

ECEY6005

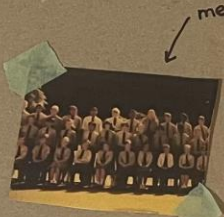
Student: 2306796

Part 1 – Portfolio of evidence





me as a toddler in my front garden. The woods are just visible behind my Dad's car.



me
my primary school leavers photo. (The woods is visible in the background.)



me my brother my sister

The Woods is clearly visible at the bottom of our street.

my parents and grandparents in our back garden on my brothers christening day (the woods behind).



I remember walking through the woods with my neighbour (Auntie Hazel) and her making daisy chains with me and making me a crown.



I took my daughter back to the woods and made her a crown too.

My earliest recollections of "the fozza"

I grew up in a quiet cul-de-sac, on a slight incline, with a huge forest (or "fozza" as it is known to the people of Bilston) at the bottom of our street. I remember being very young and looking out from my bedroom window and seeing the forest covered in snow, and being very excited!

I also remember walking past the forest on the way to school every day, I remember my parents warning, when I played out with my friends (common back then) not to leave our quiet street and never go into the forest alone as this could be dangerous. I remember collecting fire wood from the forest as a Brownie (the Scout hut is at the top of the next street along from the street I grew up on) I volunteer with the Cub Scouts now, and we collect fire wood from the forest now.

I also remember long lazy summer days at school, playing on the field and looking over to the forest... and the playground rumours about there being ghosts in the woods, as there used to be a hospital deep inside the forest. So, the forest (or "fozza") has been part of my environment for as long as I can remember, but regrettably, I have failed to appreciate its natural beauty and potential as I've got older, until now.





Walking through the woods

Through the rickety gate,
up the dirt track,
past the enormous Oak,
walking through the woods.

Crunching on dead leaves,
Squelching in the mud,
splashing through the stream,
walking through the woods.

Sun peeking through the trees,
leaves flapping in the breeze,
rain sustaining life,
walking through the woods.

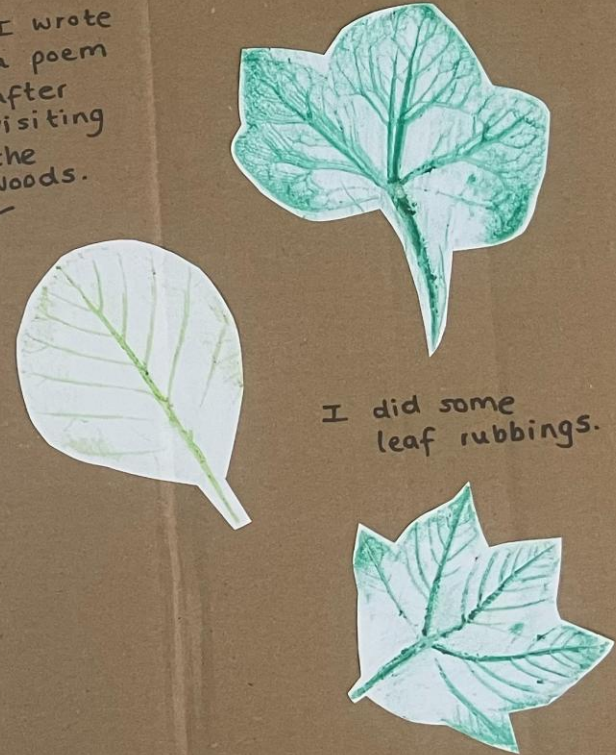
Squirrels scurrying around,
worms writhing on the ground,
birds singing from on high,
walking through the woods.

Time for me to be still,
making time to listen and see,
the calm comes over me,
walking through the woods.

I wrote
a poem
after
visiting
the
woods.



I did some
leaf rubbings.



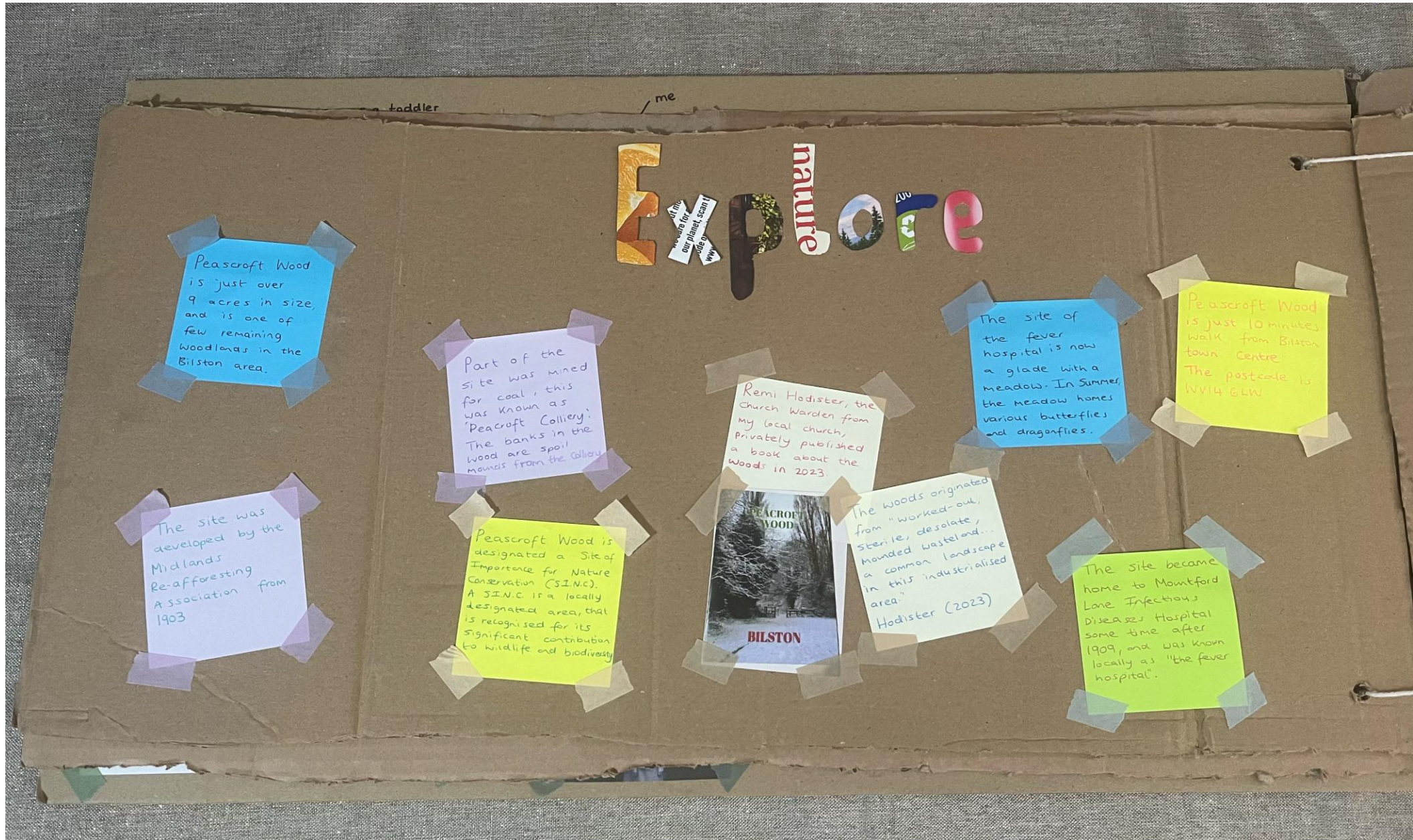


I also used watercolour
paints to paint some of
the flowers that I saw...



... and pressed a flower
that I had found on the
ground. I remember having
a flower press when I was young.





There are 250+ types of bee in the UK.
There are 24 types of bumblebee.
(Woodland Trust, 2023)



I saw some bees in Peascroft Wood.

I believe that the bees I saw were bumble bees.



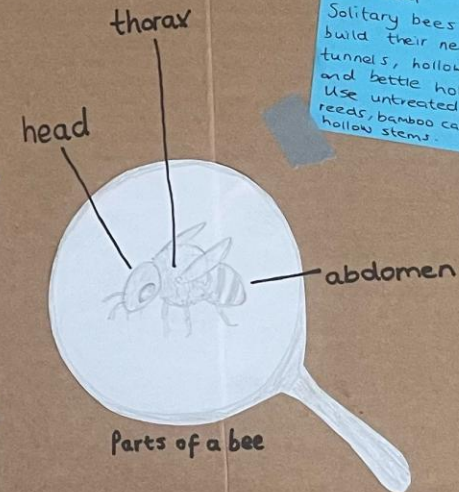
Source: Mark Phillips (Vickers, 2020)

You can help solitary bees by building a bee hotel.
Solitary bees usually build their nests in tunnels, hollow stems and bottle holes.
Use untreated wood, reeds, bamboo canes and hollow stems.

According to Vickers (2020) bees are vital for the planet, as they pollinate much of the food we eat (including crops, vegetables and fruit).

Bumblebee fact file
Habitat: open woodland, parks, gardens
Favourite plants: Comfrey, bramble, fruit trees, fuchsia
(Woodland Trust, 2023)

The best time to see bumblebees is between March and July.
(Woodland Trust, 2023)



"Ladybirds are probably our most familiar beetles - and also some of the most popular. They're known as the 'gardeners' friend'." (Kent Wildlife Trust, 2024)

There are 47 species of ladybird in the UK. Only 26 species are considered 'conspicuous ladybirds' (large and colourful). (Kent Wildlife Trust, 2024)

- always has 7 black spots
- common across the UK.
- Size: 5-8mm
- often found beneath tree bark
- usually has just one spot on each wing
- Size: 3-6mm
- often found in gardens

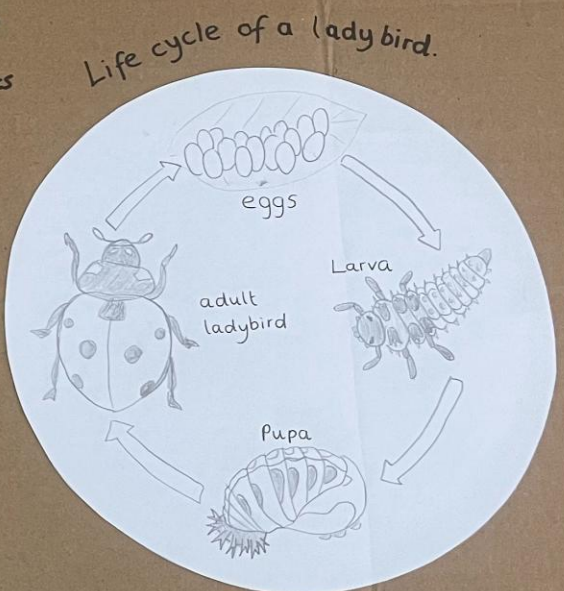


I spotted some ladybirds in Peascroft Wood.



- also known as the '4 spot ladybird'
- size: 3-4.5mm
- light orange wing cases with 12-16 white spots
- dark orange wing cases with 14 white spots
- black with 2 red spots
- often found in Ash and Willow trees
- the UK's largest ladybird
- 8-10mm
- usually found in pine trees

- yellow with black rectangular spots
- Size: 4-5mm
- variable in appearance
- sometimes black with red spots
- Size: 8-10mm
- Size: 3-4mm
- has bright yellow wing cases with 22 black spots



Can you spot these 12 trees along the way?

1 Hazel
In autumn yummy hazelnuts are enjoyed by many creatures such as woodpeckers, nuthatches and dormice. Its wood is very bendy and great for making fences and bean poles.

2 Ash
Ash trees can live to a ripe old age of 400 years. Its seeds hang in big bunches like 'keys'. Its tough wood is used to make hockey sticks and oars and the handles of axes and spades.

3 Hawthorn
Also known as the 'May' tree, as this is the month it blooms. Its flowers are said to smell like decaying flesh! It is usually found in hedgerows where its red berries are enjoyed by birds and mammals.

4 Wych Elm
Elms used to be associated with melancholy and death and its wood was traditionally used to make coffins. The word 'Wych' comes from an Anglo Saxon word meaning 'pliable'.

5 Elder
It is thought the name elder comes the Anglo-saxon 'æld', meaning fire, because the hollow stems were used to blow air into a fire to keep it alight. Many moth caterpillars feed on the elder.

6 Wild Cherry
Cherry flowers provide a source of nectar and pollen for bees and later in the year its cherries are a great food source for birds and mammals. Its wood is strong and hard and is used to make furniture.

7 Holly
The leaves of this evergreen shrub are eaten by the caterpillars of the Holly Blue butterfly. In olden days it was deemed unlucky to cut it down and it was seen as a fertility symbol and a charm against goblins.

8 Oak
Oak is the most common tree in the UK and supports more wildlife than any other native tree. It was regarded as sacred by the gods and revered by druids. Its strong timber was used to make ships.

9 Alder
Evil lurked in Alder according to myth as when cut its wood changes colour to blood orange. It has catkins appear in spring, and in winter its cones are enjoyed by birds such as the greenfinch and siskin.

10 Field Maple
The UK's only native maple, and as a member of this family, its sap can be used to make maple syrup. Traditionally its wood was used to make musical instruments, including Stradivarius violins!

11 Lime
Lime attracts lots of aphids, which in turn provide a source of food for their predators, including hoverflies, ladybirds and many species of bird. Its leaves are eaten by several species of moth caterpillars.

12 Silver Birch
To identify this tree, look out for its white papery bark. Celts regarded it as a 'holy tree' and as a symbol of renewal and bundles of its twigs were used to drive out the spirits of the old year.

Turn the page for fun and games to play along the way!

Wild Walk at Peascroft Wood

Let's take a walk on the wild side; a great way to have fun, enjoy nature and get active outdoors!

I never realised how different sticks can be!



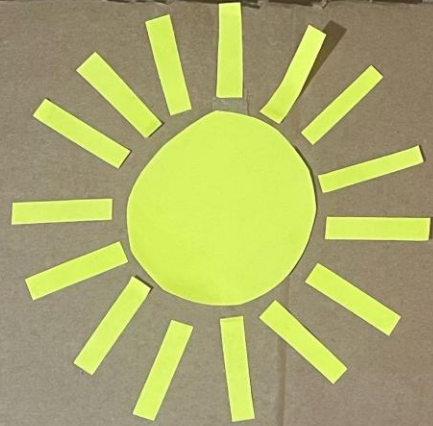
black spots U.K.

When I looked closely at the tree trunks, I noticed that the bark on each tree is very different.



The bark on each tree looks and feels very different.





Conserve

According to the RSPB (2025) more extreme weather is as a result of climate change, and can destroy habitats.

According to the RSPB (nd) birds can struggle to find water on very cold or very hot days. Introducing a bird bath can help, so I decided to try to help the birds in Peascroft Wood, by making a temporary bird bath.

When I returned several hours later, much of the water was gone and there was a feather and some debris inside the bird bath, so I believe that I had helped some birds. I repeated this for a few days until the heatwave was over.



During a heatwave (a period of abnormally hot weather that lasts multiple days) I became concerned for the birds and wildlife in the woods.



300!









"Plastic sticks around in the environment for ages, threatening wildlife and spreading toxins. Plastic also contributes to global warming."
(Friends of the Earth, n.d.)

making changes



Sort and recycle items that can be recycled.

I took the drink cans and plastic bottles that I collected in the Woods to a recycling point in Bilston.



junk modeling

cut up greeting cards to make gift tags

I used old packaging and magazines to make the lettering for this scrap book.



use reusable shopping bags rather than plastic bags.
reuse wrapping paper

I used packaging paper instead of new paper for a painting activity to paint the flowers we had seen.

Share



I shared my scrapbook with my Reception class and this inspired us to do a litter pick on the school field and forest school.

I joined a local social media group: Bilston Litter Pickers, and I have been sharing my efforts in the woods.



After finding several plastic bags, I read 'Somebody Swallowed Stanley' to my class.



My class were concerned to protect wildlife after hearing about all the creatures who were almost harmed by Stanley.

We designed our own reusable bags and made posters about not dropping litter that we put up on windows.



Outdoor learning boosts confidence, social skills, communication, motivation, physical skills, knowledge and understanding. (Gill, 2014)

Share
awe
and
WONDER

"Connecting with children as they experience moments of awe and wonder can enable us to encourage thinking skills, helping them to process what they are observing." (Davis, 2023)



There are many benefits for children in encouraging creative play in natural environments. (Wilson, 2007)



frozen flowers

We made a wormery.

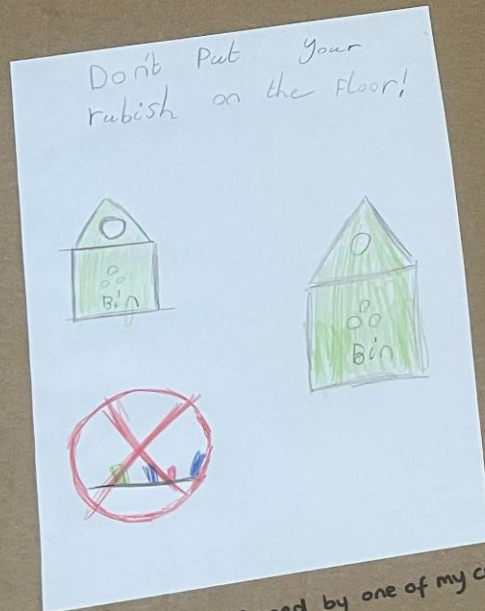


We grew some flowers

"Play is the highest form of research." (Albert Einstein)

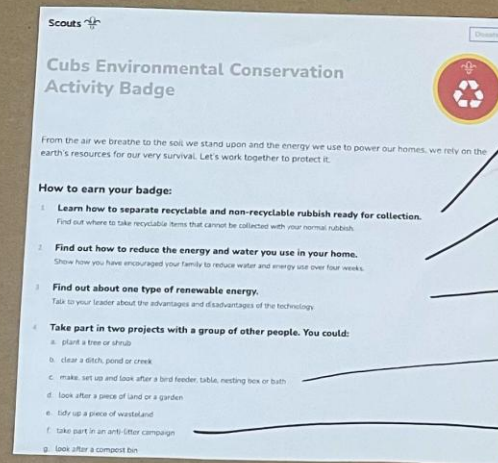






A poster designed by one of my cubs

I also shared my scrapbook with my cubs and we decided to complete the Environmental Conservation Activity Badge.



(The Scout Association, 2024)

We now have a recycling bin and a garden waste bin at our Scout hut, as well as a general waste bin.

the general waste bin is now rarely full.

The cubs undertook to switch off lights and use less water.

We have planned to make a model wind mill.

We have decided to fundraise to buy a permanent bird bath for Peascroft Wood.

We went litter picking in Peascroft Wood. We have decided to repeat this every term from now on.

John Muir

Muir endeavored to protect wild places for their own sake and for the wellbeing of people and wildlife.
(John Muir Trust, n.d.)

I have enhanced my own wellbeing by taking the time to reconnect with nature and Peascroft Wood. I have also endeavored to support the children in my Reception class and my Cub Scouts to do the same.

I have tried to support the wildlife in Peascroft Wood by picking up litter and providing water during the heatwave.

I have been influenced by the work of John Muir (1838-1914), who founded the modern conservation movement.
(John Muir Trust, n.d.)

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like Autumn leaves."
(John Muir)



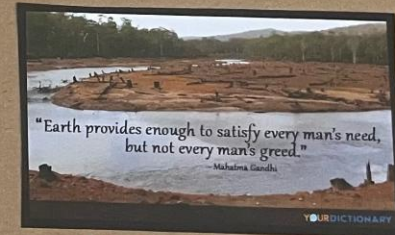
John Muir's writings inspired the creation of the world's first national park system.
(John Muir Trust, n.d.)

A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

(birthdaywishes.expert, 2017)

Others have expressed similar ideas to Muir, and many have been influenced by his work.



(Your Dictionary, 2022)

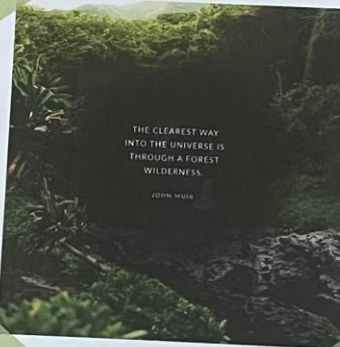
Reflect

How I approached making a scrap book

I wanted to make a physical scrap book, rather than a digital one. I wanted the scrap book to be big and durable and easily accessible to share with the children in my Reception class. I wanted to make use of cardboard delivery boxes, rather than using lots of new paper. I was inspired by a cardboard sculpture of Sir David Attenborough, which was created in 2020, to celebrate Sir David Attenborough being named as 'Sustainability Hero of the Year' (board24, 2021). I decided to cut lettering out of packaging and old magazines, rather than using new paper, ink and electricity to print lettering. I purchased paper-based tape rather than plastic based tape to add things to my scrap book. I repurposed old string to assemble my scrap book. I like that each page is not perfectly pristine cardboard, and is not exactly uniform, as I made use of what I had. Greenpeace (2020) recommends reusing items to be more sustainable. I used pieces of scrap paper, where possible, or whatever post it notes I had left. I made use of the cover of an old complete sketch pad to make the black frame to enhance my painting of the woods for the front cover. I endeavored to make handwritten notes where possible, rather than printing, and avoided laminating any of the resources that I added to my scrap book. According to TES (2019) educators should laminate less as laminated paper can not be recycled and will take hundreds of years to biodegrade. I enjoyed undertaking some tasks which I had not done for years, such as painting, sketching, writing poetry, pressing flowers, making daisy chains and leaf rubbing.



Sir David Attenborough



THE CLEARER WAY
INTO THE UNIVERSE IS
THROUGH A FOREST
WILDERNESS.

JOHN MUIR

Reflecting on my experience

Making this scrap book and undertaking the John Muir Award has been a very positive experience.

I have rediscovered Peascroft Wood, a place that has been part of my life ever since I can remember. I am grateful that this process has inspired me to reconnect with this forgotten place, and to help to protect it.

I enjoyed exploring Peascroft Wood and I have vastly increased my knowledge and understanding of different species of minibeasts, birds, bees and ladybirds. I have also learnt how to identify different trees, their leaves, fruit, blossom, and even twigs!

I have joined 'Bilston Litter Pickers' and I will continue to connect with others in my local community to take care of Peascroft Wood and other areas of the local community in need of cleaning up. At Cubs, we have also undertaken to litter pick every term.

By litter picking, we are helping to prevent birds and other wildlife from being harmed or even killed by abandoned litter in their habitats. We are also helping to preserve the environment, and make it a pleasant place for others to visit and enjoy.

By sharing and involving the children in my class and my Cubs, I am helping to educate and inspire them, and opening up a place of awe and wonder to them.

I helped provide birds with water for a few days during a heatwave, but this was short term help. At Cubs we are planning to fundraise to install a permanent birdbath in Peascroft Wood, to support birds permanently. This will continue to have a positive impact for the birds of Peascroft Wood.

My attempts to clean up the numerous signs around the Wood varied in success. I found graffiti virtually impossible to remove. I plan to contact the Local Authority to enquire if they have any plans to clean them. In the meantime, I have electronic copies of the Peascroft Wood map and information leaflets that I will share on social media with local groups, as well as children at my school and scout group, to enable them to enjoy the forest and navigate their way and identify different trees and leaves.

This process has also prompted me to make several changes to my practice. I now laminate less and print less, opting to make use of reusable dry erase pockets instead. I consider energy, water and paper waste daily. I am even more scrupulous about recycling and I always use reusable material bags for shopping, and reuse everything that I possibly can.

I have saved plastic lids and cardboard tubes, and collected a vast array of natural materials, to facilitate loose parts play, which I now favor over play with bright plastic toys. We have a junk modeling station in our classroom, to continually promote being sustainable and to encourage looking for possibilities.

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