

ECGE4001 – Portfolio of Study Skills

Part 1

Throughout the world many countries believe outdoor play is crucial for a child's growth and development; particularly endorsed in Iceland. Their respective government have officially documented support for outdoor play and learning as pinnacle for younger children; furthermore, Iceland government have adopted a curriculum to embed outdoor learning. According to Norodahl and Johannesson (2014), the Icelandic government have formed a curriculum that focuses on the beauty of the world and how it can aid a child's learning, develop an active lifestyle and also encouragement for children to consider the natural world.

Emphasis on outdoor learning has been present in Iceland for a rather long time. Children between the ages of one to six are encouraged to partake in outdoor play every day during their primary education. As the children grow up the emphasis on outdoor play decreases. When children reach the age range of six to sixteen, their levels of outdoor play decrease significantly compared to opportunity in their younger years. For example, most children over the age of 6 are only encouraged to learn outdoors during break times. Due to the curriculum, Icelandic teachers will have many different teaching styles and ways to help children to learn in an outside environment. Studies conducted by Óladóttir (2008) suggest that seventy percent of schools across Iceland utilise outdoor learning significantly.

Adapted from:

Noradahl, K. and Johannesson, I. (2014) 'Icelandic teachers' views of using the outdoors' *Education 3-13: International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*. Vol 44, No. 4, September 2014, 391-406.

Óladóttir, H. 2008. Ársskýrsla 2008 [Annual Report 2008]. Reykjavík: Náttúruskóli Reykjavíkur

Part 2a

This essay will focus on forest schools. A quotation written by O'Brian and Murray (2006) states

it is an inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment

O'Brien and Murray (2006) page 7. There is now a concern that children do not get to engage in as much outdoor learning as anticipated; primarily due to parents worrying about their child's wellbeing in the outdoor environment. As times have gone on, the amount a child can learn in a classroom has increased. This is also stated by O'Brien and Murray (2006). Research conducted by Thompson, Bell and Aspinall states that children should partake in outdoor learning as much as possible to ensure they will not lack the physical and emotional benefits of nature during early development. Welsh Government (2009) have endorsed the benefits of learning outdoors, encouraging schools to adopt forest school opportunities in particular during the foundation phase of a child's education.

Adapted From:

O'Brien, E, Murray, R (2006) A marvellous opportunity for children to learn: A participatory evaluation of Forest School in England and Wales, Farnham: Forest Research.

Thompson, C, Aspinall, P, Bell, S, Findlay, C, Wherrett, J, Travlou, P. (2004) Open Space and Social Inclusion: Local Woodland Use in Central Scotland. Report to the Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.

Welsh Assembly Government, (2009) Outdoor Learning Handbook.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/fcb8539c-9be7-4883-8542-35d7b54b56f2/foundation-phase-outdoor-learning-handbook.pdf> Accessed 11th November 2019.

Part 2b

1.

Plagiarism/unfair practise. It is important for students to avoid this as plagiarism can have consequences and can result in a disciplinary as stated by Oxford University's guidance page (2019) It is important for a student to use their own work and support their knowledge with further reading.

2.

False. A student must reference where further sources of information have been obtained from. For example, a student must reference even if they are just backing up their knowledge with another authors idea. A guide written by the Imperial College London (2017) states that referencing shows that a student has used wider knowledge and has obtained information from appropriate academic studies.

3.

False. This is because Wikipedia can be edited by anyone across the globe. This causes fake information to be spread and could lead to utilising inaccurate data. According to Godfrey (2018), if a source of information is peer assessed, it will be more reliable. This emphasises that Wikipedia is not a reliable source.

4.

When referencing a long quotation these are some instructions a student should follow –

If a quotation is longer than 2 lines it is classed as a long quotation.

Long quotations should be indented and justified.

Referencing should be conducted at the end. As stated by Lewis (2019), long quotations should have no quotation marks.

5.

Initial sources through physical books at the library. These books may also be available in an e-book format. Journal articles are also very useful. Research through the internet can also be useful although there are website endings that should be avoided. For example, websites that end in '.com' could give a biased source of information. Students could use websites that end in '.gov' for their research. The final type suggested would be newspapers however students should avoid tabloids as stated by Lewis (2019) they could be biased sources.

Adapted from:

Godfrey, J. (2018) *How to use your reading in your essays* (3rd ed). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Imperial College London (2017) *Citing & Referencing: Harvard Style*
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/library/public/harvard.pdf> (Accessed Thursday, 7th November 2019)

The University of Oxford (2019) *Study Skills and Training: Referencing*
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism?wssl=1>
(Accessed Friday, 8th November 2019)

Lewis, A. (2019) *Referencing at Higher Education*. [Lecture] University of Wales Trinity St David. Carmarthen Campus. 21st October 2019.

Lewis, A. (2019) *Reading at Higher Education*. [Lecture] University of Wales Trinity St David. Carmarthen Campus. 7th October 2019.

Part 3

This piece of writing in question is called Student' Perspectives on Cyber Bullying. The article focuses on the effect of cyber bullying. The Journal article was composed by 3 different authors. These are Patricia W. Agatston, Ph.D., Robin Kowalski, Ph.D., and Susan Limber, Ph.D. The aim of the text is for the authors to grasp a better understanding of the effects of cyber bullying in schools.

The writers of the article are trying to find out how many people are impacted by cyber bullying in schools. Thereafter, the authors want to find ways to counteract against the problems of cyber bullying. An example of this from the text is 'particularly female students—view cyber bullying as a problem but one rarely discussed at school' stated by Agatston, Kowalski and Limber (2007) S60. This presents the idea that the authors believe cyber bullying should be spoken about more in schools.

The article has been written in a very neat fashion. It does not follow a strictly basic structure but it is very easy to comprehend. As stated by Prichard (2008) A basic article would follow a simple structure. Whereas this article, has some differences. A basic structure would include an introduction, putting their point across. The main body,

where the bulk of the article is developed and finally, the conclusion where the authors close out their point and their developed opinions. This text differs as the text closes out with a discussion. When compared to the article written by Keith and Martin (2005) you can spot differences in the paragraph sizes. The article written by Keith and Martin (2005) has a statistical basis foremost than the article in question. An example of this from the text shows this. '35% of students have been threatened online with 5% saying it happens "quite often"' as written by Keith and Martin (2005) page 224. This statistic is shown in a list format whereas the article written by Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) has statistics listed in a paragraph form in S60. 'One high school had a rate of 13% of students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches'. There are few linking words in the article in question. Words such as 'therefore' and 'whereas' could have been used to link points and paragraphs together. As stated by Cottrell (2013) page 301, 'Certain words are used to link ideas and signpost to the reader the direction your line of reasoning is about to take' Agatson, Kowalski and Limber could have used more linking words to create more emphasis on points.

The language of the article is in a very formal style of writing. This is due to the authors professionalism being doctors. The article is easy to interpret as the grammar and style of writing is appropriate for the target audience being schools and students. However, the results section could be presented in a clearer format. This section of the article shows no statistics to support findings. For example, by Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) explain that many students in schools are highly unlikely to report their experiences of cyber bullying to their elders or peers. This point could have been supported statistically. Cottrell (2013) page 310 cites 'Even if most people agree with you, it is still an opinion, unless you can give evidence' This emphasises the importance of statistics. Throughout the text there is some use of persuasive language. An example of this is 'Their technological savvy, combined with the ability to be online without much adult supervision, can lead to behaviours that are high risk' Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) S59 use this language to engage the reader encouraging deeper reflection about the subject.

The article emphasises a clear problem with cyber bullying in schools. A statement that shows this is 'whether or not the prevention of cyber bullying is being addressed in the school and community setting' Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) S60. The accuracy of the article could be tarnished by today's standards as it was written in

2007. Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) express their concerns about Myspace and how it could affect cyber bullying. This emphasises how out-dated the article is as technology and social media has progressed extensively since 2007. The limited student cross section interviewed could also go against the accuracy of the article.

The authors explain that

A total of 148 middle and high school students were interviewed during focus groups held at two middle and two high schools in a public-school district. Agatson, Kowalski and Limber (2007) S59.

This could create concerns with the accuracy of the data as there is a very small amount of people interviewed to obtain the author's views and statistics. From this text, the authors have derived that not enough is being done for cyberbullying within schools. These conclusions may be justified with information but the evidence used in this article does not compare to the article written by Mishna, Saini and Solomon (2009). In this article, substantiated evidence is used to back up their own views.

In conclusion, the text expresses many solid points about cyberbullying. Conversely, there is insufficient evidence and statistics used to endorse their views of the subject. If a wider percentage of participants had been involved in the interview process, the points identified would have increased validity outcomes. Overall, the text is appropriate for an academic article, although suggested areas of improvement could have made the article more precise.

Adapted From:

Pritchard, A. M. (2008) Studying and Learning at University: Vital Skills for Success in your Degree. London: Sage Publications.

Cottrell, S. (2013) Palgrave Study Skills (Fourth Edition) The Study Skills Handbook. Pages 301-310.

Mishna, F, Saini, M, Solomon, S. (2009) Elsevier Children and Youth Services Review: Ongoing and online: Children and youth's perceptions of cyber bullying. Pages 1222–1228.

Keith, S, Martin, M. (2005) Reclaiming Children and Youth: ProQuest Psychology Journals. Cyber-Bullying: Creating a Culture of Respect in a Cyber World.

Agatston, P, Kowalski, R, Limber, S. (2007) ELSEVIER Journal of Adolescent Health. Students' Perspectives on Cyber Bullying. Section 59-60.