

# MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

'Making Space for Nature' includes indoor and outdoor activities for pupils to enjoy engaging with the nature on their doorstep. This will inspire pupil creativity whilst encouraging outdoor learning and well-being as they explore their own naturehood.

## Activity 5: Make my space for nature

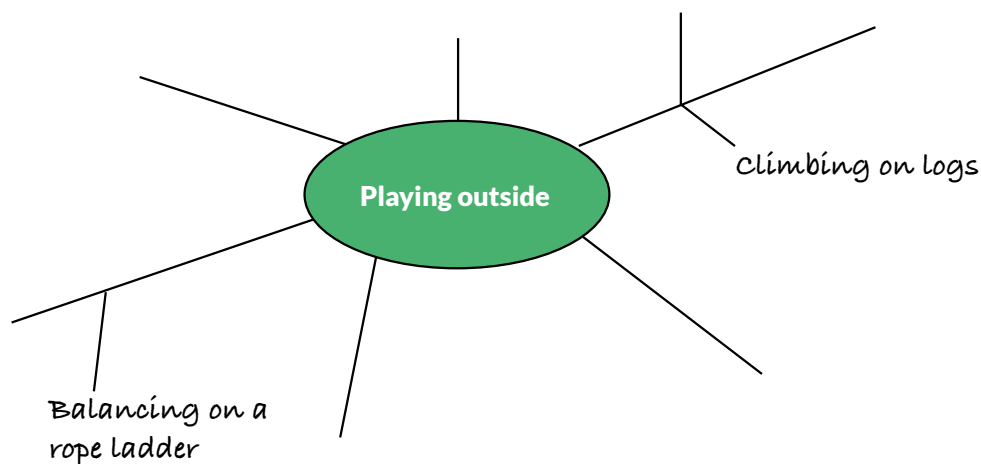
In this activity, you will become a landscape architect by **designing your own nature play area**. A landscape architect is someone who designs outdoor spaces including parks and playgrounds, thinking carefully about the location of equipment, paths, trees, plants and flowers.

For inspiration, watch this video about an exciting nature play area in London. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1z84MjiBThE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1z84MjiBThE)

### Task 1: What do you love about playing outside?

Fill in the squares in the mind map below or draw your own mind map on a piece of paper copying the one below.

Add any words or phrases that come into your head when you think about what you love about playing outside and how that links with nature. (2 suggestions have been added. You can add your own lines to add as many words you can think of.)



# MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

## Activity 5: Make my space for nature

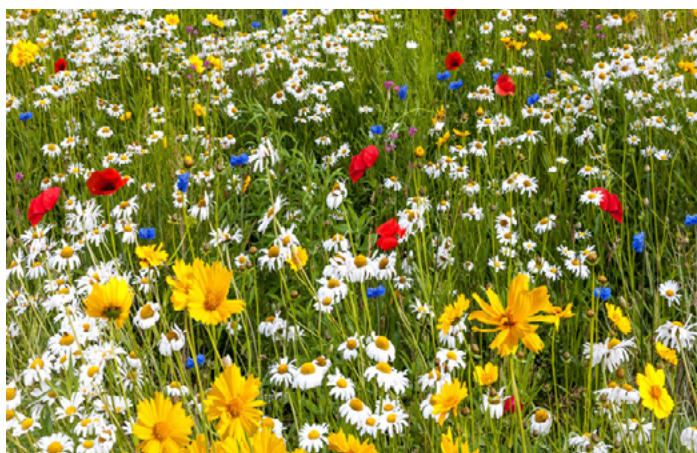
### Task 2. Choose your area.

There are important elements you need to consider before beginning your design. Decide on an area near your home or school. This could be an empty green space in a park, in your school, or an open space. Look at areas that might have natural features like a slope or a big tree.

These ideas might help you choose an area for what's there already.



**Is there a good tree to climb?**



**Is there a wildflower area to protect?**

Take a pen and paper, go outside and walk around the boundary of your area counting your footsteps. How many steps wide and long will it be? Note it on the paper. My space is 60 steps long and 40 steps wide so it is rectangular. Yours can be whichever shape you like. Complete the following questions by filling in the spaces below.

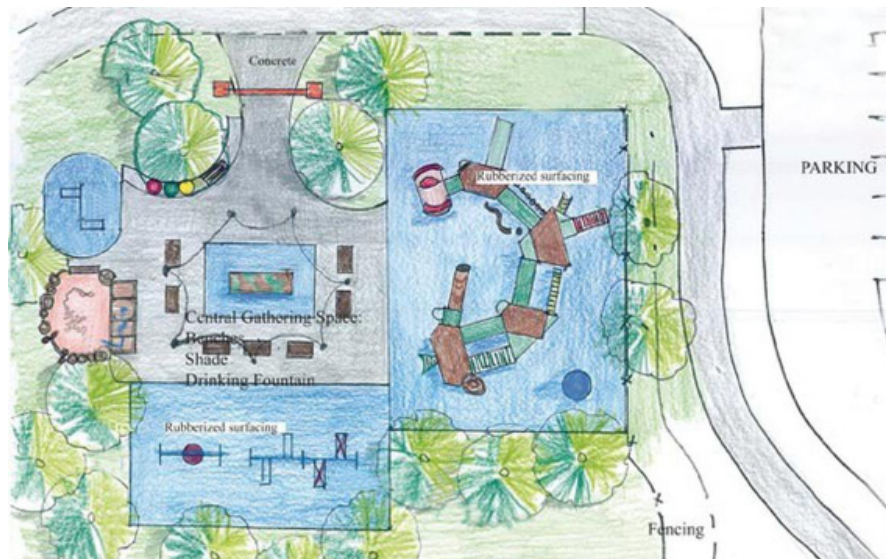
1. What size (in steps) and shape is your space?
2. What's there already? (e.g. trees, plants, paths, slopes, uneven ground, water)
3. Who is it for? (e.g. age range of children, parents and carers, teachers)
4. What wildlife lives there already and what needs to remain there to protect its normal habitat? (e.g. hedgehogs, birds, insects, plants, trees, shade, sun, water)

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## Activity 5: Make my space for nature

### Task 3. Plan your nature play space.

Firstly, make sure you've watched the video (link on page 1). These pictures and map may give you inspiration, but be inventive with your own brilliant ideas! Imagine you are looking at your area from above, so it will look a bit like these plans.





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## Activity 5: Make my space for nature

### Task 3. Plan your nature play space (continued)

Make a list of what you will include. These pictures might give you some ideas.



A climbing wall on a tree trunk, climbing steps with logs and layered planting for biodiversity.

#### My List

#### Climbing Area



A rope or tyre swing

#### Swings Area



A living willow tunnel

#### Crawling Area

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## Activity 5: Make my space for nature

### Task 3. Plan your nature play space (continued)

#### Seating and shaded areas



Seating – wooden carved mushrooms

#### Planting and paths (make sure there's enough room for buggies and wheelchairs)



You might choose to use tree stumps, logs, recycled wood, tyres, rope or pipes to design rope ladders, seesaws, tunnels, bridges, boats, forts, or musical pipes. Think of your favourite trees, flowers and colours, design a natural maze, or encourage biodiversity by adding bug hotels, bird feeders and food growing boxes.

When you've finished your design on page 6, use this checklist to check you've remembered key elements. Tick each box if accomplished.

Have you explained what materials your equipment is made from?

Have you included seating and shaded areas?

Have you included elements to encourage biodiversity?

Have you included planting of your favourite trees, plants, flowers, vegetables or herbs?

Are there busy and quiet play areas and a variety of play equipment?

Have you designed paths and space for people to move around easily?

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### Task 4. Draw your design.

Start by drawing the shape and fill the sheet with the boundaries. Then draw what is there already that you will keep. Add your own designs to it and label them.

Colour in your design.

My first name: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Optional extension activity:

Create a mini 3D nature playground in a shoebox. Use recycled items, fabrics, lolly sticks, twigs, leaves, stones, pipe cleaners, coloured paper etc.



If you're interested in other nature activities, you'll find some here:

- [www.goingwild.net](http://www.goingwild.net)
- <https://www.facebook.com/goingwild/>
- <https://twitter.com/goingwildnet?lang=en-gb>
- <https://wildlifetrusts.org/>
- <https://www.backyardnature.org/resources/>
- <https://www.wwf.org.uk/things-to-do-home>
- <https://mailchi.mp/johnmuirtrust.org/wildinside>
- <https://woodlandtrust.org.uk/search/?q=children&p=1>
- <https://rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/>