

A hand is shown holding a single green leaf, which is the focal point of the image. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural setting. The lighting is bright and even, highlighting the texture of the leaf and the skin of the hand.

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ECEY6005 *Regaining Paradise?* *Sustainability in the* *Early Years.*

Exploring, discovering and
learning about what is on our
doorstep.



Discover...

The walk we went on is in Bancffosfelen, just a few minutes from my childhood home. I have a strong connection with this walk as I often visited here as a child. I have taken my children on this walk many times as they enjoy being in the outdoors.

We walked over the little bridge that goes over a stream. The tyre in the picture has been there for as long as I can remember.



We looked up and noticed these trees were growing sideways. They made a lovely shelter over the area. We discussed how the roots must be very strong to stop the trees falling. We really enjoyed looking at the patterns in the branches and leaves.

There used to be a swing hanging from one of the trees that was made from rope and wood. I explained that when I was younger, we would create things to play with rather than use what was readily available.



Flowers that grow in the wild.

We have always enjoyed spotting different flowers on our walks. Some are easily recognizable, such as daisies, dandelions and daffodils. We decided to see what other flowers we could find, and then researched what they were.

In this picture, we found the life span of a dandelion in one small area!



Video

Helping the environment grow.

We can not walk through a field of dandelions without doing this! I explained to the children that the seeds of a dandelion rely on wind to help spread them far and wide to create new dandelions. Charlie wanted to help! Watch as he uses all his might to blow the dandelion seeds.



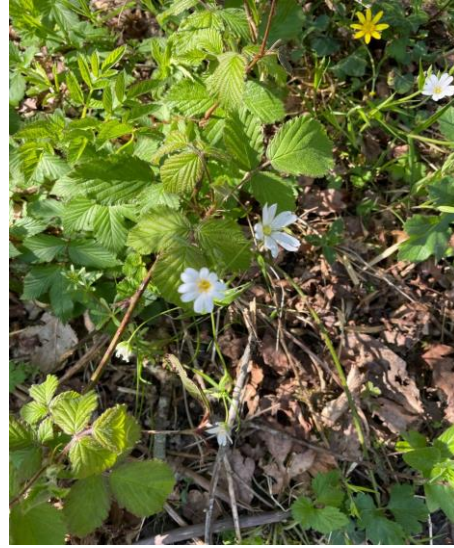
Something exciting!

We spotted many bluebells on our walk. Charlie's favourite flower is a bluebell, so he was excited to see so many. But something amazing happened whilst we were looking at the bluebells....



White (albino) Bluebells.

We found white bluebells! At first, we did not know how special this was. We only discovered the one plant on our walk, and after researching further, we found out that 1 in every 10,000 bluebells is missing the blue pigment. This makes them 'albino' bluebells. We did not pick any flowers on our walk as we did not want to take away from the beautiful natural environment. We took pictures instead to make sure we could look back on this special occurrence.



Explore...

We saw lots of different plants and flowers on our walk. We took the opportunity to look at the shapes and patterns of them. We then compared them to other things that we could think of. Charlie felt that the leaves in the first picture looked like tongues!

A young boy with dark hair and blue eyes is looking intently at a small, brown, round object held between the fingers of an adult's hand. The object appears to be a nut or seed. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with dry leaves and a blue jacket. The text "What's this?" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

What's this?

My favourite question! Charlie picked this up and asked me what it was. I enjoy opportunities like this to discuss what he thinks it could be. Charlie decided it was a peanut - but I explained that it was the remains of an acorn. I asked him what animal he thinks eats acorns - and he shouted "squirrel!" excitedly. We did search for signs of squirrels but were not successful on this occasion.

Bugs and Butterflies.

When we made it to the end of the walk, we came out into a big field. It was lovely and sunny and because it is up on a hill - the views were beautiful! Hollie spotted a butterfly fluttering about and told me that she had learned about butterflies in school. She informed me that the butterfly was a white butterfly - and was probably female as it had 2 spots on its wings. My daughter taught me something I did not know. As I always say - every day is a learning day!

We found some unusual flying insects that seemed to really like this plant!





New life.

Hollie took this wonderful picture of a new plant sprouting between lots of dead leaves and twigs. We spoke about how clever nature is and that new plants can grow in many places.



Video



Video

Listen...

Being in the outdoors is not just about what we can see. We stood quietly and listened to the sounds of the birds and the wind. We did try to spot the birds that we could hear. We saw one high up on a branch but otherwise we could just hear them. What a beautiful sound! Can you see the bird?



Conserve...

As wonderful as this walk is, unfortunately we were faced with litter both on the walk and in the stream. We came prepared! Armed with a litter picker and a rubbish bag - we were ready to tidy up the area!





Working together.

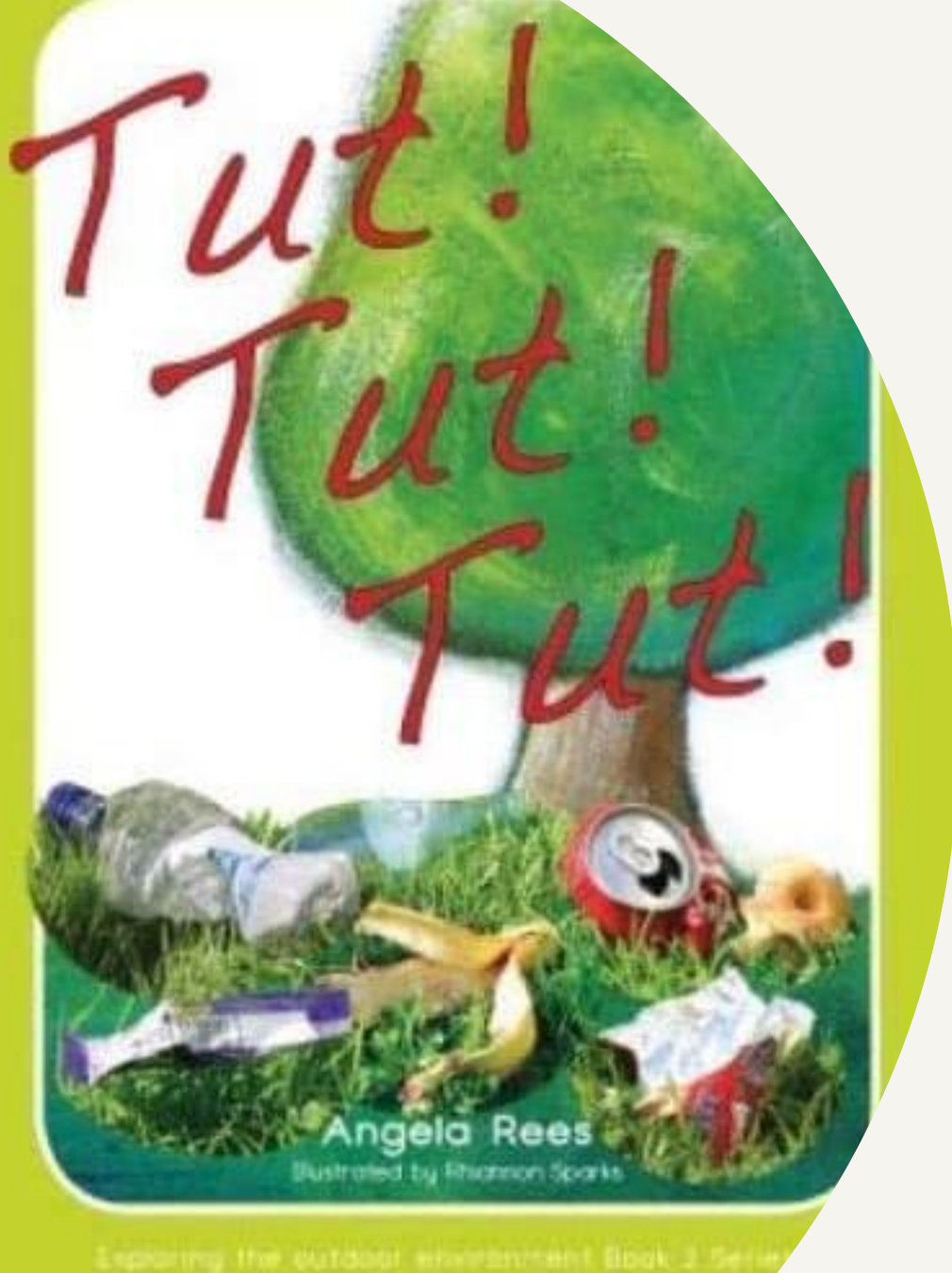
We took turns to collect litter as we came across it. We spoke about the importance of properly disposing of rubbish and recycling or reusing glass or plastic.

Additional skills.

At first, Charlie struggled to use the litter picker. He persevered and before he knew it, he was a pro! We managed to clear every piece of litter on the walk, but due to health and safety concerns, I decided not to take them down to the stream.



Video



Tut! Tut! Tut!

Charlie's favourite book! We read this book often and it has helped me teach Charlie how to identify what items go where when we are ready to dispose of them. When we returned from our walk, we read the book again. We then discussed the items that we found and sorted them into piles ready to be disposed of correctly.



Growing new things.

We spotted these planting pots and decided that they would be a good start for us to begin to grow our own food and plants. The tomatoes and basil will be used to make our own pasta sauce! Yum!









Learning new things.

We spent some time looking through this Bug Hotel book and learned a lot about the habitats that different bugs live in. We have decided to make a bug hotel ourselves using natural resources that we find on our walk.



*We love to
draw!*

Hollie and Charlie wanted to draw their favourite things that they saw on our walk. Charlie has drawn a beautiful dandelion and of course his favourite bluebells! Hollie drew the butterfly and the flowers that it seemed to really like!

*Sustained
Shared
Thinking in
our back
garden.*

Video





Bugs on the beach.

We went for a lovely walk in Aberaeron. The John Muir award has made me fully appreciate what is right on our doorstep. We found a ladybird with no spots which we had not seen before – and it made us wonder why there were no spots. We did some research when we got home and found that they are in fact Asian beetles!



Getting brave!

Hollie has always been afraid of bugs - especially flying ones! I have taken the opportunity recently to show her that there is nothing to be afraid of by holding them and getting her to look at them closely. On our trip to Aberaeron, a beetle landed on my hand, and I asked Hollie if she would like to hold it. At first, she felt afraid but then she allowed it to walk onto her hand! A big step for Hollie!



Down to Earth Project.

I was lucky enough to visit the Down to Earth Project with UWTSD. What an amazing and eye-opening experience! I faced my fear of heights by climbing a tree and learned a lot about the importance of sustainability.





Facing fears!

I never thought I would be able to do this.
Something about the natural environment just
made me feel confident and encouraged me to
push my limits.

What's this? By Lauren Thomas

Out in the open, so much to explore,
Eyes wide with wonder, longing to see more.
Patterns and colours, so much to take in,
“What’s this?” asks the younger one,
With a curious grin.

The sun shining bright, creating shadows all around,
Standing still and listening to each and every sound.
The bird’s song is loud, the wind whistles gently,
“What’s this?” asks the younger one,
Listening intently.

Noticing the flowers, discovering something new,
The excitement on their faces as they take in the view.
A butterfly flutters delicately, and moves from plant to flower,
“What’s this?” asks the younger one,
As falling leaves create a shower.

Soon the sadness hits, they’ve seen the rubbish on the ground,
The excitement turns to upset from what they have found.
Glass, plastic, tin, we notice more and more,
“What’s this?” asks the younger one,
It was not like this before.

Time to make a difference, time to clear the mess,
Time to show the children that there is no need for distress.
Working together to make a change, one bottle at a time,
“What now?” asks the younger one,
I say, “Don’t worry darling, it will be just fine.”

We teach our children daily, we teach colours, math and song.
But we may be missing something that can help teach right from wrong.
Showing children how to care for animals, plants and more,
Will help improve the future, because children, the future is yours.

Thank you!

Thank you for reading my scrap book! I am very thankful for this module as it has had a positive impact on both myself and my children. We see beauty everywhere and are making changes to become a more sustainable family.

