

Learning Geography

The sun is shining and summer is coming. So there's nothing to stop you from teaching geography outside, says Christine Kenworthy



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Geography is perhaps the most obvious subject to take outside. Indeed, when learning about the local area the most effective way is to get out there and explore!

You may wish to limit your exploration to the school grounds, or you can go further afield and include the local area surrounding your school.

Activities

Geography 2b: To use fieldwork skills (for example, recording information on a school plan or local area map).

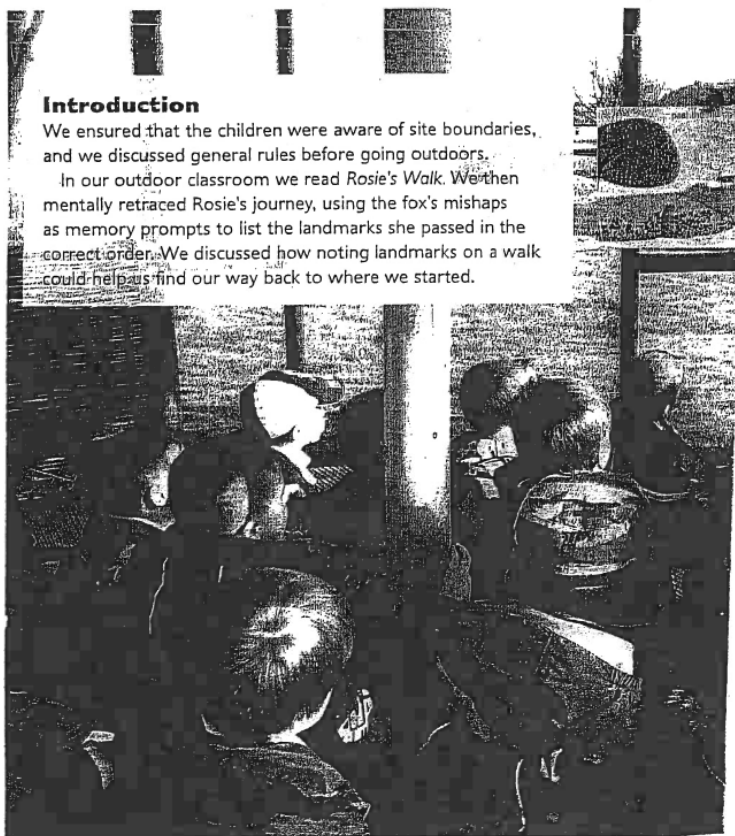
Resources

- Storybook with a walk or journey theme: we used *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins (Red Fox, ISBN 9780099413998)
- Stick or twig threaded with five elastic bands for each child
- Digital camera(s)
- Clipboard containing a printout of a plan of the school grounds for each child
- Pencils
- Photographs of a teddy bear, taken at various locations in the school grounds.

Introduction

We ensured that the children were aware of site boundaries, and we discussed general rules before going outdoors.

In our outdoor classroom we read *Rosie's Walk*. We then mentally retraced Rosie's journey, using the fox's mishaps as memory prompts to list the landmarks she passed in the correct order. We discussed how noting landmarks on a walk could help us find our way back to where we started.

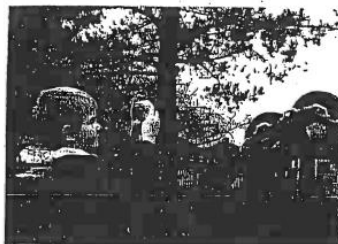


outdoors:



Representational map

The children collected natural objects, including twigs, seedpods, stones and leaves, which we used to make a representational map of the site.



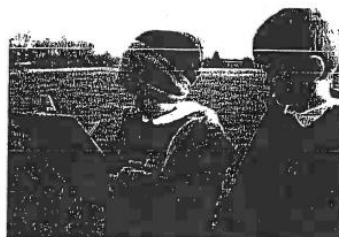
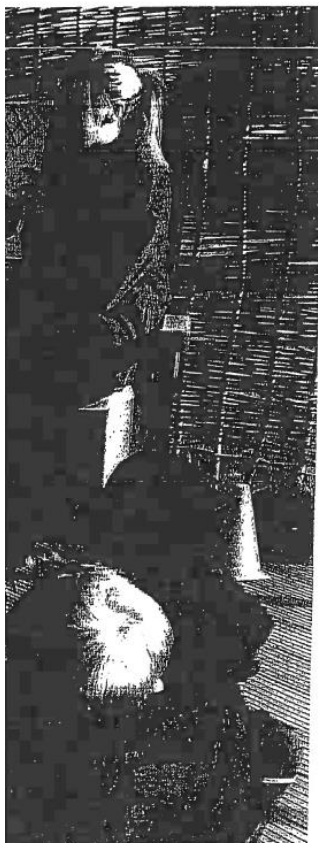
Photographing landmarks

The children worked in groups, using a digital camera to record landmarks around the site. The photographs were later printed out and plotted on a plan of the school grounds.



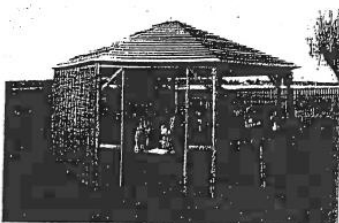
Journey sticks

Each child was given a stick threaded with five elastic bands. We walked the site, stopping to look and listen carefully. The children were asked to find an object that reminded them of the area and attach it to their stick with the first elastic band. The process was repeated until all the bands contained an object. The sticks were later used to recall the journey, and the walk was traced on the representational map.



Clipboards

The children were each given a printout of a plan of the school grounds. They walked the site, plotting areas of interest and landmarks.



Where's Bertie?

Each group was given a photograph of Bertie (our class teddy bear), taken somewhere on site. The children were asked to study the pictures carefully for clues to Bertie's location. We then challenged the children to place Bertie in exactly the same place as in the photograph, and to take new photographs to compare later.

Directions

In the outdoor classroom we asked the children, *How could I get from here to...?* The children then used their completed school plans to give directions from the outdoor classroom to various landmarks.

Plenary

Using the children's maps and directions, we retraced our journeys to check if they were correct.

Assessment

- Can the children indicate the correct position of landmarks on a plan of the school?
- Can they give and follow simple directions? ■