

Forest schools and cookery ideas from Mrs Ensor to keep you busy and happy!



Figure 1 Hello from springy the snail!

Week 1: Birds. Have you noticed how loud the birds are singing at the moment? They are trying to attract a mate so they can lay some eggs. Take a moment to go and sit by an open window or door-make sure you ask an adult first and sit and just listen. Have a look at the sky? How many birds can you count? I have seen a blackbird, robin, magpie, blue tit, wood pigeon and wren in my garden recently. One had twigs in its beak for building a nest! I was so excited! Maybe you could try and identify the birds you see. Here are some good websites to try out:



<https://www.ecokidsplanet.co.uk/blogs/news/handy-little-guide-to-the-uk-s-top-10-garden-birds>

<https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/discover/fun-stuff/activity-sheets>

<https://www.lovethegarden.com/uk-en/article/19-common-british-birds-you-can-find-your-garden>

Could you pretend to be a bird building a nest? I wonder what you would need? Could you make one out of things in your home or garden? How are you going to eat if you were a bird and what do birds eat?

Can you find a feather or draw one? They are very beautiful and very cleverly designed. Does your feather have magic powers? Maybe it is like a Harry Potter quill and can write magic words!

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/04/feather-identification/>

Don't forget to sing the Forest school songs to your parents/carers too!

"Forest schools, Forest schools, we have fun....."

"I'm going to climb, climb, climb a mountain....."

Maybe you could find some sticks or wooden spoons and pretend they are clocky sticks!

We look forward to seeing what you have done. Send you pictures to Mrs Clark for us to see. Xxxxx

Cooking idea! well I have come up with the obvious one, making a nest out of cereal, cornflakes or shredded wheat and chocolate. Yummy! (don't forget to clean your teeth after enjoying these treats)

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/shredded-wheat-nests>

https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/easteregg nests_93841



Week 2: Bugs, bugs, glorious bugs!

When it was warmer last week, I was so excited to see so many insects and bugs appearing in my garden. These are our forest school friends. I saw ladybirds, bees and butterflies. I wonder what you can see near your home. There is no need to be scared of these creatures, just have a careful look and be very quiet and still. If you are going to touch a worm, for instance, remember to use very gentle fingers and put the worm back in its home or habitat after having a look at it so it does not die. Remember you are Forest school guardians, so we take care of these special creatures.

How many spots can you count on a ladybird I wonder? I saw lots of 7 spot ones! How many legs do they have? Is that different to a spider? Maybe you could draw a ladybird or make one out of bits and bobs around your home or garden.



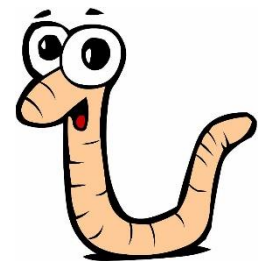
What other insects can you see? I saw a peacock butterfly getting nectar from the grape hyacinths. Isn't it beautiful?



This is a great website

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/other-invertebrates/>

Cooking ideas! How about making some cheese pastry worms and insects? Pastry is fun and very easy to make; the rule of thumb is half the quantity of fat to flour and some cold tap water. <http://allrecipes.co.uk/recipe/211/easy-peasy-pastry-for-pies.aspx> The children know all about Mrs Ensor's fairy fingers tip for rubbing in the fat to flour to keep the pastry light. As flour is difficult to find at the moment, you could always buy a block of shop bought pastry. If you haven't got a rolling pin, try using a bottle instead, but give it a wash first. If you grate some cheese over the pastry and roll it in, you have magic cheese pastry. The children know about tucking their fingers in; the claw grip, to protect their fingers and I hope they will sing you the grating song- 'Up and down up and down all the way to London Town!' Then just pretend the pastry is playdough and get modelling! Pop your creations on a baking tray and paint with a little milk or milk alternative and put in a hot oven, about 180 degrees and cook until golden brown. The timings depend on the size and thickness of your creations. We can't wait to see your creations!



Week 3. Weather and Clouds.

Hello lovely children! I thought we could think about the sky today. This is always how we start our Forest Schools sessions by looking up at the sky and engaging all our senses. Can you hear or feel the wind blowing today, are the trees waving their branches? How does the weather make you feel today? What can you see when you look up at the sky, are there any clouds? I



I love clouds. I think they look like big marshmallow trampolines! I would like to jump on them, wouldn't you? Mr Bartlett, our amazing forest school's helper is an expert on clouds and he knows all the special names for them. They have some very long names.

What are clouds? Clouds are made up of very light water droplets or ice crystals. These particles can float in the air. When warm air rises, swells and cools, it forms clouds.



Different types of clouds mean different things-

Cirrus clouds are high in the sky and are wispy like pulled bits of cotton wool or candy floss-they do not hold any rain and it a few of these and a blue sky means its going to be a fine day



Cumulus clouds are big puffy clouds and they pile up in the sky. If they are white it means, there will be no rain but if they are grey it means it might rain depending on how dark they are

Stratus clouds are like big blankets that cover the sky. These clouds mean it will rain if the cloud is low down it could also be foggy



Nimbus clouds means rain or snow is already falling from them.



You can have stratusnimbus and cumulonimbus too! what do these mean I wonder?

Maybe it is raining today where you are. Never mind wrap up warm and breathe the air for 10 minutes, there is nothing like jumping in a few puddles. Remember the Swedish quote 'There is no such thing as bad weather just bad clothing!' Do you remember our rain chant? How much rain can you catch in a bucket? You could measure it each day or use it to make a potion?

Rain Chant- repeat after leader.

"It is raining, I don't care; I've got rain drops in my hair, I am wet right to my toes, now the rain's dripping off my nose, I am feeling rather soggy, and the ground is getting boggy, Rain is good for all the plants, Now I'm going to do a dance, We can still have lots of fun, very soon we'll see the sun!"

Happy Cooking. How about making mashed potato cloud fluff? This reminds me of that amazing Charlie and Lola story <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x30k5eu>. Or you could try whipping up some egg whites to make meringues. These are very cloud like. Some of your children are very good at separating eggs now. <https://www.olivemagazine.com/recipes/meringues/>

If you can't eat eggs have you tried using chickpea water-aquafaba instead? They are amazing! <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/vegan-meringues>.

Week 4. Leaves. By now all the leaves should be starting to unfurl and show us their beautiful shapes and patterns.

There are so many different shades of green. How many different leaves can you see out of the window or find I wonder? If you are allowed out for a short walk, see what you can find? You could maybe thread your leaves onto a stick and make a leaf kebab. It looks a bit like a totem pole. This is great website with lots of ideas.

<https://muddyfaces.co.uk/activity/threading-leaves/>

If you are going to use any tools with your parents or carers can you teach them our tool rules children? Always pull the peeler away from you so you don't cut yourself, always be a star jump away from your neighbour and always leave your tool in a safe tool area. You could make your own tool area, so it doesn't get lost. I know you will be brilliant at it. Don't forget to smell your twig to see if it smells of melon or cucumber under the bark.

The undersides of leaves are amazing too! Can you see the patterns the veins make? Can you trace them with your finger? This is taking water and nutrients to the tree to help it grow. Can you draw a leaf pattern? This is meant to be a very calming nature activity. Relax and breathe as you let your pencil wander, branching out and out and out.

Who remembers what trees we have in forest schools? Which one do you like to climb or swing in, in the corner - I will give you a clue it begins with O! Or how about the Fairy King's tree? That one begins with C! I bet the fairies are missing you all. Maybe you could draw them a picture or send them a magic wish. Which is your favourite tree at Forest schools? We have lots of fruit trees too, I wonder if the bees are busy pollinating the flowers yet to make fruit?

Cooking ideas How about making mini leaf pizzas today? You can make your own pizza dough easily with this recipe, <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/no-yeast-pizza-dough>. If you can't find



Figure 2 This is Mrs Ensor's pear with the flowers starting to open!

flour you could use a bought pizza base and add your favourite pizza toppings. To make the leaf shapes you could roll out the dough and stamp out circles and ovals by overlapping the circles to make ovals / half-moons with a glass to get a leaf shape. Hard to explain, just try it! You could use a piece of pepper to make your leaf stalk. In early years we like to cut strips of pepper and spring onion with scissors, as this is great for fine motor skills and add grated carrot too, using our grater skills, to a passata base or your favourite pizza base layer. You can even use just tomato sauce if you have nothing else in the house. Then add your small pieces of chopped veg and grated cheese and pop in a hot oven till brown and bubbling for 10-15 mins, cooking time depends on the size of them, so keep an eye on them. Enjoy!

Leaf hunt

Woodland Trust
naturedetectives

 <input type="checkbox"/> alder	 <input type="checkbox"/> ash	 <input type="checkbox"/> beech	 <input type="checkbox"/> birch
 <input type="checkbox"/> elder	 <input type="checkbox"/> field maple	 <input type="checkbox"/> hawthorn	 <input type="checkbox"/> hazel
 <input type="checkbox"/> holly	 <input type="checkbox"/> horse chestnut	 <input type="checkbox"/> oak	 <input type="checkbox"/> rowan
 <input type="checkbox"/> sycamore	Have you found any other leaves? Draw or stick them here and find out their names.		

Start your own adventure at naturedetectives.org.uk

WOODLAND TRUST

Week 5. Sticks.

We love sticks in Forest Schools because they can be so many different things in our imaginations? 'Stanley's stick' is one of our favourite books.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfluIQaOLIY> listen to it here.

What would you do with a stick today if you had one? If you can't go outside and find a stick maybe you could use a broom handle or a wooden spoon? Is your stick going to be a magic broomstick, a fishing rod or a pirate ship mast? Can you tie anything onto it? Here is a very easy knot to learn how to attach things. I wonder how long your stick is? Which is longest or shortest? https://mothernatured.com/nature-exploration/fun-ways-to-measure-nature/?fbclid=IwAR0xL64n8Di7qW_rjIFosJHybyfzyseYoeAl7HYVwmzTLzOpOM3RhTa0ZBs

Overhand knot, single, double and triple.

- Take a piece of rope or string and lay it across your palm with the end by your little finger, this is the mouse's tail.
- Mouse is now going to run around your fingers- wrap the long end around your fingers.
- Mouse is now going to tickle your fingers- tuck the long end through the string over your fingers once and pull both ends.
- To do a double tuck under twice and a triple tuck under three times
- These are pretty, simple, decorative knots and can be used at FS for simple tying for very young children to attach things e.g. tying a feather to a stick or make a bracelet with leaves attached.



Maybe you have a bigger log or a living tree nearby. I wonder what tree it has come from or how old that tree is? There is a very clever way of measuring trees so you can find out roughly how old they are. You have to use a tape measure at your chest height to get the circumference of the tree.

Choose a deciduous tree (a tree that drops its leaves in winter) in woodland or an open space such as a park. With the help of a friend, use a tape measure to measure the circumference of the tree trunk at a height of around 1 metre. Try to avoid any lumps on the trunk surface. Now use the information below to work out how many years old your tree is. If you have chosen a tree in woodland, divide the circumference in centimetres by 1.25. If you have chosen a tree in an open space, divide the circumference in centimetres by 2.5.

Cooking ideas. How about making a pastry whirls, like a swiss roll but savoury, which looks like tree rings when you cut the slices off the pastry log. The children love doing this at school as we roll the pastry out as wide as the table! Buy or make some pastry and roll it out into a long rectangle as thick as a pound coin. Spread the surface with your chosen spread right to the edges. This could be marmite and grated cheese (love it or hate it!), pesto and hummus, or tomato sauce and cheese for pizza type whirl, or whatever other combo you can dream up. Then carefully roll up your long log long the long edge. Slice with a sharp knife into discs and place on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with more cheese if you like. Bake in a hot oven 180 degrees for approximately 20mins. Cool and enjoy!



Week 6 Flowers.

Hello lovely ones! I wonder how you are doing today. There are so many flowers now poking their heads up out of the ground. This spotter sheet has all yellow flowers on it, 10 of them in fact. I can see you holding up your hands and counting all your fingers- **10!** I wonder if you can see any of these when you go outside today if you are allowed to? If you can't maybe you could draw some different yellow flowers. I wonder how long the roots are on your plant.

Yellow springtime flowers



www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Credits: Dandelion, Gorse, Marsh marigold, Colts-foot (d Richard Burkmarr / Primrose, Lesser celandine, Spring cinquefoil (d Philip Precey / Cowslip (c) Dave Appleton / Winter aconite (c) Amy Lewis / Daffodil (c) Neil Aldridge



Remember our chant-The roots go down and the shoots go up! The roots then suck up all the water so our plants can grow and make leaves and maybe eventually flowers! Maybe you could draw lots of flowers and put them on a crown or mask and you could be the King or Queen of the flower fairies today? If you can go outside maybe you could pick some flowers; only one or two though, as we don't want to pick all the wildflowers or there will be none left for the insects to collect nectar from. You could use the petals to attach to your crown. Wow! I bet they look beautiful, don't forget to take some photos to show us. Do you remember this song children? Join in Mums and Dads/carers!

Song- to the tune of 'Heads shoulder knees and toes'

Roots, stem, leaves and flowers, leaves and flowers

Roots, stem, leaves and flowers, leaves and flowers

And Petals and pollen and anthers and bees BZZZZZZZZ

Roots, stem, leaves and flowers, leaves and flowers

Here is a really interesting video clip about bees.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2jfMHWYTDk>

The bees love collecting the nectar so they can make honey. Maybe you could add some drawings of a bee to your flowers and crowns. So now its time for a party as you have your crowns on. Shall we make some party food? You could make some pretend party food in your home or outside or try the recipe below.

Cooking idea

Thought you might like to try just fruity honey muffins today. You can use any fruit in the recipe, fresh or frozen, just use what you have. Just use 1 ½ tsp baking powder and if you haven't got vanilla don't worry! Enjoy!

<https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/blueberry-oatmeal-muffins/#tasty-recipes-66860>

Week 7 Potions

Bet you never thought we were going to get to potions -one of our favourite things to do in Forest schools using herbs and petals and leaves and mud!

We are so sorry we did not get to see 'Room on the broom' together but you could watch this clip if you like to get you in the mood for potion making. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWB0goTWZic>

Potion making can be done inside or outside or even in the bath in case it gets really messy. You will need several different sized containers, or saucepans, bottles or buckets and a stick for stirring. Adding bicarbonate of soda and vinegar is always fun as it froths up like a volcano or you could add a bit of washing up liquid or bubble bath for froth! If you are lucky enough to have any flowers or fresh herbs these are great, and lemons or oranges grated will give a good scent too. Any veg peelings or leaves could be added too, or a handful of frozen veg, though the children might then decide this looks like vomit-You have been warned! You could also add in some food colourings or food scents or even some perfume if you have any! A few drops of oil is also fun as this sits on top of the water but can stain clothes, beware!

What can your magic potions do I wonder! Will it turn the teachers into bats or frogs! What is your potion called? Maybe you need a wand and a cape now to be a magician? Send us pictures don't forget!

Cooking ideas

Making a milkshake would be the best sort of edible potion. You could use milk, yoghurt, ice cream, cocoa powder, frozen fruits or fresh soft fruits, flavoured syrups and whizz them all up. If you drink this, I wonder what you will turn into!

Alternatively, you could try making magic potato bombs! Pop some small potatoes into roasting tray. Add a tablespoon of oil to coat the potatoes lightly. Add some ground pepper, lemon zest and some herbs if you have any, rosemary or thyme are always good but use whatever you have. Pop in a hot oven, 180 degrees, and roast, giving the tray a shake so all the sides get brown, after 30 minutes. Re-check after 15 mins and pop a skewer through to see if they are done. Enjoy and see what the children can tell you about what their bombs are going to do!

