



Robert Ogilvie Preschool Inquiry Project 2020-2021

How does Nature Play affect the
“Whole Child”?

An ongoing inquiry project.....



Inquiry's start with a simple question?
Sometimes from the children or students and
sometimes from the Teacher.
My question this year was “Why was I seeing
children come through my centre with, what I
would describe as, Low Gross Motor Skills?”.
Were they lacking this developmental stage due
to not being exposed to outside play, where we
tend to use a lot of our large gross motor muscles?
Or was it something entirely different?
So I took my preschooler's outside to our school
forest to.. Explore. I was wanting to see if being
outside in an environment where they had to use
their large muscles skills and allowing it to
happen in a “Play-Based” situation would help
build these skills faster.

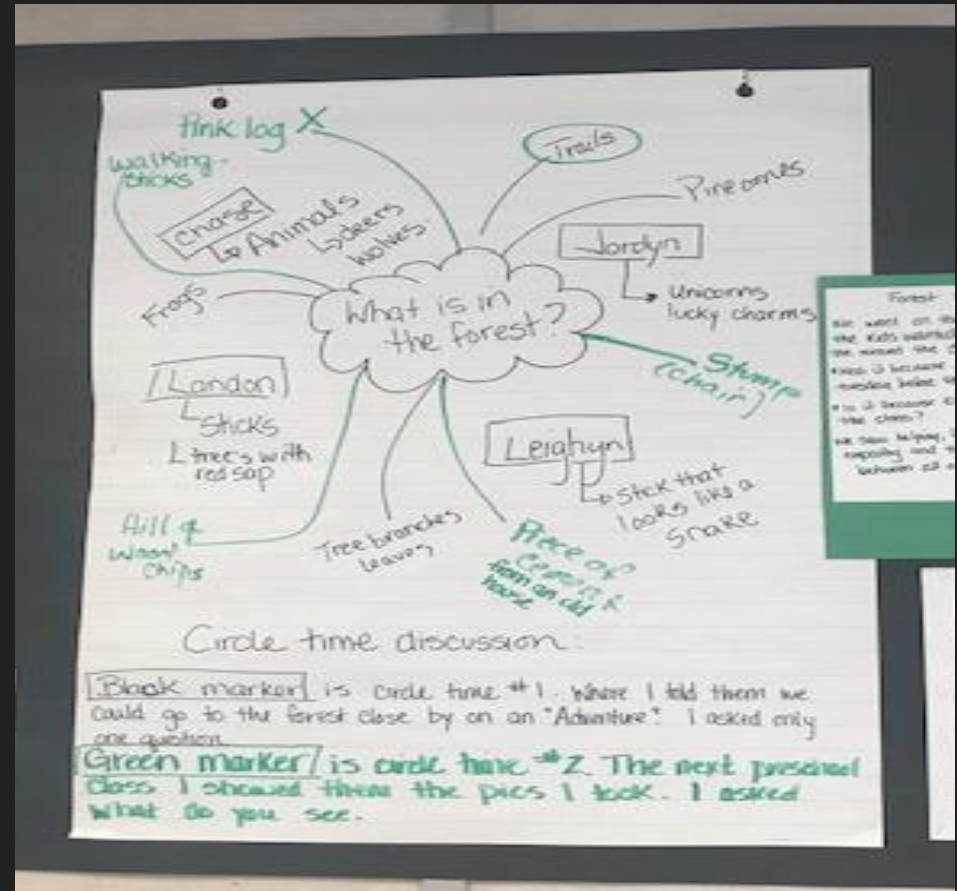


Before we went out on walk in the forest I asked one question at circle time discussion.

“What is in a Forest?”

I went around the circle and let everyone tell me their answer. I wrote it down word for word to what they said. Some said they would see Deer and Wolves.. One said they would see Unicorns and Lucky Charms.... Clearly we were all over the page on what was in a forest.

I ask this question so that later when we review the pictures of this walk as a group, we can backtrack and discuss what we actually saw with what they had assumed. Helping to build some concrete learning.





On this walk one of my friends found a large stick and used to to walk with in the uneven ground of the bush.



The stick also became important to use for uncovering things in the leaves and underbrush. The children uncovered a piece of cement and said that there had been a house here before. Knowing that it wasn't natural to the forest but having no real knowledge of how it got there.





“The X means go this way, Teacher Pam” said one friend.

We also found that when walking through the forest there are a lot of branches that hit you in the face. One friend found that if you walked backwards the branches don't hurt as much.





We found a stump that was actually a really good spot for a sit down rest.

.... And sometimes we fall down in the forest. But we get back up and carry on.





Towards the end of the walk we found a large hill made from wood chips and the children climbed to the top, then rolled down.





As the group were rolling down the hill and climbing back up, I noticed a little friend who was not rolling but just watching.

I asked him, “ Friend, don’t you want to roll down the hill with like your friends?”.

“No, I don’t know how. It's too scary” said the friend.

No matter how much i coaxed him or encouraged him , the friend wouldn’t roll down. Eventually when it was time to leave he walked very slowly down the hill and we headed back towards the school.



This has me questioning:

Does my friend have the gross motor skills to roll down the hill?

Has he maybe never done this skill yet?

Is it just his personality of being a watcher and observer that makes him think he can not roll down the hill?

How do I nurture and extend this skill set for him?
Through more experiences?