



John Muir Award

Question: How can an ordinary outdoor space become a place of discovery, sustainability and belonging?

Discover • Explore • Conserve • Share





- Explore the John Muir Award framework
- Support scrapbook assignment development
- Promote sustainability, wellbeing, inclusion and Cynefin
- Connect theory to practice

Retrieval & Recap



(John Muir Trust, 2025)

What are the four challenges of the John Muir Award?

What does sustainability mean?



Who is John Muir?



John Muir: The Father of National Parks

- Born in **Dunbar, Scotland** in **1838**
- Moved to **Wisconsin, USA** when he was 11 years old
- Naturalist, explorer, writer, and environmental campaigner
- Explored and studied forests, mountains, and wildlife
- Helped protect **Yosemite National Park** and other wilderness areas
- Co-founded the **Sierra Club** in 1892
- Inspired people to value and protect nature
- (Worster, 2008)

John Muir's mission and environmental stewardship

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." (Muir, 1911).

The John Muir Award

- An environmental award that encourages people to connect with, enjoy, and care for nature.
- Open to people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Involves four challenges:
 - **Discover** a wild place
 - **Explore** its nature and history
 - **Conserve** it through practical action
 - **Share** experiences with others
- Helps develop environmental awareness, confidence, and teamwork.
- Encourages people to become responsible stewards of the natural world.

Why it is important:

The John Muir Award inspires people to value nature, take action to protect the environment, and build a lifelong connection with the outdoors. (John Muir Trust, 2025)



Why Nature-Based Learning Matters

Froebel – Nature as a teacher (*Froebel, 1887*)

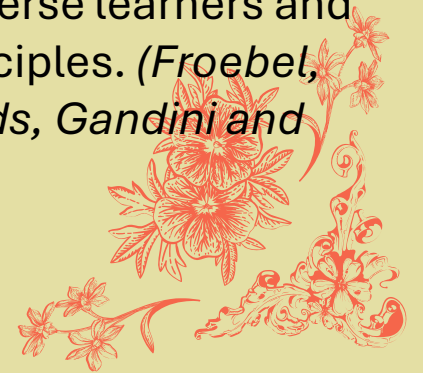
Montessori – Hands-on learning (*Montessori, 1912*)

Dewey – Learning through experience (*Dewey, 1938*)

Malaguzzi – Environment as the third teacher (*Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 2012*)

Inclusion & Multisensory Learning

Outdoor and experiential learning reflects the theories of Froebel, Montessori, Dewey, and Malaguzzi by providing diverse learning opportunities, multiple ways to engage with learning, and inclusive environments that support neurodiverse learners and identified ALN through inclusive practice principles. (*Froebel, 1887; Montessori, 1912; Dewey, 1938; Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 2012*).



Treasure Chest Activity

Discover – What do you notice?

Explore – What memories does it evoke?

Conserve – How could it be protected?

Share – Discuss with a partner





The Four Purposes of the Curriculum for Wales

•Ethical, Informed Citizens

Developed an understanding of environmental issues and the importance of protecting natural spaces.

•Healthy, Confident Individuals

Improved wellbeing, resilience, and confidence through outdoor activities and teamwork.

•Ambitious, Capable Learners

Gained new knowledge and skills through exploring and learning about nature.

•Enterprising, Creative Contributors

Used creativity to solve problems, complete conservation tasks, and share experiences with others.

Link to the John Muir Award:

The award supports all four purposes by encouraging learners to explore, conserve, and reflect on their relationship with the natural environment.

Cynefin

A Welsh concept meaning a sense of belonging and connection to place.

Helps children understand their identity, community, and environment.

Encourages respect for local culture, heritage, and nature.

Developed through meaningful experiences in local environments.

Link to the John Muir Award:

Exploring and caring for local natural spaces helps children develop a strong sense of Cynefin and responsibility for their environment.

John Muir Award and the Curriculum for Funded Non-maintained Nursery Settings in Wales

Belonging

•Developing a sense of connection to nature, place, and community.

Communication

•Talking about experiences, asking questions, and sharing discoveries.

Exploration

•Investigating the natural world through hands-on outdoor learning.

Physical Development

•Developing coordination, confidence, and resilience through outdoor activities.

Well-being

•Supporting emotional wellbeing, independence, and positive relationships.

Key Link

The John Muir Award promotes active, child-centred learning through outdoor experiences that support all five developmental pathways and encourage children to care for the natural environment.

(Welsh Government, 2022)

John Muir Award
Digital Scrapbook
Part 1

Plenary & Feedback

How can an ordinary outdoor space become a place of discovery, sustainability and belonging?

One thing I discovered today...

Post-it note feedback 

Questions?

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