LEARNING in the OUTDOORS

IN THE ARTS

TOOLKIT 5

TEACHER TOOLKIT SCHEDULE

Outdoors Victoria, in partnership with the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER Victoria), Environment Education Victoria (EEV), Geography Teachers Association (GTAV) and Parks Victoria (Parks Vic) will produce 15 Teacher Toolkits between 2018 and 2020. These toolkits will be delivered to the following order:

2018

1 Introduction to Outdoor Learning
2 Outdoor Learning in the Play Ground
3 Outdoor Learning in Water-Based Environments

2019

4 Outdoor Learning in Physical Education
5 Outdoor Learning in Art
6 Outdoor Learning in Geography
7 Outdoor Learning in Science
8 Outdoor Learning in Mathematics
9 Outdoor Learning in Urban Environments

2020

10 Outdoor Learning in Health
11 Outdoor Learning in Sustainability
12 Outdoor Learning in History
13 Outdoor Learning in Reading & Writing
14 Outdoor Learning in Speaking & Listening
15 Outdoor Learning in Indigenous Activities

Outdoors Victoria, in partnership with ACHPER (Victoria), EEV, GTAV and Parks Victoria, are always interested in finding out what is occurring in the outdoors in your school.

If you are proud of a new program you have implemented or would like to be involved in, or contribute to any of the Teacher Toolkits, contact any of the above organisations. (Contact details are provided on the final page of this document)

Outdoors Victoria, in partnership with ACHPER (Victoria), GTAV, EEV and Parks Victoria, respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and their Elders past and present, for the important and enduring role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples play in Australia regarding the land, water and sky used for learning in the Outdoors.

LEARNING IN THE OUTDOORS

IN THE ARTS

INDEX

Outdoor Learning in the Arts 1
Benefits of Outdoor Learning in the Arts 2
Activities
- Activity 1: Plein Air Painting 3
- Activity 2: Panorama Drawing 4
- Activity 3: Ephemeral Art 5
- Activity 4: Chalk or Painting Drawing 6
- Activity 5: Yarn Wrapping Branches 7
- Activity 6: Scientific Leaf Drawing 8
- Activity 7: Nature Paintbrushes 9
- Activity 8: Stamping & Printing Leaves 10
- Activity 9: Yarn & Twig Sculptures 11
- Activity 10: Outdoor Scavenger Hunt 12
- Activity 11: Installation Art 13
- Activity 12: Field Sketching 14
- Activity 13: Sun Painting 15

Conclusion 16
Acknowledgements 16

This Teacher Toolkit is offered as a framework for developing your own curriculum specific ideas and activities for Outdoor Learning. It is quite flexible and should be adapted to suit your needs. Remember to note the benefits of Outdoor Learning in your teaching area, and to provide tips wherever you can for embedding Outdoor Learning into the curriculum. Include relevant research, case studies and examples that might assist teachers. Teacher Toolkit 1 Benefits of Outdoor Learning presents research that will help you argue the case for taking students out of the classroom.

Outdoor Learning in the Arts

This Teacher Toolkit will be looking at the opportunities for integrating Outdoor Learning in the arts. The Outdoors has been used as medium to teach and enhance arts for many years, in this toolkit you will find a series of activities that can be used across various year levels and student groups.

In this Teaching Toolkit, we provide sample activities which use minimal equipment and have a quick setup time. As for all activities in the tool-kits, it is important to survey your environment carefully, to ensure it is safe and appropriate for students.

Remember that rain can trigger good conversations about safety. You may need to have a safety chat at the start of every rainy session. For example; steep hills, banks, and grass can become slippery.

Outdoor Learning activities are only limited by your imagination. We hope the activities described below will inspire you to explore further.

Do you have a great activity that you would like to share?
Please feel free to email **outdoorlearning@outdoorsvictoria.org.au** with any suggestions.

These Teacher Toolkits would not be possible without the wonderful support of many practising teachers willing to share their favourite ideas and activities.

Benefits of Outdoor Learning in the Arts

Research conducted by Atchley & Strayer (2012) from the University of Utah and University of Kansas (1) has shown that an increase of nature will nurture creativity, the study found that after spending an increased time in nature participants were able to see certain optical illusions that were not visible in pretests. It was found that "Our environment plays a critical role in how we think and behave"

Michelle Park (2) from San Francisco reflected upon a life time spent in the outdoors creating art projects in 2018 and found that using the outdoors in arts has helped coming back to basics. Instead of relying on the formal processes that typically occur in a closed environment the outdoors encourages spontaneity, that the outdoor environment encourages children to take control and express the way they view the world.

Lev Vygotsky (3) found that this play allows children to reflect upon the world that is around them and to begin to understand it. This is echoed by Wells 200 who found that using the outdoor environment during school assists in stimulating students mental engagement, increasing student attention and cognitive abilities.

1 - https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0051474
2 - https://www.hipcamp.com/journal/camping/5-benefits-of-making-art-outside/
3 - https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/001391600219727793

Mike Barr from Artworx Gallery (4) in South Australia suggests that by being engrossed in the outdoor environment whilst creating art will help see the real colour of the world as it is instead of through artificial renderings on computers or printed pages. Additionally, that by being in the outdoors will help provide an increased understanding of light and shadow to students as it is right in front of them.

The Outdoors and Nature is all around us, sometimes the best thing that can be done is to let students explore, play and experiment with the outdoors, you may be shocked with what students will be able to create!

4- artworxgallery.com.au/art-news/2017/5/31/the-benefits-of-painting-outdoors

ACTIVITY 1

Plein Air Painting

Plein air painting provides students with an opportunity to paint outside. Everywhere they turn there are new things to see, arrangements to consider, or decisions to be made about what to paint.

Step 1: Choose a location
This could be in a nearby park, on your school oval, on a tennis court. Anywhere!

Step 2: Find your subject matter
What will students paint and how will they paint it?
'

Step 3: Paint or Draw
Provide students a range of materials including paints, brushes, coloured pencils or markers, paper or other surfaces. Start small on your first trip, the more frequently you go out, the larger canvas/paper you can bring.

It is important to ensure no expectations are placed on students, there is no right or wrong. Remember this activity is not necessarily about the end outcome, the process is the key.

When you have finished

Plan how you intend to bring the wet art back into the classroom. How is it going to dry? Think about what will be the best way to clean everything.

Curriculum Outcomes

1-2

- Experiment with ideas and develop characters and settings through stories using images, sounds and text (VCAMAE021)
- Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021)
- Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas (VCAVAR024)

Equipment & Materials

- Sunscreen
- Pencils
- Sketchbooks
- Paints
- Brushes
- Coloured Pencils
- Pastels
- Markers Canvas
- Art Paper
- Board

Additional Resources:

Plein Air painting for kids: https://artclasscurator.com/en-plein-air/
How to plan a day of Plein Air painting with your kids: https://www.arthistorykids.com/blog/2016/4/5/en-plein-air-painting

ACTIVITY 2

Panorama Drawing

Provide each student with a large piece of paper and pencils and go outside the classroom to a nearby tree.

Once you have found the tree, ask students to place the paper on the tree trunk and slowly start to sketch around the tree. Students place the paper on the trunk and then sketch what is immediately in a narrow space next to the paper. Students will walk around the entire trunk of the tree drawing what they see.

Upon completion of this activity, the students will have created a 360° Abstract Panorama Drawing of the tree. You could have students create drawings of the same tree or different trees and analyse the differences in trees and why the differences occur.

Equipment & Materials

- Large sheet of paper for each student
- Pencils
- Large and various trees

Curriculum Outcomes

1-2

- Experiment with ideas and develop characters and settings through stories using images, sounds and text (VCAMAE021)
- Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021)
- Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas (VCAVAR024)

Additional Resources:

How to draw a tree: https://artprojectsforkids.org/how-to-draw-a-tree/

ACTIVITY 3

Ephemeral Art

Ephemeral art has many forms. It only occurs once and cannot be embodied in any lasting object. This art merges back into the environment. It can take place in many areas including the beach, the oval, the forest, or in a park and can be completed in one session, several sessions, or throughout an entire term by individuals, partners or small groups.

Firstly, when introducing these activities, choose whether to provide students a prompt or add specific requirements for the art work. Prompts may relate to certain subjects or topics you are covering in class. Requirements may be to 'use your body to create a sculpture' or 'use twigs and grass only' or may simply ask that the artwork is based on a random word pulled out of a hat.

In groups, students design their art and work together to create it, and present it back to the bigger group. An individual or partners may plan their art in one session and create it in the following one. Students may also wish to choose their word to prompt their creations.

In this activity, you can use any material you find. Look closely and you may find natural materials around the school that you can use. Feel free to show students the work of other artists (but only after completion as students will often subconsciously copy the work they have seen.)

Equipment & Materials

The equipment and materials for this activity are often scattered around a school ground. These may include:

- twigs
- leaves
- branches
- rocks and stones

Curriculum Outcomes

1-2

- Experiment with ideas and develop characters and settings through stories using images, sounds and text (VCAMAE021)
- Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
- Create and display artworks to express idea to an audience (VCAVAP023)
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021)
- Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas (VCAVAR024)

Additional Resources:

Nature crafts for kids: http://naturecraftsforkids.com/tag/ephemeral-art/

ACTIVITY 4

Chalk or Paint Drawing

Chalk Drawing has been used in the primary school art setting for many years because it is so easy and effective. This activity varies the traditional practice by using paint substituted for chalk.

Step 1: Make the chalk paint by mixing 1/2 cup of corn starch, 2/3 cup of water and food colouring. This paint can be removed easily if necessary.

Step 2: Ask students to choose a subject then draw a pencil outline of it on concrete or asphalt. The subject may be inspired by a random word or by some topic from other classes (maths shapes, the human body, stars and planets)

Step 3: Dip the paintbrushes into the paint and start drawing.

In groups, students design their art and work together to create it and present it to the class.

Equipment & Materials

- Corn Starch
- Water
- Food Colouring
- Pencils

Curriculum Outcomes

1-2

- Experiment with ideas and develop characters and settings through stories using images, sounds and text (VCAMAE021)
- Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
- Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas (VCAVAR024)
- Identify and discuss how ideas are expressed in artworks from a range of places, times and cultures, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR028)

Additional Resources:

Wet chalk drawings: https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/drawing/wet-chalk-drawings/
Sidewalk chalk anatomy for kids: https://www.trueaimeducation.com/sidewalk- chalk-anatomy-activity-for-kids/

ACTIVITY 5

Yarn Wrapping Branches

Yarn Wrapping is currently a trend in Outdoor Art. Be aware it might pose a risk to the plants that are wrapped. It is important to only leave the yarn wrapping on for a short time (less than seven days) so the plant wrapped is not damaged. We recommend using branches that have fallen off trees already rather than living trees. Dead standing trees would be ideal for wrapping.

To start, gather a collection of fallen branches. Choose the coloured yarn you wish to use. Start along the base of the branch and wrap upwards. For best coverage, allow each strand of yarn to overlap the one below, ensuring none of the branch peeks through the yarn.

Once you reach the end of the portion you wish to wrap, cut the yarn and tie it off.

Equipment & Materials

- Branches
- Yarn

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

3-4
- Explore different ways of displaying artworks to enhance their meaning for an audience (VCAVAP027)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

Yarn wrapped branches for spring: https://www.themagiconions.com/2012/03/yarn-wrapped-branches-for- spring.html
Yarn bombing and ethics: http://www.leanneprain.com/2014/08/on-yarn-bombing-and-ethics/
Wrapping trees in yarn: https://www.hgtv.com/design/make-and-celebrate/handmade/wrap-trees- in-yarn-for-the-holidays- pictures

ACTIVITY 6

Scientific Leaf Drawing

This is one of the simplest activities in this booklet but a very useful way to develop a good hand and powers of observation. Leaf drawing can be used to illustrate different leaves in different seasons to show change.

It builds confidence in students to know that they don't have to be artists to create successful sketches. There is no right or wrong.

For this activity, provide students with the sketching materials listed below and ask them to go out and collect three separate, different leaves. Students place their leaves on a page, then trace around them.

Once each leaf is outlined, fill in its details and colour. If students finish quickly, prompt them to deepen their sketch by adding further details.

Once all students have sketched their leaves, ask them what details they included in their drawings.

Later, you might like to arrange all the leaves and the drawings and ask students to try to match the drawings to the leaves. Once all sketches have been matched, discuss with students what helped make the match. Ask what differences they noticed in the sketches.

Equipment & Materials

For this activity, you need:

- Pencils
- Paper
- Different leaves

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)
- Objects are made of materials that have observable properties (VCSSU044)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

How to draw a leaf: https://snapguide.com/guides/draw-a-leaf-1/

ACTIVITY 7

Nature Paint Brushes

Students are always using paint brushes in art but rarely do they get an opportunity to investigate how they are made.

Ask students to go outside and collect materials with which to create their nature paintbrushes.

These materials might include twigs for the body of the paintbrush, and grass, different types of leaves, and a variety of other materials for the 'bristles'.

Then attach the bristles (grass, leaves, bark) to the end of the body (twigs) of the brush with rubber bands.

These brushes will not last as long as traditional paint brushes although if washed, they are more than satisfactory and they show elements of sustainability and innovation.

Equipment & Materials

- Twigs of a similar size (6cm)
- A variety of leaves, grasses, and bark to create the 'bristles'.

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)
- Objects are made of materials that have observable properties (VCSSU044)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

Stick craft nature paintbrushes: https://www.messylittlemonster.com/2015/07/stick-craft-nature-paintbrushes.html

ACTIVITY 8

Stamping and Printing Leaves

This is a fun activity that can be done in any or all seasons.

Students gather a collection of leaves from the school ground or local parks.

Step 1: Lie a leaf vein side down on a sheet of A4 paper, then cover it with a paper towel.

Step 2: Pound the leaf and paper towel with a heavy object like a school book, or rubber mallet.

Step 3: After several hits, the colour and shape of the leaf will come through the paper towel.

Step 4: Carefully remove the towel and leaf to reveal the print.

Equipment & Materials

- Leaves
- Drawing or Watercolour paper
- Paper towels
- Object for pounding leaf (e.g. rubber mallet, heavy book)

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)
- Objects are made of materials that have observable properties (VCSSU044)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

3 ways to make prints with leaves: https://www.hobbyfarms.com/3-ways-to-make-prints-with-leaves/

ACTIVITY 9

Yarn and Twig Sculptures

Students create their own sculptures - designing and implementing their own ideas or responding to your requirements.

During a nature walk around the school ground, ask students to collect all kinds of twigs and sticks in different shapes and sizes

Then go to the art room and find string and yarn scraps from old art projects or use new materials if needed. Bright colours work best.

Ask students to wrap the twine or yarn around the twigs to create different shapes. Glue or rubber bands can be used to hold the yarn in place for a longer period.

You can suggest an extension activity where students create 'lilypads and find out how much weight they can hold.

Equipment & Materials

- Scissors
- String
- Twigs
- Glue
- Rubber bands

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

DIY gods eye yarn kits: https://www.makeandtakes.com/diy-gods-eye-yarn-art

ACTIVITY 10

Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

This scavenger hunt requires students to use found materials in different ways. Ask individuals or groups to find all the items on a 'Scavenger" list.

Find items in nature that are shaped like a heart/circle/square/triangle, find a leaf with interesting veins, find five blue things, five things that start with P, find something soft or hard

Make a sculpture of a found object

Do a drawing of a found object

Play a game of hopscotch on the concrete

Build a fort or tower out of your found objects

Equipment & Materials

The equipment and materials needed for this activity vary depending on your chosen activity or the scavenger hunt.

Curriculum Outcomes

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

A make and do scavenger hunt for kids: https://artfulparent.com/a-scavenger-hunt-and-make/

ACTIVITY 11

Installation Art

In this activity we make Installation Art that is nature based. We will make a tree!

Collect a range of items, both natural and made. Gather sticks and twigs, leaves and other natural elements that can form the tree. Collect other items like toilet roll cylinders, paper cups, coloured paper, and twine.

Either give students a framework - basic instructions - for their installations, or allow them to create their trees by trial and error.

Work in groups of five or six. Start by providing a large flower pot in which you have stood and secured a wooden stick - the base of the trunk. Then using cardboard and twine, students start to build the trunk and branches of the tree. It does not have to be perfect at this stage. Use paper mache or coloured paper then all the found objects to complete the tree.

Once complete, the students will have made a forest!

To extend this activity, make birds and other creatures to sit in the trees then discuss the importance of trees in our natural environment.

Equipment & Materials

- Paper cups
- Paper plates
- Toilet roll holders
- Yoghurt containers
- Coloured paper
- Natural objects found outside

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

Making a tree with children: https://www.instructables.com/id/Making-a-Tree-With-Children/

ACTIVITY 12

Field Sketching

Sketching outside is a great activity that can be done by all levels of students, anywhere and everywhere.

Make sure you have the appropriate materials, a variety of pencils and paper.

Go outside into the school ground, local park, or a built environment where students start sketching.

You might choose to limit this activity by using only certain colours, objects, or styles.

This activity fosters students' independent thinking. Ask students to reflect on their own and each others' sketches.

This activity can be scheduled for a one-hour class over three weeks or more.

Equipment & Materials

- Pencils
- Paper

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

Do's and dont's of urban sketching: https://roisincure.com/wp/25-more-dos-and-donts-when-urban-sketching/
Urban sketching with kids at water: http://www.urbansketchers.org/2017/08/urban- sketching-with-kids-at-atwater.html

ACTIVITY 13

Sun Painting

Students enjoy this hands-on activity. You need a variety of materials including cotton fabric, paintbrushes, and flowers, leaves and twigs.

Step 1: Dampen the fabric. Ask students to start painting the fabric with any colour or colours that have been made up.

Step 2: Gather leaves and twigs and ask students to arrange them on the fabric then press them lightly into it.

After several hours and once the fabric is dry you can slowly peel the items away from the fabric.

To set the paint, tumble the sun prints in a clothes dryer at a high temperature or through line drying (This is not always as effective) and then hang out on the line to finish.

Remember to watch throughout the process.

Equipment & Materials

- White 100% cotton fabric
- Acrylic craft paints (darker colours work best)
- Paintbrushes
- Water
- A tarp or plastic rubbish bag
- Flowers
- Leaves, etc.

Curriculum Outcomes

F
- Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks (VCAVAE017)
- Experiment with different materials and techniques to make artworks (VCAVAV018)

1-2
- Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)

F-2
- Use a range of methods, including drawings and provided tables, to sort information (VCSIS053)

5-6
- Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029)

Additional Resources:

Sun prints on fabric: https://www.craftiments.com/2013/06/acrylic-paint-sun-prints-on-fabric.html

Conclusion

This Teacher Toolkit shows integrating the arts into the outdoors can be achieved with relative ease. To create this teacher booklet, specialist arts teachers were interviewed to find out their favourite outdoor activity that could be completed by generalist teaching staff.

As educators we are continually seeking development If you have feedback or would like to share your experiences or activities please add a comment on the FUSE Webpage or email **outdoorlearning@outdoorsvictoria.org.au** and we will review it and get back to you as soon as possible.

Acknowledgments

This teacher toolkit could not have been created without the work and dedication of educators throughout Australia. Educators often need to look at their local environment and create activities that suit their needs for that day, we thank you for sharing your activities and hope others reading this document can utilise your creative thinking and implement these activities.

Furthermore, the following organisations and staff have assisted in the creation of this document including;

- Outdoors Victoria
- ACHPER (Victoria)
- Environment Education Victoria
- Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria (GTAV)
- Parks Victoria

Get in contact:

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