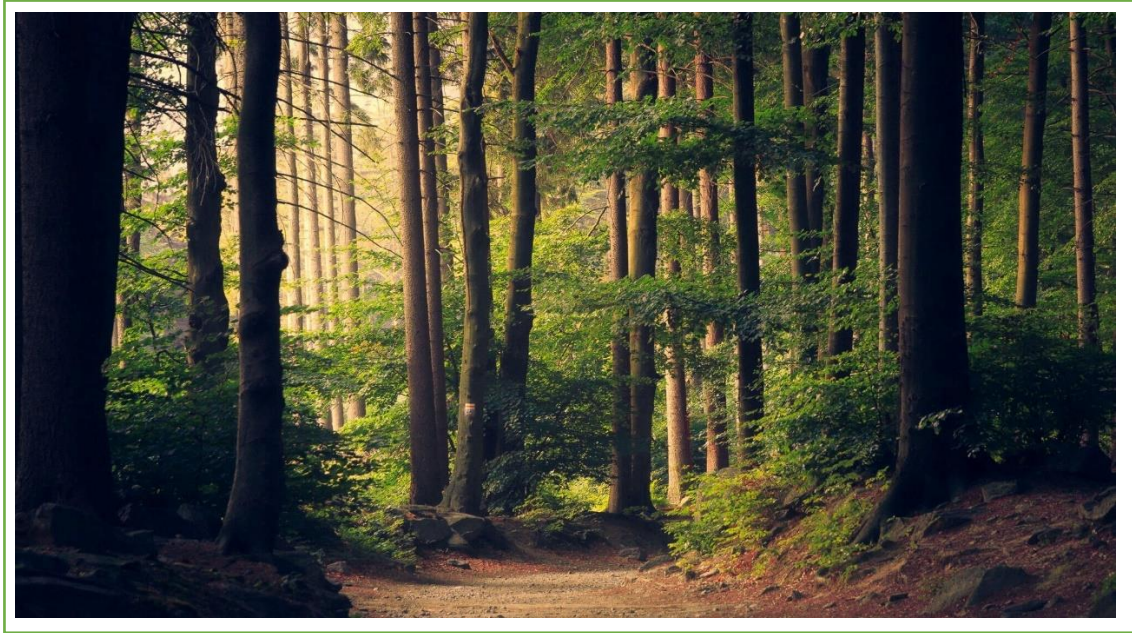


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Our story

An adventure through the stormy woods.



(Source: Mountain Ranch View)

Class/ Dosbarth: Miss Needham

Adventure date: Friday 15th September 2023

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Section two

Due to the children's additional learning needs in my setting, I have chosen the environment in the photograph above due to the opportunity of curiosity that it gives to the children. Whenever the children attend this environment, they curiosity really shows, and it allows them to be able to express how they are feeling through movement.

The children in my setting benefit more from the curiosity approach which is based on the child-led learning and this environment is one of the places that the children truly feel happy and want to explore. Although some of the children can not express their emotions verbally it is clear to see the enjoyment on their faces. (Learning Journals, 2011-2023)

We also took along some empty plastic bottles and we found some stones and leaves and small flowers, we put them inside the plastic bottle and poured in some oil and water and we made our very own nature sensory bottles. The children love anything sensory and by making a nature sensory bottle we was able to open up the a conversation about the objects we found and how some of the objects were to big to go into the bottle and some of the shapes made it difficult to go inside the bottle to. Although this conversation was simple it allowed me to teach children about shapes, big and small and quantity of objects that can fit inside another object, for some children this is simple maths but for my children this is the level that they are at and they had lots of fun making lots of different sensory bottles that they could take back to school and show their friends. This activity can be done anywhere and with almost any objects as well, it is grate for teaching my children maths and science.

I believe that the woods are a good place to teach the children the basic learning skills and it is also good for teaching children about maths and science. For example, when we went to the woods the children took an interest in the flowers and those who can talk started asking questions about how flowers grow and what they need which is how I was able to teach them about photosynthesis.

Here is a little observation on the conversation we had about flowers.

Child A- look miss flowers, I like flowers

Me- Yes flowers, there are lots of different flowers and they are all different colours as well

Child B- I see purple ones, my favourite colour is purple.

Child A- I see green ones, like the hulk. I can do the Hulk smash

Child C- how do flowers grow?

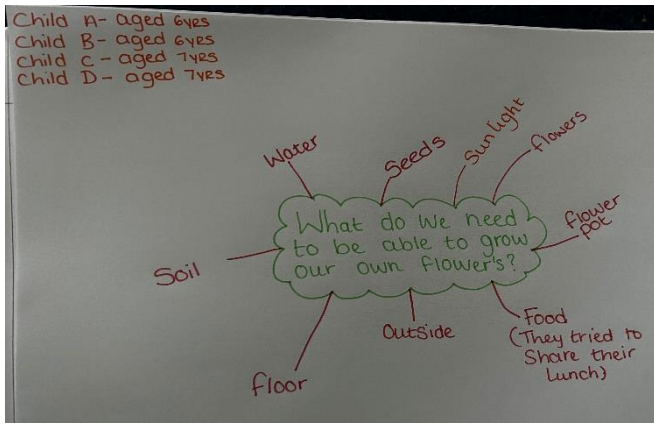
Me- Well shall we look at them and learn about flowers

Class- Yes

Child D- can we grow our own flowers?

Me- Of course, lets see what we need.

We sat down together and completed a spider diagram of what they thought we needed and then they went and looked it up on the class iPad.



The children enjoyed thinking about what they needed to be able to grow their own flowers, some of their answers came after looking on the iPad.

Source: Emma Needham

After we talked about flowers, I also asked the children what else can they see, here is some of their answers

Teacher- "what do we all see when we look at the trees?"

The children began to talk to their friends about what they could see.

Teacher- "shall we all sit down and talk about what we see when we look at the trees?"

Class- "yes"

They all took it in turns to say what they could see and although we had some children that said "trees" we also had children who really used their imagination and said they could see things like

- a) Trees with funny wild leaf hair
- b) Lots of broccoli
- c) Giraffa's because they have tall necks like the trees.
- d) Small trees and tall trees
- e) Mummy tree, baby tree and daddy tree. A family of trees



Source: Vecteezy

After we had a conversation about what we could see when we look at the trees the children became curious about who is the tallest person in the class and who is the shortest person in their class. The children started to try and work out who was the tallest, but they could not agree on the answer, I simply asked them.

"What can we do or what can we use to work out who is the tallest? Shall we have a look to see if there is anything that can help us?"

The children became very excited about that question and started talking amongst their sleeves.

Child A- maybe we can stand face to face?

Child B- Or back-to-back?

Child C- But you have bigger hair than me, you need to put your hair down like mine.

Child A- I know, we could use a stick to measure each other with, we need to find a big enough to measure everyone.

Child D- over there has lots of big sticks, come on everyone let's go.

Each child began to pick up the sticks from the ground and seeing if they were bigger than their friends stick, this is all part of teaching the children mathematics. It's allowing the children to be able to problem solve on their own, it is also teaching them about sizing and that not all sticks are the same. We also spoke about the weight of the sticks and which ones are heavier or lighter.

By getting the children to look for sticks I was able to not only teach them science, I was also able to teach them maths and they developed their social skills by working together which is a big achievement for my children, but they did it without questioning or having a melt down because it was done in a fun and exciting way that did not feel like learning to them.

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Everything that we did in the woods the children continued to talk about it when we got back to the school, they went home and told their parents as well about the fun they had in the woods.

The new curriculum has stated that there are four purposes that are part of the shared vision and aspirations for every child and young person and that is why the environment in the photo above helps to implement the four purposes because it encourages the children in my class to become ambitious children and it shows them that they are capable learners and that they can achieve anything that they set their mind to but at the level they are at and not what people think they should be at due to their age.

Although on the day of me completing this activity the group of children I took with me was our more able children, they have more understanding and they could listen and understand when we tell them that something is not safe for them to touch, go near or put in their mouths. I do have some children who due to their learning needs and disabilities who do not understand that they can not eat everything that they see, some of the children have Prada Willi Syndrome which means the children can not help but try and eat everything not matter what the object is. That is why it is very important to make sure we complete a risk assessment before we arrive with the children and when we are there as well, we need to make sure we keep a clear eye out for any risks that might have been missed or that might have occurred during our time there.

Section four

In the blog from First Things First explains that introducing science or mathematics to children or young people does not need to be complicated and should not be left until they can solve written maths problems or conduct science experiments, this should be introduced as early as possible. By getting the children or young people involved in finger painting, building a tower out of blocks, or even baking cakes can be the first introduction to science and maths for children. The senior of the blog said that “young children learn naturally by exploring their environments” and “What appears to adults as play is really forming and testing theories and trying out different variables. This type of learning goes hand in hand with how young children learn best, using multiple senses (seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling) to discover the world around them.”

It is important for children to have supportive adults around them who have a clear understanding on the importance of play. If an adult understands how important play is for children will allow them to be able to teach children maths and science in a fun way that they will understand and be able to learn from rather than making them sit down at the table with a work sheet in front of them. The adult can tailor any activity that the children enjoy playing to teach them anything for example most children enjoy playing in water so any practitioner could teach the children about measurements and problem solving by putting different sized materials in the water tray and allow them to play with them as they normally would and in time they will learn that one cup is bigger than the other cup and the bigger cup can hold more water inside. This is a maths lesson for children that can be done from a very young age and there is many more activities just like that one that can help children. (Linda Pound, 2006)

Researchers believe that if teaching staff implement play in to their classrooms then they can increase children's learning by up to 30% higher than a normal run classroom. Dr Sarah Millier, who is a known psychologist, and she has expressed her beliefs that “play is the language of children”. Play is more than children just having fun, play is about children being able to explore and increase their understanding and growth. Play is more than just having fun like Dr Sarah Millier has said, play is also important for children's brain development and increases their communication skills. When practitioners watch children building a tower with building blocks and then knocking them down then the practitioner is watching the children learn counting skills, learning how to balance objects on top of each other, they are learning about shapes and which shapes fit better together and they are also learning about gravity when they finally push the tower down all of which are concepts of maths and science.

Children become motivated more through play than sitting in a classroom because when a child is playing it is more memorable to them than a work sheet is and practitioners or teaching staff can use play to making teaching mathematics more understandable in a fun way and at their own level of understanding and the

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practitioner or the teacher can do this by creating a space where the children can play and learn effectively. It is important for teachers and practitioners to stay connected to their learners so that they can help them learn new mathematical skills. Giving children the space to create their own sense of learning methods is something that more teachers and practitioners need to do more often because most adults understand how effective child-led learning is for a child's development. Adults who are looking after or teaching children then they have the responsibility in making sure they have a clear understanding about what is to be learned and they should be flexible when it comes to giving their guidance when allowing the children to be more in control of their own learning. (Williams, J Helen. 2022)

Froebel believed that "play is the highest expression of human development in childhood for it alone is the free expression of what is in the child's soul" he believes that children develop their understanding of the world they live in by having direct experiences with the real world outside. Froebel understood the importance of teaching children through play and from his knowledge he created six wood blocks and paired them with other objects such as sticks, clay sand and many more, the objects he used are all open-end objects and can be used in a lot of different ways by children which can also support their own self-learning. (Early Education, 2021)

Simply psychology stated that Vygotsky believes that the community and environment that the children live in plays an important role in the process of "making meaning". He also said that adults mirror the cognitive development from children in the care by participating in challenging and meaningful activities, adults teach children how to use objects as a learning tool rather than using the object for what it was intended to be used for, and by learning this they are then in charge of their own learning and development when they are casually playing.

Bilton, H (no date) explains that the role of the adult is crucial when enhancing the quality of outdoor experiences that children get to be a part of. An adult's body language and enthusiasm when they are outdoors impact what children learn, therefore it is important that the children have attentive and engaged adults who are enthusiastic about outdoor learning and children's learning and development. Adults need to make sure that they are providing the same number of resources for outdoor learning as they would for indoor learning to allow the children the same opportunities to learn no matter where they are. When the adult is enthusiastic about being outdoors it will show when they talk and how they act, the children will witness this and then they will become interested in what is going on and they will also be excited and enthusiastic about the outdoors as well. The adult can use this to be able to get the children excited about learning outdoors and that will help them to be able to teach maths or science to the children in a way that they will fully understand and be able to continue to learn when they go home.

Time is something that teachers feel they do not have enough of when teaching children and that is why not many teachers give children the opportunities to take part in free play however when a teacher does give the children time to free play they will then see that children learn how to work things out on their own, to be able to explore new ideas as well as being able to develop their own decisions-making skills. However, they also need to know the importance of staying behind the scenes and not to interrupt them with questions. When children are absorbed in play that is satisfying and rewarding to the child by having adults interrupting them unnecessarily and calling them away to complete adult-prescribed task can have a negative impact on the children's development and self-learning.

Montessori said "play is children's work" which means any adult who is looking after, or teaching children have the important job of providing them with the quality play experiences that they children can enjoy as well as learn important facts and information which will help them with the knowledge and understanding. Once a relationship between the teacher or adult and the children has been made and everyone knows each other well then, the adult/ teacher can tailor their teaching methods to suit the children in their care. If the teacher is standing at the front of the classroom talking to the children about photosynthesis it is likely that the children will not understand and become frustrated however if the teacher gets the children to plant a sunflower and research how to look after the sunflower, then over a small period the children would have learnt about photosynthesis in a fun and exciting way. This would then encourage the children to be excited about learning

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and they will want to share what they have learnt with their friends and family, which would educate other adults about how important it is to allow children to learn by doing rather than watching. (Rymanowicz 2015)

Adults have an important responsibility to be able to identify opportunities in their outdoor environments for teaching science and maths and to be able to enhance provisions and to be able to express the excitement of the unique qualities the outdoor environment has to offer for example collecting and sorting natural objects, moving heavy objects together safely or simply playing escape games from dinosaurs or monsters is just a small example of the fun and learning children can experience when given the right opportunities to play outside. It is important that the adults know and remember that their role outdoors is the same as their role indoors and that is to make sure they engage as a co-player when the children invite them in and to be able to extend their learning when possible, being outside does not mean that adults have a 'hands-off' supervisory role their role is to simply observe the children learning through play and to extend their knowledge when the children need or ask for help. Adults need to understand how important they are to children's learning no matter where they are and once every adult understands that they are learning easier and more effective for a child. (Dancer, 2023)

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