



Autumn outdoor activities

for Schools & School children

Autumn is a colourful season full of excitement and anticipation. As the leaves fall, heading outside is not only fun, but one of the very best things you can do for your Students health and wellbeing.

To help get you started, we have put together a list of easy outdoor activity ideas to enjoy as a School Class this Autumn in your School grounds.

Autumn Treasure Box

Going on a treasure hunt is an all-time favourite game and while it's essentially the same idea, it's much more appealing to students than just going out for a walk. It's all about the challenge!

Children love the finer details of Autumn and at this time of year, there are so many interesting things to look for in nature. A host of different coloured and shaped leaves litter the floor, while fallen conkers, acorns and pine cones are there for the taking. Choose whether you're going for a "colour" theme or a "autumn" theme, then head straight outside and let your students look for items.

To make an Autumn Treasure Box, take an empty egg box and get your student to paint the inside of each section in a different autumn colour - reds, yellows, oranges, browns and greens. Take it out on your hunt and encourage your student to fill it with items of corresponding colours, or you could reserve sections for specific items, whatever they prefer. It's a good way for students to learn colour and to understand a bit about the natural world around them too. It's worth your School buying a pair of binoculars or a magnifying glass, so you can take them along to add to the adventure. Involve older students by letting them make the hunt their own - they could bring a sketchbook to draw what they see or if



the school has a digital camera/I-pads allow them to take pictures, depending on their interests.

Conker/Pine Cone Paint Rolling

If you've collected conkers or pine cones on your treasure hunt, dip five or six of them each in a different colour poster paint. Place them onto plain paper on a tray and give the tray a good shake. It's fun for children to watch them roll around and leave colourful patterns on their way. Can you spot a familiar face or shape in the design? What do the conkers/pine cone pictures have to tell you?

Leaf Prints and Puppets

Head out into your School grounds or out for a walk in your local park or woodland area to collect a bag full of autumn leaves. Children will relish a challenge to find the biggest, the most interesting shape, the most beautiful. Try to get some with really large veins as they will work even better for the next part of this activity. Take the leaves back to class and paint the undersides in greens, yellows, browns and reds. Press them

carefully onto plain white paper to create a life-like leaf print pattern. You could use fabric paint on textiles - E.G. plain t-shirts for young children to make their own designs to wear, cushion covers, or a table-cloth that could then be put up on the wall in class with their names on.



Afterwards, they can glue a wooden lollipop stick to the bottom of each painted leaf, stick on a pair of googly eyes in the middle (cheap and easy to buy online or from craft shops) and draw on a smile to create leaf puppets.

Grow your School garden

Flowers may be disappearing, but there is still plenty of life out there and much to do in your school garden. You could also create a new feature or school greenspace this Autumn.

It's the perfect time to plant bulbs ready for next spring. Bulbs are worth every moment of digging and muddy hands for the surprise and joy of seeing their own daffodils, tulips and snowdrops that pop up a few months later. If you don't have a School garden you can plant bulbs in frost-proof window boxes, or in pots for the front of the School or outside your classroom window using peat-free compost.



Wildlife Feeders & Homes

Set up a wildlife watch with your students in the School grounds. A great activity is to make bird feeders by collecting pine cones from a local park, smearing them with crunchy peanut butter, or lard & seeds then stringing them from tree branches in your School garden/grounds.

Children can get busy making a safe home for any wildlife that visits over the colder months. A simple pile of twigs and leaves or hollow bamboo canes cut short and laid flat in a quiet corner of the garden offer a welcome shelter for insects. Find a good place to hide and let them spy with binoculars, and students can then look out for birds coming to eat at the feeders.

Nature Wands - Perfect for Collecting Treasures on a Nature Walk

Nature Wands are ideal for sprinkling a little discovery, creativity and imaginative play! Simple to make & great for exploring what nature has to offer. All you need are sticks & double-sided tape!

Students can find used sticks they can collect on a woodland walk, and then get them to wind sticky tape around the top half of each one. Then head off in search of nature treasures. Each time an item is found it is stuck onto the wand. The double-sided tape is strong

enough to hold most items (feathers, leaves, flowers, seeds, grass, small stones).

These are ideal for encouraging children to explore outdoor spaces & create nature-based art. They also offer opportunities for imaginative play, storytelling & an appreciation for the natural environment.

Compost Making

Make your own compost by raking up the leaves from your school garden and adding them into bin bags.

Next squash in the collected leaves fill to nearly the top then punch a few small holes in the side and base of the bag (with a pencil) and add a little water. Tie the

bag and leave over the Winter, then next Autumn you should have some homemade leaf mulch

to use around the base of your plants and flowers. This is an excellent way of 'recycling' Nature's resources and is a great way to teach children about the ways leaves actually rot down (decompose).

8. Clay Faces

Students can make a face-shape out of clay and stick this onto an outside wall or a tree in the school. They can then collect and add Autumn objects/items to make an actual face with features. The objects can be acorns, seed heads, berries, leaves, twigs, feathers etc. These can then be displayed in the classroom.

Seed Dispersal Activity

When the students are out in the school grounds ask them to find or think about the ways seeds from flowers, plants and trees can disperse /spread in Nature.

The following ways and species are:

Wind:	Poppy, Thistle, Sycamore, Dandelions
Gravity:	Acorns, Conker, Pine Cones
Animals:	Tomatoes, Bean, Burdock
Explode:	Peas, Gorse, Lupins
Water:	Coconuts, Willow, Violet

Autumn Poem/Story

To encourage students to write their own poem or short story. They could try using the first letters from the word Autumn as the start of each line. The idea is for them to add in subjects such as Autumn Plants & Animals, Sounds & Colours.

