Isles.

Most minibeasts love damp cool spots so look under rocks and stones, if you do not have these in your area you can add some minibeast front doors (discs of wood) and have more fun getting the kids to paint them up.

Hedge rows and nettle patches are rich sources of life and a wooden fence - especially if small patches are left untreated could be a home to spiders and wood living insects. If you don't find any life then maybe you could make some improvements of your own to make some homes for wildlife.

You never know, doing all this fabulous observation may spot something stalking through the long grass.

Props and games can encourage exploration and observation.

Remember that all the senses will help you discover what is around you. Use activities and games that will stimulate the senses before expecting children to discover the wildlife around them.

Magnifying glasses, and dipping nets are examples of props that make children feel like they are looking for wildlife and will focus their attention.

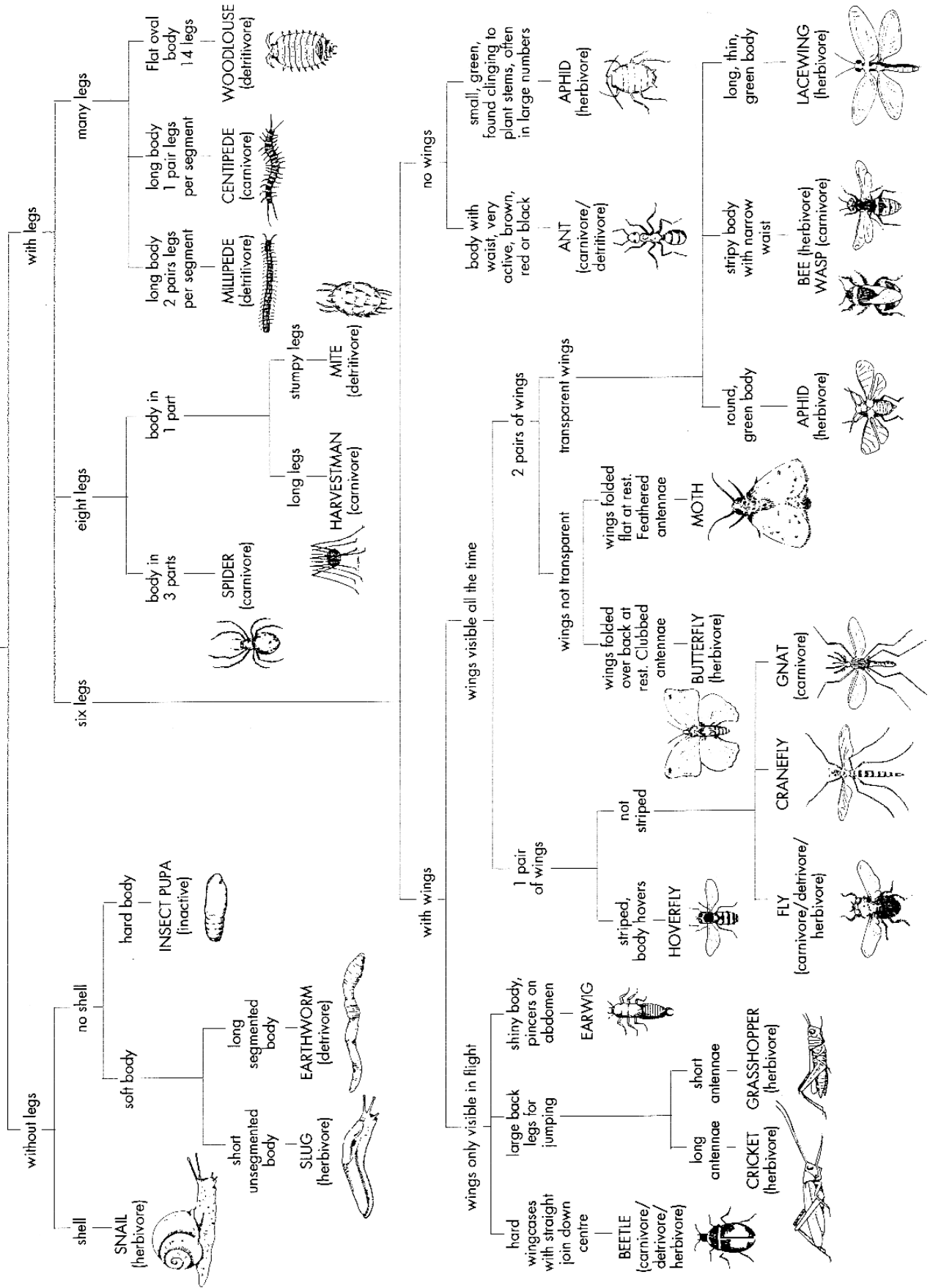
Lots of children's groups say that they would love to look at nature but they don't have anywhere to go. Once you start looking **NATURE IS EVERYWHERE!**

Use the areas you have access too. You'd be surprised what you find.

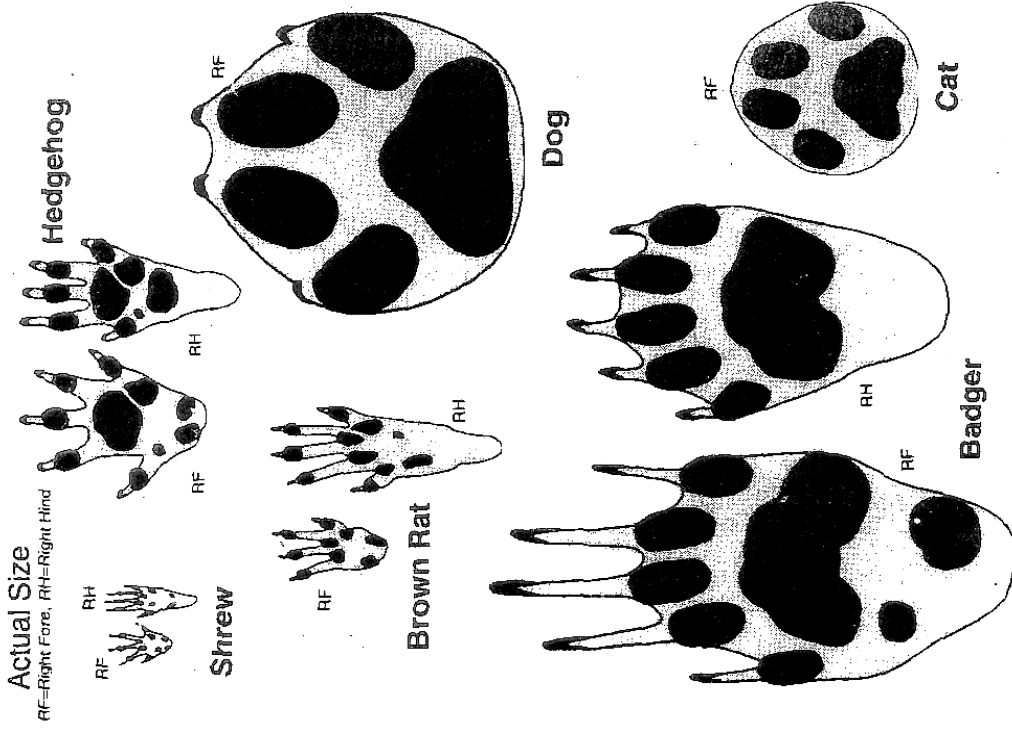
Some days I suspect the adults are having just as much fun as the kids. Don't worry about knowing names- when children ask 'what's that' they are not asking for labels, they want more information. Ask other questions such as what is it doing, is it alive, why is it making that noise, what does it feel like when you touch it?

If you don't know what you have found, then...great! Everyone can explore and learn.

GRASSLAND MINIBEASTS



Riverbank tracks

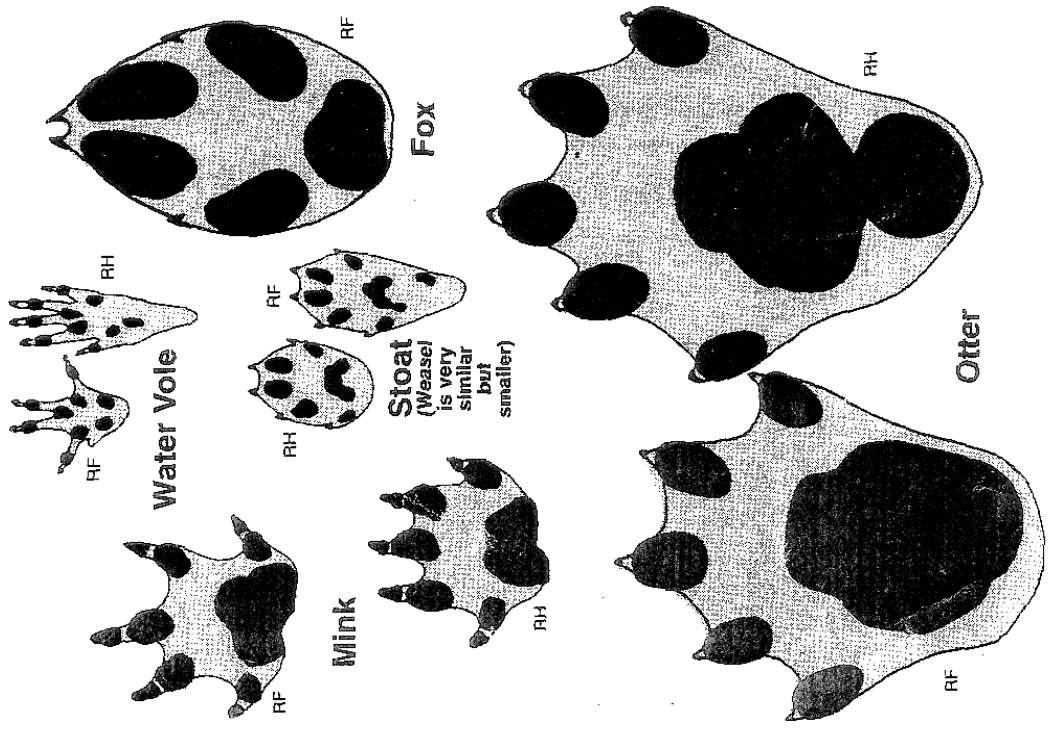


Support material for Herefordshire Action for Mammals
 Produced by Herefordshire Nature Trust
 Courtesy of Devon Wildlife Trust

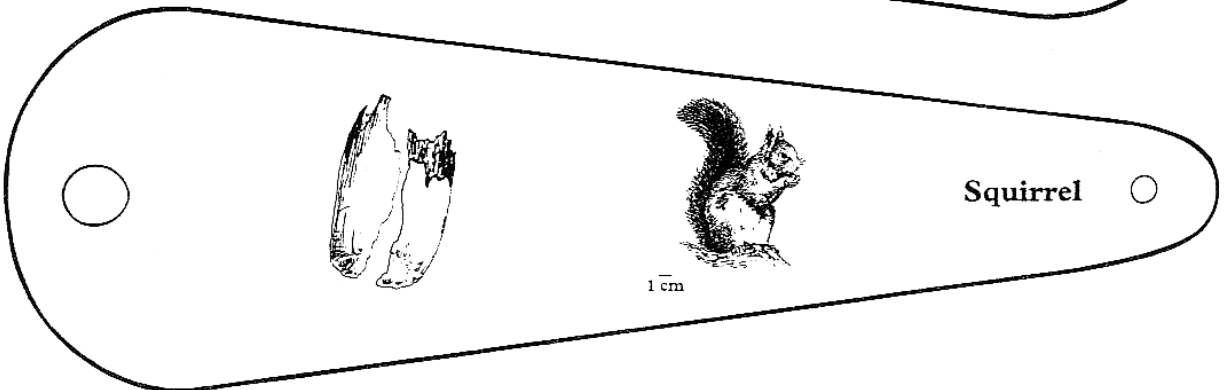
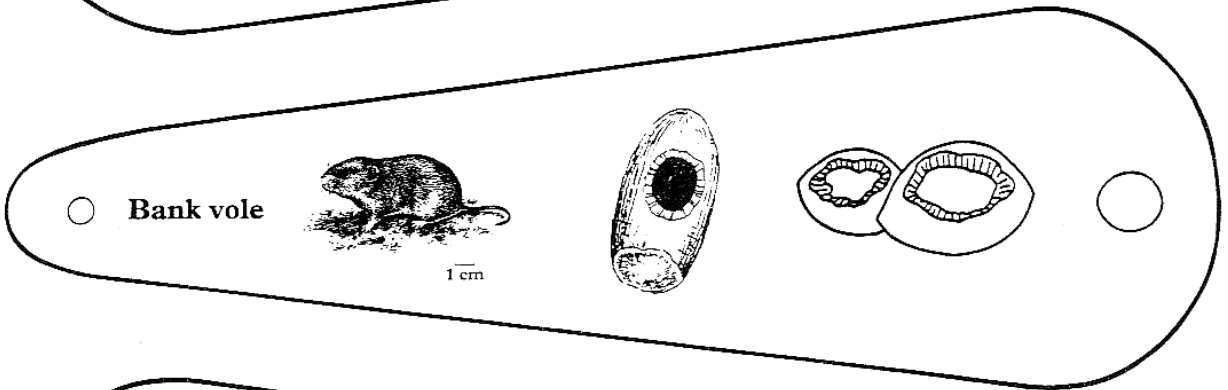
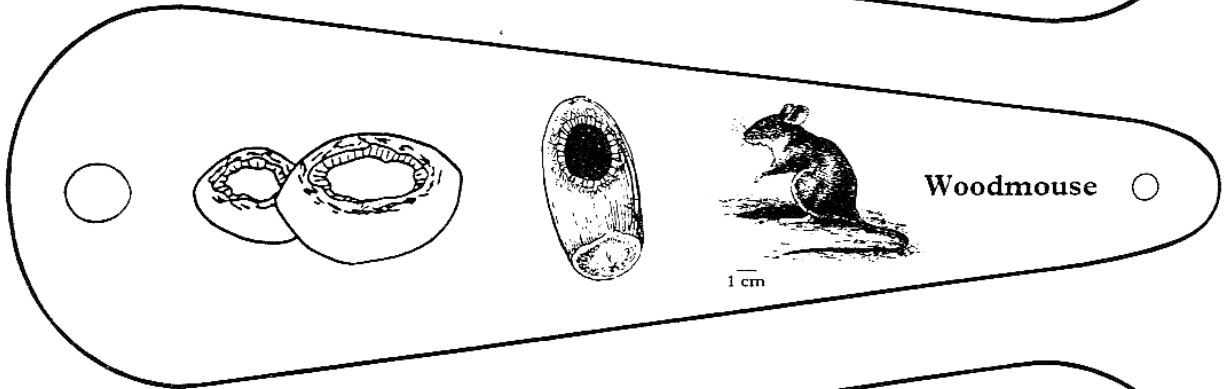
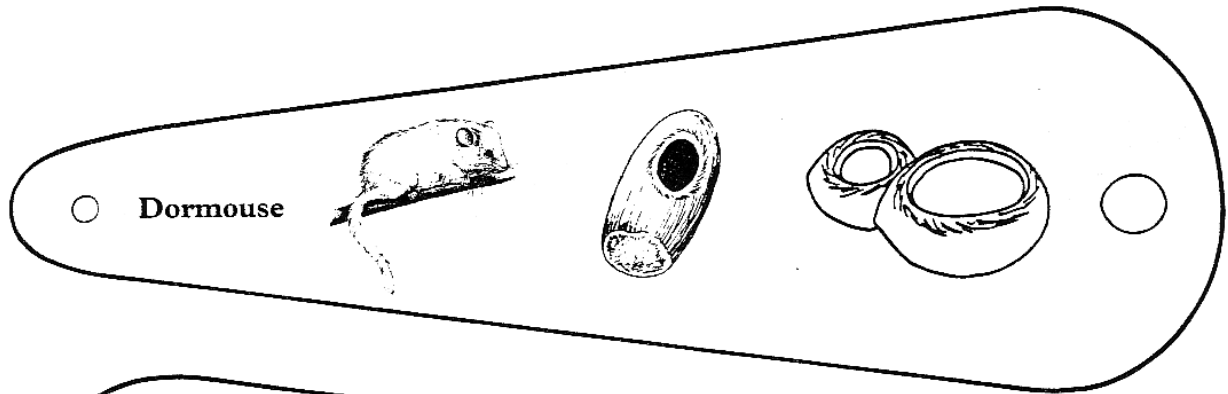


**HEREFORDSHIRE ACTION FOR MAMMALS
 TRACKS ON THE RIVER BANK**

Actual Size RF=Right Fore, RH=Right Hind



Identifying creatures





Tips for outdoor exploration

Playing should be the easiest thing in the world. But as adults, we sometimes forget how to do it; we're so often caught up in doing it right doing it best, or doing it efficiently. Here are some things we have learned.

- There is no right when it comes to children's activities. As long as no one is getting hurt, let your children invent the rules- it will give them a sense of ownership. (Besides following child-invented rules is half of the fun!)
- Make sure activities are appropriate for your children's age and skill level. You can make the same activity challenging for kids of different ages. You are the best expert on your own group so select and adapt activities to their capabilities and interest

Based on '365 outdoor activities'
Steve and Ruth Bennett



Before you leave .

- **Start small:** Start by exploring your yard, park, playing field or playground, many kids haven't been outdoors enough to feel at ease in a dark scary forest. Explain that 'wildlife' is all around them from spiders and worms to rabbits and squirrels. Their idea of wildlife may be tigers and elephants and other things they have seen in a zoo or on television.
- **Know the area:** It's easy to become lost, even on clearly marked trails. Mark off a territory by saying "we won't go further than that big pine tree and the white fence." If you are looking for a particular activity to happen and you are under time constraints then be sure to preview the area beforehand. You may want to 'salt' the area with natural items (e.g. feathers, acorns, tracks) to give every one a fair chance at discovery.
- **Cover yourself:** When you least expect it, mud happens. Make sure children wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the conditions, with sun protection.
- **Pack light:** Nothing beats a bum bag or zip lock plastic bag for collecting nature items. Or make and decorate small paper collecting pouches before you go.
- **For a quick nature bracelet:** Wrap a strip of masking tape, sticky side out around the child's wrist. The tape will hold small, light finds.
- **Trees like to keep their leaves until the Autumn!** Encourage children to always pick up leaves, twigs, needles and petals that have already fallen to the ground. If you do pick plants only pick things that there are lots of – grass, daisy's etc. avoid rare plants. If you are not sure don't let the children pick it.



While you're out

- Stay close have children work in small groups or pairs and be mindful of your adult to child ratios. If you are walking along a trail make sure one adult is the 'head' and one is the 'tail' to keep stragglers in line. Children may want to run ahead, if this is the case then have points at which they have to stop and wait. (This could be a large tree or other landmark or the way markers of the type found in country parks).
- Quiet please. When searching for wildlife, walk slowly and quietly to avoid scaring them. Do not approach any animal that seems sick or is seen outside of its normal foraging hours (e.g. bats during the day). Keep a good distance from hives and nesting areas.
- Let it be. Studying insects often involves disturbing their homes (lifting a rock or board. Encourage children to 'put the roof back on' the homes of minibeasts when they're finished observing.



When you're back

- Look me over. Check for ticks and 'stickers' like burdocks
- Replay. Talk about what you have seen, read more about it, or draw pictures of the experience to refresh the memory.
- Keep your promise. If you promised to find the answer to a particularly tough question DO IT.

Based on Play lightly on the Earth
Jacqueline Horsfall



Special tips

- Teach less, share more. - be alert yourself to what is around you.
- Don't worry about knowing names- when children ask 'what's that' they are not asking for labels, they want more information. Ask other questions such as what is it doing, is it alive, why is it making that noise, what does it feel like when you touch it?
- Focus the mood of the outing at the start. Involve everyone as much as you can, ask questions, point out anything unusual. Find things that interest them and you and build up from there.
- Look and experience first, talk and identify things later.
- Remember that your own enthusiasm will be infectious.

Lily Horseman

Games for wildlife exploration

Camouflage Game

Equipment needed: 20 different objects

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Demonstrates: Camouflage in animals

How to play:

- **Prepare by hiding about 20 different objects in a small area out-of-doors – not so that they are obscured, but so that some blend in with their background; others should be bright and obvious to see**
- **Allow all players to go around the area – if possible, in groups - a few at a time and try to spot as many as possible.**
- **When they think they have seen all the hidden objects, ask them to list them. Tell them if there were any more hidden that they have not found, and let them try to look again**
- **When all are found, discuss which were the most difficult items to spot and why. A talk about the uses of camouflage and colour in the natural world – for example, bright colours are also used by flowers or animals to attract pollination or mates, or to warn predators away.**

A variation of this game can be done using plastic toys or cut out mini-beasts, which the children have all coloured in (this can be done during the first part of the session). Discuss why certain ones were found – different colours, heights etc.



Bats and Moths

Equipment needed: Blind-fold

Preparation time: None

Demonstrates: Echolocation

How to Play:

- **One child is the bat and is blind folded. S/he stands in the middle with everyone else around them in a circle. The rest of the children are moths and run around in the circle, around the bat.**
- **The bat has to shout 'BAT' and the moths have to respond by shouting 'MOTH' whilst running around. The bat has to try and catch the moths by listening to their calls, i.e. by repeatedly shouting 'BAT' so they respond with 'MOTH'.**
- **The first moth caught then becomes the bat and the bat becomes a moth.**

Bird Song Game

Equipment needed: A tape recorder, a tape of bird song and some pictures of birds

Preparation time: 30 - 60minutes (depending on how good you are on bird song)

Demonstrates: Teaches children to identify birds by sound

How to play:

- Think up some 'catch phrases' specially to describe the bird songs.
- Some examples are: great tit 'teacher teacher'; marsh tit ' help, help, help'; coot 'coot-coot-coot'; coal tit 'a tishoo, tishoo, tishoo' blue tit - ring a small bell; wren – the opera bird; reed bunting – the 'burp burp pardon bird'; goldfinch – the wind chimes bird; jackdaw – 'Jack, Jack, Jack'.
- Tell the children the 'catch phase' and ask them to comment on whether this description is good or bad. This will encourage them to listen carefully to the recording when it is played a second time.
- After you have introduced the children to the catch phrases and they have listened to all the songs, the next time you can play it as a game.

I Went For a Walk and I Saw

Equipment needed: None

Preparation time: None

How to play:

- The children take turns to say 'I went for a walk and I saw ...' .
- The next child, has to remember the previous thing and then add their own observation.

Suitable for after a nature walk.

Owl stalking

Equipment needed: Blindfold and 'food' e.g. pine cones

Preparation time: None

How to play:

- The owl in the blindfold sits above a stash of 'food' the rest of the children are mice.
- At a given signal different mice try and creep up to the owl in ones or two without being heard.
- If the owl hears a mouse and catches them by pointing at them the mouse is sent back to the beginning.

Rainbow Chips (suitable for all ages)

Equipment needed: Make rainbow chips from coloured pieces of paper, (cut up paint samples work well).

Preparation time: None after chips are prepared

How to play:

- Give each child several chips of the “rainbow.”
- The object is simply to find the colours somewhere in nature.

This is a good game for younger children but can be made more challenging.

Parachute games

Predator and prey: Talk about which animals eat other animals. Possibilities may include birds and worms, foxes and rabbits, etc. one or two children go under the parachute to be the ‘prey’ and one (shoeless) child goes on the top as the ‘predator.’ The other children flap the parachute up and down (this can be waves, leaves or whatever) the ‘predator’ child has to try and catch his prey. When all the ‘prey’ are caught swap the children over.

Fruit and Mice: Talk about fruits that appear on the trees in the Autumn and the animals that feed off them. Name the fruits as you throw coloured balls or rolled up newspaper onto the parachute which will represent our tree. Explain that the wind will blow and the fruits will come off the tree. Nominate two little mice/ squirrels who have to collect all the fruits up as they come off the tree. These children have to gather up the fruits as fast as they fall and throw them back into the ‘chute. Keep swapping the children over.

Butterfly’s Wing: A calming game. Explain that they will take a ride on a butterfly’s wing. Split the children into two groups. Send one group to sit or lie under the parachute. The butterfly is flying through the garden (flap the parachute gently). It becomes tired and runs low of energy (flap really slowly), but it sees the flowers that it needs to feed on (flap really fast). It flies over and lands on the flowers (let the parachute land on the children) and when it has had it’s fill of the nectar the butterfly can fly away (flap gently). The children underneath the chute get cooled and relaxed. Then the two groups can swap over.



Exploring safely

Ground rules:

Here is a way that we have used to set the ground rules for outdoor exploration with lots of different groups including groups of children who had never met each other and children with special needs.

Before the session a pot is filled with enough leaves or dandelion flowers so all the children can choose one each. This pot is introduced to the children as containing the 'tickets' to the woods or to the play session. The children are then told that to get their tickets they have certain responsibilities. These are to:

- look after themselves
- look after the woods(or other environment)
- look after each other

We then have a discussion about what each of these entails. The children suggest things like:

- Looking after themselves- not getting lost, not falling over, looking out for nettles and brambles.
- Looking after the woods- not disturbing nesting birds, treating growing things with respect.
- Looking after each other-staying in pairs, staying together as a group, not hurting or teasing each other

Try and put their suggestions into positive terms e.g. If someone suggests 'don't pull branches off trees' as a way of looking after the woods. Reinforce it with, 'yes, we will make sure the trees to keep their branches and pick any sticks we need up off the floor'.

When you feel confident that you have covered all the rules with the kids then they can all take a 'ticket' and you can head off to enjoy yourselves.

The benefit of this method is that the ticket gives the children something tangible to focus on during the discussion and a reminder if kept in a pocket or tucked in a hat.

Boundaries

You need to know how far the children will spread out across an area. If it is somewhere you don't normally go know the area. It's easy to become lost, even on clearly marked trails.

Mark off a territory by saying for example "we won't go further than that big pine tree and the white fence." If you are looking for a particular activity to happen and you are under time constraints then be sure to preview the area beforehand. You may want to 'salt' the area with natural items (e.g. feathers, acorns, tracks) to give every one a fair chance at discovery.

If you are walking along a trail make sure one adult is the 'head' and one is the 'tail' to keep stragglers in line. Children may want to run ahead, if this is the case then have points at which they have to stop and wait. (This could be a large tree or other landmark or the waymarkers of the type found in country parks).

Risk assessments

Some example risk assessments for WildPlay activities are included in this pack in the Health & Safety section below.

An example of a site risk assessment is also included for the sorts of places these activities might take place.





ACTIVITY SEEDS



Listed below are different areas of activity that you might find helpful when thinking about your workshop sessions.

Exploratory activities

Collecting:

Map sticks

Story shields

Camouflage

Rainbow chips

Charms

Badges

Resources for art and craft

Sticky tape – using sticky-back tape or back-to-front masking tape to make bracelets, crowns, hats, postcards, wellies or outline body on paper/cloth on which to stick collected materials



NB: See arts and crafts for more things to do with collected nature.

Trails:

Treasure Hunt

Trails with arrows made from sticks on the path

Glow-in-the-dark trails

Egg Hunts

Scavenger hunts

String courses

Mini-beast courses

Obstacle courses

NB: See also senses and collecting.

Senses:

Taste: Wild foods

Fruits

Predator/prey tastes

Hearing: Dawn chorus

Hands over ears then hands behind ears – what can you hear

Sound snap

Smell: Salt dough smells

Smelly cocktails from flowers, leaves etc.

Touch: Feely feet

Blindfolded experiences – meet a tree, guided exploring



Crawling
Collecting – comparisons
Craft, making things
Sight: Matching colours to collected objects.

NB: See other visual activities under observation and collecting

Dark and Light:

Moon stories
Pinhole camera
Night hike
Torch games
Shadow puppets
Star gazing
Lanterns

Hiding/stalking:

Hide and Seek games - bear hunts, predator/prey
Magic spots – finding a small place and exploring it.
Den building (can be mini-homes and dirt cities)

Observational activities

Seasons and Weather:

Sun art e.g. sun prints
Solar cooking
Sun dials
Wind speed
Rain gauge
Rain photos
Clouds – shapes, movement...
Rainbows (there are lots of stories)

Elements:

Fire: Candles, Ovens (earth ovens, solar ovens), Camp fire, Lanterns, Cooking
Water: Water obstacle course, Pooch sticks, Rafts and boats, Rain, Bubbles
Air: Kites, Spinners, Wind socks, Wind mills
Earth: Digging, Planting, Soil painting and printing – pigments, Tree spirits, Earth oven, Mud pies, Mud tracks



Wildlife:

Bat detecting
Mini beast hunts
Pond dipping
Bird watching
Looking for tracks and signs
Nests – look at or making
Worm or ant farms
Food web games
Mini beast obstacle courses



Observational props:

Magnifying glasses
Frames (cardboard or sticks)
Mini beast hunting pots and plastic spoons
Microscopes
Binoculars
Mirrors – dental mirrors, wing mirrors in CD cases
Sticky-back postcards to display finds
Identification displays and keys



Growing and Sowing:

Planting seeds or bulbs
Potato maze
Growing potatoes in a carrier bag!
Scarecrows

There are lots of art and craft ideas for celebrating growing and sowing - see other sections.

Arts activities

Music:

Songs
Chants



Soundscapes – take the sounds you hear around you and recreate them in your own voices

Making instruments – from scrap and natural materials

Songlines/song walks – go for a walk, collect the sounds you hear and tell others the story of your work in songs and noises.

Stories & poems:

Elemental gods
Myths
Seasons
Story making: One word per person
Poems on pebbles
Tree poems
Haiku
Mnemonics



Sculpture: (using earth, leaves, wood etc.)

Land Art – spirals, nature shapes - see the work of Andy Goldsworthy, Richard Long and Chris Drury
Tree dressing – tree jewellery
Leaf animals and leaf sculptures on the ground
Look at natural forms – small and big
Leaf and bark rubbing
Whittling
Traditional craft - Baskets, Woodturning, Carving, Willow, Hazel

Weaving:

Threading e.g. use stick-built frames with string pulled across and threaded through with natural materials
Mobiles
Stitching leaves together

Making Costumes:

Tabards
Hats
Face Painting
Camouflage
Decorating feet



Movement/Drama:

Creature features
Warm ups
Masks
Using Enormous Vegetable-style framework to create short plays

Puppets

Cloth and nature puppets

Shadow puppets

Giant puppets (Willow and tissue/nature/scrap)

A few others...

Land Art – spirals, nature shapes

Tree dressing – tree jewellery

Tree poems

Leaf sculptures on the ground

Leaf animals

Look at natural forms – small and big

Leaf and bark rubbing





EARTH-ED: EXPLORING THE SENSES



Earth-ed story

This story was first told to WildPlay by John Cree from Bishops wood. The story can be used with the pictures as visual prompts for the children to name the creatures as they come forward. The story leads into a set of activities for exploring the environment with different senses.



This is a story from before clocks and watches, before calendars, diaries and time.

This is a story about a fox.

Now the fox decided that he would like to make a new animal. One that was better than all the other animals, the best animal that there ever was. Well the fox, he went to the other animals who were all gathered together and he said to them. " I want to make a new animal. It will be the best animal that there ever was. It will be better than all you animals"



Well the owl swooped forward straight away and he said " what?, who? An animal that is better than me?

I have the best eyesight of all the animals.

My eyesight is so good that I can spot the little scurrying animals that live in the long grass and I can swoop down in the dark and catch them and eat them for my dinner."



Well the fox he went away and he thought about what the owl said, and he thought I could still make an animal that is better than all the other animals.

So he went back again to where all the other animals were gathered and he said.

"Right you animals, I have thought about what the owl said and I still think that I can make an animal that is better than all you other animals" that's the boastful sort of creature that fox is.



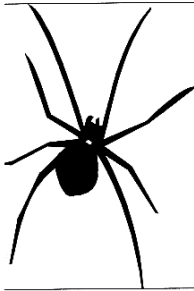
Well the bat he came flitting forwards and he said to the fox.

"You might think that you can make an animal that is better than all those other animals. But my hearing is so good that you will never make an animal that is better than me. My



hearing is so good," said the bat "that I can hear the noise that bounces off the wings of a moth or a fly as it moves silently through the dark. You will never make an animal that is better than me."

Well the fox he went away and he thought about what the bat said and what the owl said, and he thought NO! I could still make an animal that is better than all the other animals. So he went back again to where all the other animals were gathered and he said. "I have thought about



what the owl said and I have thought about what the bat said and I still think that I can make an animal that is better than all you other animals."

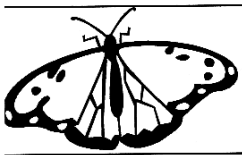
Well, the spider he came forward next and he said to the fox.

"what's this about making an animal better than me. Don't you know how good my sense of touch is? I can sit in the corner of my web with just one of my legs touching one of the strands of the web

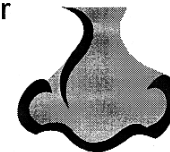


and as soon as a fly or a midge or another flying creature lands in the web I know exactly how big it is and how juicy it is and I can run out of my hiding place and capture that creature for my larder."

Well the fox shuddered at the thought of how clever the spider was but he wasn't daunted. He said to all the animals that were gathered around him, interested now in what he was up to, he said to them "all of you animals... I have listened to what you have said and I still think that I could make an animal that is better than you "



Well the butterfly fluttered forward shyly and shyly he said "Fox, I have listened to what you said, but I do not think that you could make an animal that is better than me. Not because I am beautiful but because I have the most amazing ability to

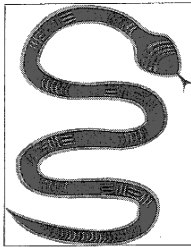


smell things. I smell the sweetness of the flowers as I fly past and tell which one holds the most nectar. I can fly down and sip the nectar from the flowers and this makes me the best animal there is."

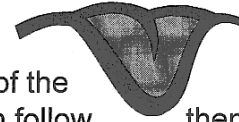
The fox thought about what the butterfly said, and the spider, the bat and the owl and he said to the animals:

"animals, I still have an idea that there is a creature that is better than all of you."

What the fox didn't see was the snake moving towards him in the grass. When the snake spoke up it made the fox jump.



"Fox" said the snake, "how could you think that there is an animal that is better than me? I have the most amazing sense of taste. My sense of taste is so amazing than if I stick out my tongue I can taste the air and in that air I can taste the footprints of the smaller creatures that I like to eat and I can follow them to their lairs so I can make my lunch." Some of the smaller



creatures felt very scared by the snakes words but the fox he looked very thoughtful.

"I have listened to the snake and I see what he says about why he thinks he is the best animal and I have listened to the butterfly and the spider, the owl and the bat and they are all truly amazing animals, but" said the fox "to be a truly amazing animal you must be able to experience the world in many different ways. "

The fox was right. Only a truly amazing animal could experience the world in lots of different ways. The animal that can do this is here today. This story is also a puzzle because we are going to work out what this animal is.

The following activities can then be used to explore any natural environment. After the activities recap the story with the animals and the senses that they use. When this has been done remind the group that they are trying to work out which animal, that they have seen today can use all of these senses.

EXPLORING THE SENSES

SMELL

Equipment

Small plastic containers
Bottle of water



Instructions

Tell the children that they are going to collect smells.

Give a small plastic container to each child.

Warn children of plants to avoid - thistles, nettles etc, and things that are rare, or locally uncommon.

Break off a small piece of plant material, then rub the plant material between the thumb and index finger to release the smell. What does it smell like?

If the plant does have a smell, place the plant material into the plastic container.

To make the cocktail add a small amount of water to the plant material, stir with a stick.

What does it smell like?

Then, share the small of your cocktail with other people. When you have finished, stand in a tight circle and put it “down the hatch” (fling it over your shoulder). Cheers!

VISUAL

Equipment

Mirrors



Instructions

Tell the children that they are going to use the mirror to look at the tree canopy above them.

Children work in pairs. Issue each pair of children with a mirror. The children take it in turns to use the mirror.

Hold the mirror under your chin and look down into the mirror as you walk along the path to view the tree canopy above. Your partner will guide you to make sure that you don't bump into others or trip over.

What can you see?

Tell your partner.

Swap places with your partner.

SOUND



Instructions

Tell the children that they are now going to listen to *nature's orchestra*.

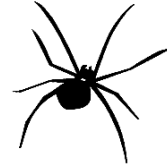
Sit very quietly and place your hands over your ears for a minute to block out all the sound.

Place your hands behind your ears with hands extended outwards (may need to demonstrate this) and listen carefully.

What sounds can you hear?

Raise a finger for each of the sounds you hear.

TOUCH



Equipment

Egg boxes

Words on cards attached to egg box with velcro (face down)

Instructions

Tell the children they are going to use their sense of touch.

Issue an egg box to each child.

Inside each box is a word – hard, smooth, solid, prickly, stiff, rough, soft, fluffy, bendy, etc.

Read the word on the card - they may need to ask an adult about the word but they are to keep the word a secret.

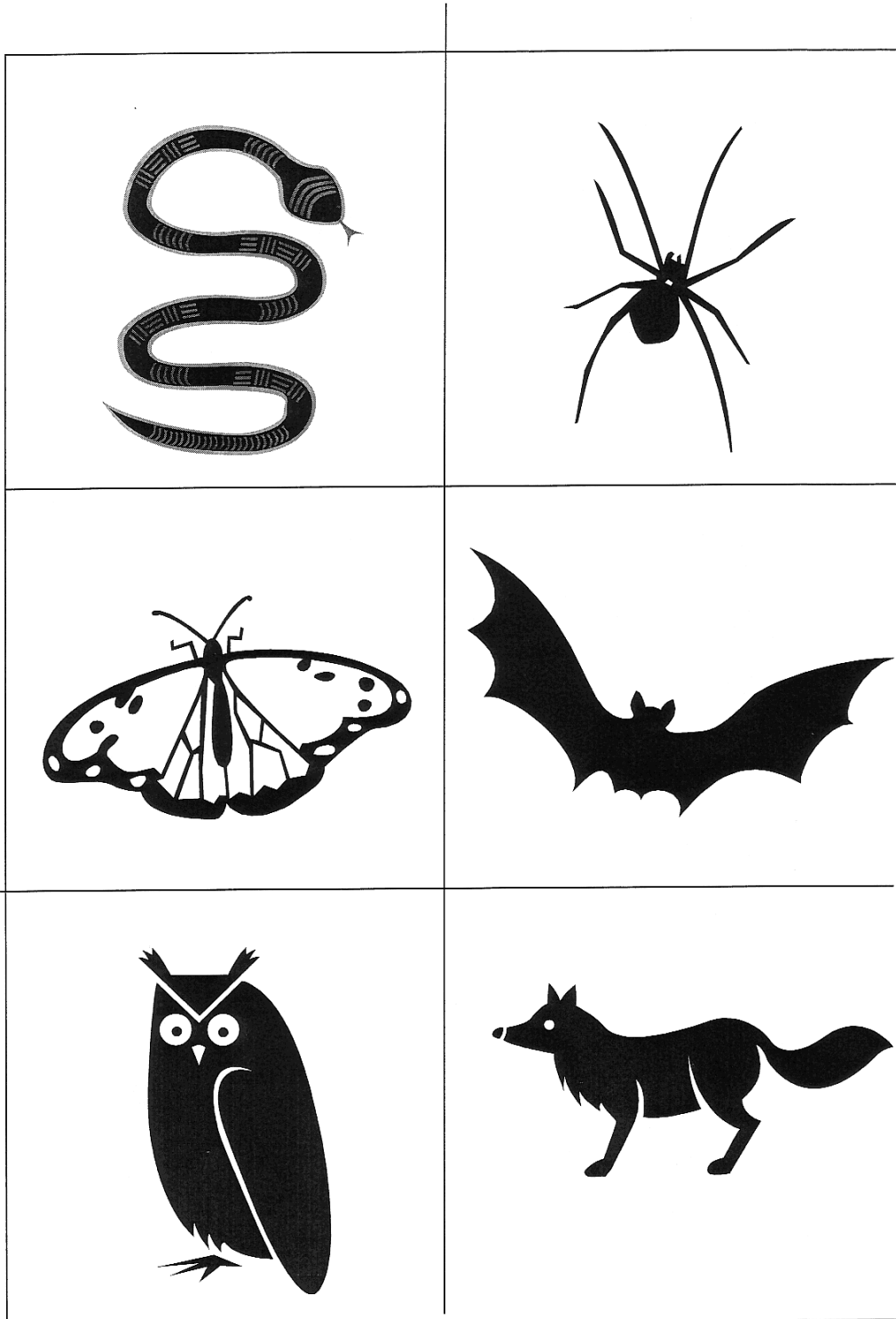
Collect items that demonstrate the word and place the items in the egg box.

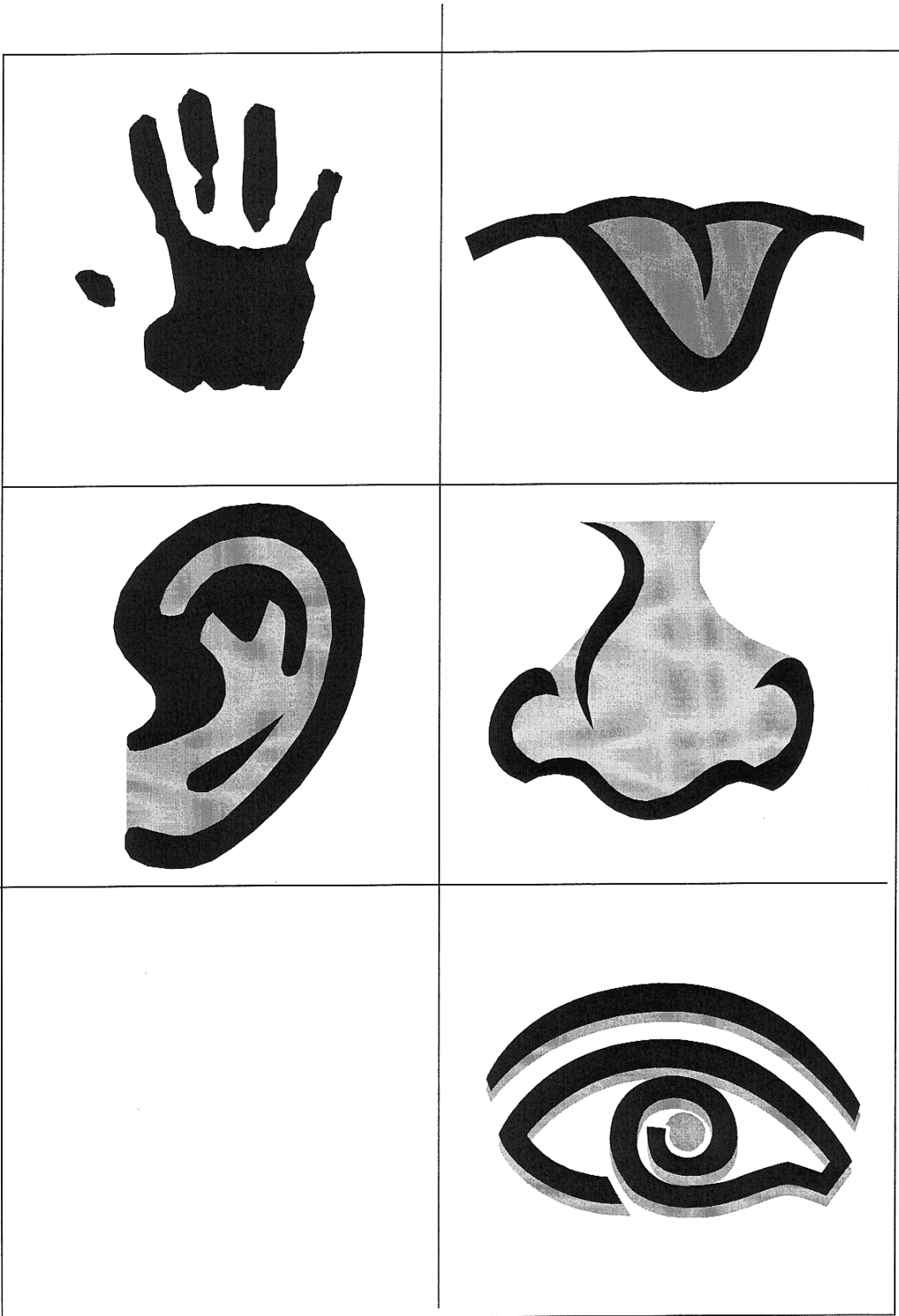
Place the egg box on the ground.

Look at and feel the items in a different box. What word do these items represent?

Once all the group has done all the activities, it should be apparent what the creature is. (If you still can't guess, it's a human being! We use all of our senses.) You will notice there is not a taste activity here. This story takes about an hour and a half to two hours to complete and we normally have a snack in the middle. This time can be used to have a discussion about different tastes and how we taste things.

Earth-ed worksheets







EVALUATION

Getting Feedback from Children



Evaluation games

Rounds and Circles

- Get everyone into a circle.
- Going round the group everyone has an opportunity to say something about the activity or event. This may be something you have asked the group to consider or it may be more general;
e.g. “What have you got out of today?”
- Alternatively you may ask each person to complete a sentence
e.g. “One thing I have learnt today is.....”
or “The things I enjoyed most was.....”
- For some groups a “Talking Log” or can be helpful and inviting. A person is only allowed to speak when they are holding the log. Thus the log is passed around the group.

It All Comes Out In The Wash

- Hang up a washing line.
- Draw a series of pictures representing activities the group has done. Leave a space for responses underneath.
- Peg the pictures onto the washing line.
- Get the group to stick sticky spots/ stars/ etc. on the activities they liked best. The number of stickers they stick on each activity should represent how much they enjoyed the activity.

Stepping Graph

- Get the group to line up on an imaginary or real line.
- Ask them to consider how much they enjoyed an activity or how much they learnt depending on what you want to achieve.
- Each individual then takes steps forward according to how much they got from the activity.
e.g. If they liked it a lot they would take lots of steps, if they didn't like it they will take few steps.
- Repeat with different questions.

Weather Map

- Create a map of the country, the county or the local area (whatever the persons participating can identify with).
- Draw compass points on the map. Each point of the compass will represent an activity or an element of an activity that the group has participated in,
 - e.g. North = Playing games East = Going for walks
South = Making things West = Making new friends
- Make stickers of different weather symbols that can be stuck onto the different areas of the map. Each weather symbol will represent an opinion or feeling about the activities in different areas on the map.
 - e.g. Sun = Fun Sunshine & Showers = OK
Rain Cloud = Boring Lightening Bolt = Exciting
- Participants are asked to stick the sticker that represents how they feel about the activity onto that activities area of the map;
 - e.g. A sun sticker in the North represents playing games as being fun.
- Alternatively you may ask, “What has it been like playing games? Has it been a bit stormy or have there been clear blue skies?”
- As an extension to the game you can also consider the weather forecast for the future
 - e.g. What will the weather forecast in the North be like next week?
- This starts the group how they will use what they have learnt.

Compass Game

- Make a compass on the floor and label four sides of the area you are working in as points of the compass (North, South, East and West).
- The points of the compass can be used to represent opinions about activities you the group has done or other things relevant to the project
 - e.g. Not fussed in the North Exciting in the East
Wicked in the West Stupid in the South
- Ask the group their opinions about activities they have done and get them to respond by running to the point on the compass that expresses how they feel;
 - e.g. When asked “what do you think about playing outside?” someone might run to the East if they think playing outside is exciting.
- There should be an extra helper on the sidelines to jot down a tally of responses.

Playing Cards Round

- This game is played using a deck of playing cards
- The dealer shuffles the pack and places it face down in the centre.
- Each person turns over a card in turn.
- Red cards are positive and black cards are negative
- The person turning over the card must say something positive or negative, depending on the colour of the card they turn over.
- The positive or negative statements can be about themselves, the group or activity, etc.

Wool Spider Web

- The aim of the game is to ask children what they think to questions that you ask them using a ball of wool.
- Five metre lengths of different coloured wool are joined together in a long line to form a ball (alternatively wrap the wool around a bobbin or object).
- Ask the children to form a circle (not too big so as they can throw the wool to each other).
- Start by asking for a volunteer to be asked the first question, throw the wool to that person and ask them a question. Once they have responded ask that person to nominate someone that they would like to throw the wool to. Once the wool has been thrown to the next person ask them a question.
- As the wool is thrown to more people different colours of the wool begin to unravel and a spider web begins to develop.
- When the wool runs out the web can be dropped and the children can get underneath it. Please take care during this exercise that children play safely whilst under the wool. Use wool that can break fairly easily should someone need to be freed from the spider web.

Children's questionnaires

To gain a full picture of what children think to a subject it is often a good idea to construct a simple questionnaire. Whereas Adults questionnaires rely solely on words, children's need to contain as much visual stimulus as possible, yet remain simple.

Normal questionnaires that contain yes/no tick box answers can be enhanced on a child's questionnaire so that a yes/no answer can be coloured in. Children's questionnaires are also useful in that more than one piece of information can be extracted at a time. If age and gender are to be established, a colour-in chart can be sketched of a girl and a boy standing side by side, each holding identical age charts. The same idea can be used when requiring a response to a before and after scenario question. Two identical pictures can be drawn and presented side by side in a questionnaire. The children then colour in both drawings according to what they think to a scenario before and after.



HEALTH AND SAFETY



Setting ground rules

If you are planning to take a group of children out to play safety is of paramount importance. Safety is stressed when setting up the ground rules at the start of each session.

Here is a way that I have used to set the ground rules with lots of different groups including groups of children who had never met each other and children with special needs.

Before the session a pot is filled with enough leaves so all the children can choose one each. This pot is introduced to the children as containing the 'tickets' to the woods. The children are then told that to get their tickets they have certain responsibilities. These are to:

- look after themselves
- look after the woods
- look after each other

We then have a discussion about what each of these entails. The children suggest things like:

Looking after themselves: not getting lost, not falling over, looking out for nettles and brambles.

Looking after the woods: not disturbing nesting birds, treating growing things with respect.

Looking after each other: staying in pairs, staying together as a group, not hurting or teasing each other

Try and put their suggestions into positive terms e.g. If someone suggests 'no punching or kicking' as a way of looking after each other restate what the child says as 'we will treat each other with respect',

When you feel confident that you have covered all the rules with the kids then they can all take a 'ticket' and you can head off to enjoy yourselves.

The benefit of this method is that the ticket gives the children something tangible to focus on during the discussion and a reminder if kept in a pocket or tucked in a hat.

Children and tools

When using simple hand tools only do what you feel comfortable with. The following guidelines may be helpful to you, but do seek training.

Things to think about when you are using trowels, spades, shovels, forks, hammers, rakes, secateurs, long handled loppers (sometimes called long handled pruners), bow saws.

- Adults can make their own informed decisions on a child's suitability to use a hand tool based on individual ability of child, how many children are present and group dynamics
- However, if children under 15 years old are present then it is not advisable to use long handled edged tools used by a swinging motion.
- Ensure that your equipment is in good condition.
- You need to be aware of the safe use of the equipment.
- Explain to the children how to use the equipment safely even if they seem confident.
- Ensure that the tool you are using is 'right for the job'.
- Mark out a safe area for using the tools in and make sure there is plenty of space between children.
- Ensure equipment is returned safely.
- Ensure a high staff to child ratio. 1:1 for younger children or 1:2 for older children. This does not mean having loads of adults present. Rather only have a few tools out at once .e.g have only bow saw that the children can come and use as they need it.



Forest school training

Forest school training covers using simple hand tools with children. For more information about Forest School and what is available in your local area contact:

| England | | Scotland | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| Name | Susannah Podmore | Name | Abbie Wyatt |
| Address | FEI Great Eastern House Tenison Road Cambridge CB1 2DU | Address | FEI Silvan House 231 Corstorphine Rd Edinburgh EH12 7AT |
| Phone | (01604) 882610 | Phone | (0131) 314 6187 |
| Email | fei.England@forestry.gsi.gov.uk | Email | fei.scotland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk |
| Wales | | | |
| South Wales | | North Wales | |
| Name | Lucy Kirkham | Name | Sue Williams |
| Address | FEI Cantref Court Brecon Road Abergavenny NP7 7AX | Address | FEI Clawdd Newydd Ruthin Denbighshire LL15 2NL |
| Phone | (01873) 850060 | Phone | 01824 750492 |
| Email | fei.wales@forestry.gsi.gov.uk | Email | fei.wales@forestry.gsi.gov.uk |





RISK ASSESSMENT



Several examples of specific risk assessments have been prepared for this pack, based on activities that have already been used for WildPlay. You will see that some risk assessment work together and refer to each other, for example those on gardening and on plants.

The risk assessments should also be used in conjunction with your own risk assessment of where you are working and playing, so you can identify the hazards on your site. A site risk assessment for the Herefordshire Wildlife trust as well as a risk assessment based on the weather are also included.

All the examples included in this kitbag have been saved as separate files on the resource DVD, so that you can edit them to suit your own circumstances.

Please use and adapt these risk assessments to make them useful to you. They are just suggestions. Remember to keep referring to them regularly.

Examples of risk assessments

The following examples are included in the resource pack

Activities:

- Bird Feeders**
- Collecting Natural Materials**
- Den building**
- Gardening**
- Handling Plants**
- Live animal handling**
- Night play**
- Pond dipping**
- Tree climbing**
- Using clay / earth**
- Using fires/ candles/ lanterns**
- Using hand tools**

Other assessments:

- Weather**
- Herefordshire Wildlife Trust site**

Activity-based risk assessments

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|------|----------------------|--------|------|
| Activity: Bird feeders | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Injury caused by Needles or bodkins 2. Child eating items meant to go on feeders. 3. Choking hazard. | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| <u>Low</u> | Medium | High | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use large blunt ended bodkins. 2. Use items suitable for human consumption. 3. Check for nut allergies. 4. Do not give nuts to children under 3 (choking hazard) | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | |
|--|------------------------|--|
| Activity: Collecting Natural Materials | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children wandering away from the group. 2. Litter 3. Sharps 4. Faeces See also plants and clay and earth risk assessments | | |
| Level of Hazard | Level of Risk | |
| <u>Low</u> Medium High | Low <u>Medium</u> High | |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure During session. Children may want to leave group to carry on collecting type activities | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High level of Supervision 2. Use ground rules and activities to establish boundaries. 3. Warn children of dangers from litter etc Level of risk after new control measures <u>Low</u> Medium High Is this level of risk acceptable <u>Yes</u> No | | |
| Name: Date: Signature: Date to review again: | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------|----------------------|---------------|------|
| Activity: Den building | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children in confined spaces- risk of accidental or deliberate harm to other children 2. Sticking out sticks on dens, Wounding hazard at eye height (note children's lower eye height) See use of tools risk assessment See collecting materials risk assessment | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | <u>Medium</u> | High | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sure to allow plenty of space to work in. 2. Set ground rules clearly with regard to respect for others 3. Warn children of danger. Check dens for dangerous bits | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Activity: Fire - Using fires/ candles/ lanterns | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See attached BTCV generic risk assessment. 2. Children poking fire with sticks and leaving smouldering material. 3. Trip or slip resulting in contact with fire. | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | Medium | <u>High</u> | Low | Medium | <u>High</u> |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See attached BTCV generic risk assessment. 2. Set ground rules rigorously. 3. Place seating well away from fire. 4. Ensure people walk around the back of people seated round a fire instead of in front. 5. Have high ratio adults to children. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------|------|----------------------|--------|------|--|
| Activity: Gardening | | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <p style="text-align: center;">Use guidance under using clay and earth, plants and tools specific risk assessments.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. Strain or sprain if large amounts of lifting to be done.</p> | | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | | |
| Low | Medium | High | Low | Medium | High | |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure | | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <p style="text-align: center;"> 1. Provide wheelbarrows for lifting. 2. Instruct in safe and correct procedures for digging lifting etc. 3. Provide regular breaks and swap jobs. 4. Protective gloves to be provided. </p> | | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | Low | Medium | High | |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | Yes | No | | |
| Name: | | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Activity: Live animal handling | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Infection on animals e.g. zoonoses or enzootic abortion 2. Kicking (larger animals e.g. pony) leading to contusion or crushing 3. Bites and stings 4. Parasites 5. Allergies 6. Fainting (through fear) 7. Poisonous secretions (toads and newts) | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | Level of Risk | |
| Low | <u>Medium to High</u> | Low | <u>Medium</u> High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure Any time when animals are present. During any outdoor play especially in summer | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure everyone washes hands after coming into contact with animals. 2. No pregnant women to have contact with ewes in lamb 3. Only allow children to have contact with animals with an experienced handler who knows the individual animal. 4. Keep records of all allergies and take precautions. 5. Introduce animals e.g. snakes to the children in a supportive environment so children can overcome fears safely. 6. Gentling handling of creatures so as not to excite defence mechanisms | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | |
| Date: | | | |
| Signature: | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Activity: Night play | | | | | |
| Location | | | | | |
| Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Higher risk of trip or slip hazard. 2. Fear or anxiety. 3. Child becoming lost or separated from the group. 4. Child personal welfare- strangers | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| <u>Low</u> | Medium | High | Low | Medium | <u>High</u> |
| Persons at risk | | | | | |
| Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide torches if appropriate. 2. Ensure batteries kept well primed. 3. Set boundaries clearly and patrol them well. 4. If doing a night hike ensure one registered adult is in front and one behind the group. 5. Provide opportunities for children to opt out of activities or stay with an adult. 6. Check area thoroughly beforehand for trip and slip hazards and warn participants. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------|----------------------|--------|------|
| Activity: Handling Plants | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thorns- scratching or piercing 2. Stinging 3. Poisonous berries- swallowing or skin contact. 4. Poisonous sap- swallowing or skin contact. 5. Poisonous fungi- swallowing or skin contact. 6. Grasses with sharp edges e.g. saw sedge- cuts 7. Falling vegetation- crushing or bruising. 8. Carcinogens e.g. bracken. 9. Entanglement. E.g undergrowth | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | <u>Medium</u> | High | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure Whenever playing outdoors. | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Ensure high level of knowledge of plants that pose a possible risk. 11. Don't put fingers in mouth. 12. Wash hands before eating or drinking. 13. Warn children of dangers of eating unknown plants. 14. Use face-masks if you have to go into bracken. Avoid where possible. 15. Identify hazardous plants before children go onto a site and remove where possible. Use P.P.E. 16. Warn of danger of infection from e.g. blackthorn. 17. Look at child height when doing initial site visit. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------|----------------------|---------------|------|
| Activity: Pond dipping | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence Slipping into pond. | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slipping into pond. 2. Water borne diseases. E.g. tetanus leptospirosis 3. Deep or fast flowing water. 4. Exposure to harmful substance | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | <u>Medium</u> | High | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure During pond dipping activity. Also possible children could go back to pond after activity has finished | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure children have adequate clothing 2. Maintain high level of supervision for the whole duration of the activity. (1:4 or 1:5) 3. Make sure everyone washes hands after the activity and before touching food. 4. Talk about risks involved with the children. 5. Tread carefully on banks and gravel banks 6. Do not drink or wash hands in stream or pond water. 7. Plan rescue systems in advance 8. Use only water with existing pond dipping platforms or where the water is shallow enough to not cause serious threat. 9. Do not use ant site where sewerage is present | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Activity: Tree climbing | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Falling or slipping from trees. 2. Dead branches breaking under children's weight- branch falling onto others, child falling from tree. 3. Child standing on another child's fingers climbing below. 4. Child getting stuck. 5. Wounding on sharps sticking out of tree. | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | <u>Medium</u> | High | Low | Medium | <u>High</u> |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure Any session in which ratio of adults allows for tree climbing. | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specific measures or precautions to be taken 2. Allow children to climb without pressure or adult concern to ensure they only climb as high as they feel comfortable. 3. Limit numbers of children in any one tree 4. Get children to 'flag' (verbally or physically) dead branches and sharps. 5. Make sure all children can recognise a dead branch by its lack of foliage (N.B. this may cause problems in wintertime). 6. Children must only climb the trees they can climb. Do not give 'bunk ups' or allow children to use climbing aids. 7. Adult to climb all trees that children climb. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|------|
| Activity: Using clay / earth | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sharps buried in clay or earth. 2. Infection form soil borne disease e.g. tetanus. 3. Injury from using tools See specific risk assessment on using tools | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | Medium | <u>High</u> | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure Whenever activity is undertaken. Any time small children are outside (under 4's) | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover any broken skin. 2. Wash hands before eating or drinking. 3. Instruct in ensure safe and correct digging lifting techniques. 4. Dig or use earth form sites known to be free of rubbish, sewage etc. 5. Ensure children know not to put soil in mouth. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------|------|----------------------|---------------|------|
| Activity: Using hand tools | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard 1. Hurt or harm to operator or third party. 2. Tools left lying around causing hurt or harm | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | <u>Medium</u> | High | Low | <u>Medium</u> | High |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure Short sessions with tools. | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken 1. Maintain High ratio's (1:1 for saws, 1:3 for spades) see above. 2. Keep all tools in good working order and check regularly. 3. Only have out as many tools as you can supervise safely. 4. Put tools away as soon as they are not needed. 5. Store tools in a safe and secure manner. 6. Ensure correct tool is used for the job. 7. Safe carrying of tools | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Low</u> | Medium | High |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Yes</u> | No | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

Other risk assessments

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|------|----------------------|--------|------|
| Risk: Weather | | | | | |
| Location Any: see site specific risk assessments. | | | | | |
| Description of previous accidents/ incidence | | | | | |
| Description of Hazard <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cold, sleet, snow, hail- exposure leading to hypothermia. Disorientation. 2. Mist, fog- poor visibility, loss of contact. 3. High temps, sun, -burning glare, sunstroke, and dehydration. 4. High winds- wind blown debris, children blown over cliffs, difficulty in verbal communication 5. Heavy rain- slippery conditions, rapid rise in water levels. 6. Lightning- lightning strike, burns, death 7. Ice- slippery conditions | | | | | |
| Level of Hazard | | | Level of Risk | | |
| Low | Medium | High | Low | Medium | High |
| <u>Various</u> | | | <u>Various</u> | | |
| Persons at risk Adults (including employees and volunteers) and children | | | | | |
| Duration and possible frequency of exposure | | | | | |
| Specific measures or precautions to be taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check weather forecasts. 2. Wear suitable clothing. 3. Carry and ensure adequate access to fluids. 4. Provide barrier cream. 5. Provide shade where possible. 6. Avoid outdoor activities in poor conditions. 7. Warn of danger of enhanced trip and slip hazard. | | | | | |
| Level of risk after new control measures | | | <u>Various</u> | | |
| Is this level of risk acceptable | | | <u>Various</u> | | |
| Name: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | |
| Date to review again: | | | | | |

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Site Risk Assessment

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| ACTIVITY / EVENT/ PREMISES ASSESSED: To be used in conjunction with specific activity risk assessments | | ASSESSED BY: Lily Horseman WildPlay Officer | | DATE(S): | | PPE needed: Not applicable | | 1st Aid Kit(s) checked (tick): YES NO Qualified First Aider(s) present: Lily Horseman/ Jo Polack | |
| LOCATION and GRID REF: SO: MOBILE PHONE NO: | | NO. OF PEOPLE AT RISK AND STATUS (e.g. 6 volunteers, all staff, public, etc): WildPlay staff / volunteers/ and children / OTHERS AT RISK: Parents coming to collect/ drop off children | | Power tools and operators: Not applicable | | Nearest Hospital and/or Doctor (N.B. emergency no. is 999 or 112) Grid ref. for air-ambulance: | | | |
| HAZARDS | TYPE OF RISK | Risk level(R) Probability x severity $P \times S = R$ Where risk is L, M or H | PRECAUTIONS (to remove hazard or reduce risk) | | Who will undertake precautions? | Before /During (B/D) | New Risk Level(R) (after taking precautions) $P \times S = R$ | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|--|----------------|-----|---------|
| Uneven ground | Trip +slip | 3x1=2 L | Warn people to be careful. | Lily +all | d | 2x1=1 L |
| Litter, metal, glass, needles, dog faeces. | Wounding infection or | 2x2=4 L | Check area before start of workshop. | Lily +all | b | 1x2=2 L |
| Brambles +prickly undergrowth | wounding | 3x1=3 L | Warn people to be careful. | Lily +all | d | 2x1=2 L |
| Tasty looking fungi and berries, handling poisonous plants. | poisoning | 1x4=4 L | Warn people to be careful not to put fingers in mouth. Provide hand washing facilities | Lily +all | d | 1x2=2 L |
| Weather conditions | Sunstroke. heat fatigue, wet | 3x2=6 M | Bring sun protection. Warn people to be careful, provide indoor/ outdoor activity/ hot drinks on cold days/ access to drinking water | Lily | d | 2x2=4 L |
| Child personal safety | Strangers. Children wandering off and getting lost. | 3x2=6 M | Signing in and out procedures, level of supervision, ground rules | all | d | 2x2=4 L |
| Unsafe trees | Tree falling on someone | 2x4 +8 H | Don't use woods during high winds, get check done on woods for unsafe trees. | Lily – rangers | B/d | 1x4=4 L |
| Children being out of sight in centre grounds/ woods | Incident accident happening without knowledge of leaders | 4X4 H | Regular head counts of children, cross checked with signing in book for numbers, children in groups and high level of supervision | all | d | 2x2=4 L |

Signed:

Date:

NOTES

No. of people at risk and status: This refers to who is directly at risk from the activity, event, premises being assessed, e.g. 10 volunteers with the work party, or all staff in a Trust premises.

Others at risk: Refers to other parties that may be at risk during the activity, e.g. members of the public using a reserve whilst volunteers are felling trees, contractors, visitors to Trust HQ, etc.

Grid Ref for air ambulance: A vehicular ambulance service operates from Hereford City. If an accident occurs near the county borders or on a remote site or in a woodland an air-ambulance (helicopter) will probably be sent. They will only land in an appropriate field close to the accident site. If you provide a grid reference for such a location, they will be able to land and treat the casualty much quicker. The mountain rescue may also be sent if the casualty requires a stretcher as transport to the ambulance, as the paramedics will not do this! You or your volunteers may have to instead.

This section is meant to help you calculate the level of risk for a particular hazard – where a hazard is something with a potential to cause harm.

| | | |
|-----------------|--|---|
| <p>1</p> | <p>To calculate level of risk, first calculate the level of Probability = P (1 to 4) where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improbable / unlikely to occur 2. Possible / could occur sometimes 3. Probable / will occur several times 4. Likely to occur/event expected. | <p><u>Example –</u></p> <p>The probability of harm from tripping or slipping may be likely (probability value of 4) but the potential outcome is a minor injury (severity level is 1). $P \times S = R$, hence $4 \times 1 = 4$. Thus the level of risk is LOW (4). However, poisoning by plants might be regarded as possible (probability value of 2), but the potential outcome is death, (severity of 4). i.e. $2 \times 4 = 8$ Here the level of risk is HIGH (8). N.B. You must show your calculation on the form.</p> <p>The risk level to be estimated relates to the hazard before you apply precautions to reduce the risk. Thus on the forms, record the initial level of risk and use it to give an overview of various risks on a site/activity and to focus precautionary measures to reduce the probability or severity of a particular hazard. N.B: Any activity with a High level of risk is unacceptable until the hazard can be avoided, the likelihood can be lessened or lastly, the level of risk can be reduced. If it cannot, DON'T DO IT!</p> |
| <p>2</p> | <p>Then calculate the severity of the hazard = S (1 to 4), i.e. the worst likely outcome assuming no controls in place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minor injury, e.g. cuts, bruises, sprains, minor burns, etc. 2. Major injury / Non-life threatening, e.g. fractures, dislocations, muscle strains, cuts/burns or disease needing medical attention. 3. Major injury / Life threatening, e.g. loss of limb, major fracture, major disease, exposure or hypothermia, penetrating eye injury, etc. 4. Fatal, i.e. death of volunteer, employee, contractor or member of public. | |
| <p>3</p> | <p>Then multiply as below:</p> <p>Probability x Severity = Level of Risk (P) x (S) = (R)</p> <p>Where,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Levels of risk 1 to 4 = Low risk 2. Levels of risk 6 = Medium Risk 3. Levels of risk 8 to 16 = High Risk | |