









Handbook for Youth Workers

PINE

Practical Innovative Nature Education

WHEN NON FORMAL LEARNING BECOMES ONE WITH NATURE.



PINE

Practical Innovative Nature Education Handbook for Youth Workers

KA2 Erasmus+ project Strategic Partnerships for youth

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ABOUT

PINE - Practical Innovative Nature Education - is an Erasmus+ funded project aimed at young people aged 14+ tackling inclusive education and training, enhancing the access and participation of disadvantaged young people who are unemployed and need support to find employment in their countries or within Europe. The project's programme of activities were closely monitored to provide understanding of its impacts on who take part to develop a best practice understanding of education in an environmental context as a way to develop key skills and competences.

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It runs for seven years, from 2014 to 2020, with organisations invited to apply for funding each year for life-changing activities.

It aims to modernise education, training and youth work across Europe. It is open to education, training, youth and sport organisations across all sectors of lifelong learning, including school education, further and higher education, adult education and the youth sector.



INTRODUCTION

This handbook is an innovative environmental education programme for youth workers working to enhance personal development, social inclusion and an appreciation for the environment.

With this handbook we want to empower younger people with the skills and confidence they need to make a difference to society by improving their natural environment and their opportunities for personal development and employability. By using a variety of approaches this new initiative aims to demonstrate how providing a mix of formal, informal and non-formal learning will help to strengthen skills in entrepreneurship and communication as well as promote inclusive values and active citizenship.

Through engaging and collaborative outdoor nature conservation activities supported by specially developed training guides and resources for youth leaders, this handbook will provide an exciting and practical way for young people to reach their full potential and boost their future opportunities.

This handbook was funded project by Erasmus + and it is aimed at young people aged 14+ tackling inclusive education and training, enhancing the access and participation of disadvantaged young people who are unemployed and need support to find employment in their countries or within Europe.



Why is environmental education important?

It is essential that young people have frequent and regular opportunities to explore and learn in the outdoor environment as part of their daily lives. Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering young people opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being. Teaching and being outside also helps young people to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants and lifecycles.

Who is this handbook for?

Anybody who works with young people aged 14+ who would like to learn more about getting young people in nature can use this handbook. The programme of activities has been closely evaluated to understand the impact on young people who take part. We have developed a best practice understanding of education in an environmental context as a method of developing key skills and competences.

How can I use this handbook?

The activities have been split into an ice breakers or main activity to help you find what you are looking for. Each activity includes how long they take, the resources you may need, background research to do beforehand and the instructions.

Guiding Symbols



If you see this symbol the activity is suitable for young adults with additional needs.



If you see this symbol the activity is suitable to be done inside on a wet day.



If you see this symbol the activity is suitable for outside.



If you see this symbol the activity is an ice breaker.



If you see this symbol the activity is a main activity.

"No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced" David Attenborough

GUIDELINES For youth workers

Taking young people outside can be incredibly rewarding and challenging, so here are some hints and tips to help you along the way.

CLOTHING AND FACILITIES

- Alway ensure that the students are **dressed appropriately** for outdoor activities
- If they are not comfortable then they won't enjoy the time outdoors as much.

(don't forget that there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing choices!).

- Wet/cold weather raincoat, boots, warm clothing.
- Sunny/hot weather sun hats, sun cream, plenty of liquids to drink.
- If you can carry some extra clothing, water and food, it can be very helpful in case of an emergency
- Make sure that everyone knows what the **bathroom options** are, it is really important in ensuring that your group feel at ease being in the outdoors.
- Check the weather forecast and have a back-up plan in case the weather changes and you need to make a quick exit!

HEALTH & SAFETY

- Being outside can be exciting, especially when you are exploring a new environment. However, there are a few different hazards being outdoors which you should take note of and actions to reduce risk as much as possible. Make sure you **check your site** before going with a group and carry out an **appropriate risk assessment**.
- Make sure you carry a **first aid kit** and have someone with you that is first aid trained in case of any accidents
- If you are going to be in a remote area, make sure you have **mobile phones**, charged and with credit in case you need to make an emergency call.

TEACH APPROPRIATE OUTDOOR BEHAVIOUR

- Apply the 'Leave no Trace' policy with your group which means that everyone should leave the area how they found it. Take rubbish home!
- This also applies to picking anything that is living (for example, flowers or leaves) so make sure the group leaves them alone
- There are lots of things to see outside, as long as you are quiet! Have a signal that lets the group know they need to be quiet to observe wildlife (if anyone ruins this for the group, an appropriate forfeit should be given!)

HAVE ENOUGH YOUTH WORKERS!

- As the outdoors can be a large and exciting place, make sure you have enough youth workers to keep your group together
- Inform your group to keep in sight of the youth workers or set boundaries where they can explore
- Always keep one youth worker at the front of the group and one at the back, with ideally one or two in the middle.

TIME KEEPING

- Some activities require you to keep to a time, make sure you have a watch or phone handy to keep to this time
- If any of the young people are late, an appropriate forfeit should be set by the rest of the group (maybe they will have some fun whilst doing it)

MEETING PLACE

- Once outside, the group may want to explore everything they can see. Before letting them go and explore, agree on a central meeting point.
- Use a signal to have for when you want everyone to come back to the point (for example a whistle)
- Have a few activities prepared which can focus your group's attention, with so much to see and explore it is easy to lose concentration! There are lots of easy and simple activities such as nature sit spots, or some ice breakers, which will refocus the group.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED!!

• Going outdoors isn't always going according to your plans, don't be discouraged if it does**n'**t. Make a note of what might have gone wrong and how you could make it better for next time and go back outside!!

BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE! HINTS & TIPS

Here are a few easy steps to make sure that the activities you organise are as environmentally friendly as possible.

THINK BEFORE YOU BUY!

- Could you reuse something you already have or borrow equipment from someone else?
- Not only would this save you money, it could also drastically reduce the amount of waste you throw away.

CHOOSE CAREFULLY!

• Try to avoid using plastic where possible, especially single use plastic items like straws, plastic bags, plastic packaging, adhesives and balloons

RECYCLE!

• Make sure you carefully sort and recycle any waste you produce into the correct bins.

LEAVE NO TRACE!

• Make sure you take everything you brought with you, home with you. Leave no trace that you've been in the area.

REPLACE!

• Make sure you return any natural materials you use to the place that you found them

KEEP IT ALIVE!

• If you see anything living, leave it where it is, like flowers and leaves.

SAVE THE TREES!

• Print pages only when essential. Could you print onto scrap or recycled paper? Can the document be printed double sided? Paper may be cheap but it's precious when you're a tree.

SHRINK EMISSIONS!

• Plan travel carefully. Walk, cycle or use public transport when possible. If you are travelling by car, try to share lifts to reduce the number of vehicles on the road.

SWITCH IT OFF!

• The best place to work is outdoors in natural light. If this isn't possible, try to minimise the electricity you use and switch off electrical appliances when you finish using them.

ACTIVITES

ACTIVITIES

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GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 20 / 1,5 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Presentation skills
- Ability to express own opinion
- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution skills

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Active citizenship
- Inclusion
- Environmental value
- Entrepreneurship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- flipchart papers
- markers
- cards with roles of teams participating in this activity

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

• None

INSTRUCTIONS

- Give a short introduction to participants, explaining that their role within this task will be to organise a public event to preserve the natural heritage of their local area.
- If there is currently no new development on natural habitats in the area the team can work with some of the examples below or they can create their own development ideas.:
 - A local authority would like to turn a nature reserve into a football stadium
 - A local authority is chopping down trees to widen a main road
 - A local authority would like to continue to develop on natural environments causing there to be little or no green space

- Split the group into small groups. In their groups they will focus on different topics and coordinate themselves to organise the event and reach their goal.
- Each person in the group should be assigned a task and role (team leader, logistics, design of materials, promotions).
- The group should work together to determine a valid argument on why the natural heritage should be kept and designed to presented to the youth workers, as a social media campaign or a display board.
- Participants are provided with time and materials to organize the event, by exchanging information, checking examples of good practices and developing new, innovative solutions.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- What did you learn in this session?
- How can you use this knowledge in your daily life?
- Why is it important to express own opinion and advocate public interests?
- What are the possible ways to do it?
- How motivated are you to be actively engaged in community and what would increase your motivation?



ACTIVITY NAME 🔅 BOAT RACE

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 12 / 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Leadership skills
- Respect and understanding for other people
- Participation in decision process
- Responsibility about environment and how to be more environmentally friendly
- Self-confidence
- Communication skills, listening and understanding

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Active Citizenship
- Communication
- Inclusion
- Environmental Value

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• Planks of wood.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- The objective of this activity is for players to get from one point of room/field to another without touching the ground. In order to achieve this, players must use two wooden planks which act as 'boats'.
- What is climate change?
- Climate change is the process of the planet heating up. In the last 100 years, the average temperature of Earth has increased by 1°C. The changing climate will make weather more extreme and unpredictable.
- (More information can be found here:
- https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/geography/gene ral-geography/what-is-climate-change/)
- Some of the effects of climate change:
 - More rainfall flooding urban areas
 - Changing seasons damper, warmer winters
 - Shrinking sea ice less habitat for wildlife
 - Rising sea levels flooding on coastal areas and coastal erosion.

INSTRUCTIONS

- If able, take participants outdoors for this session.
- Explain to the group the objective of the activity.
- · Split the group into two teams to compete with each other
- There will be two rounds.
- In this activity, players must get from one point of the room/field (Point A) to another (Point B) without touching the ground.
- The fastest team wins the game.
- In order to achieve this, players must use two wooden planks which act as 'boats' and the ground is 'water'.
- Other pieces of wood are placed around the room/field (between Point A and Point B) and could be used as 'islands', immovable land which could be stepped on.
- Once the team is ready, they should stand at one side of the room/field (Point A) on one plank.
- In order to 'navigate', from one side to another, teams must use the planks and 'islands' to reach the end point.
- If at any point a player touches the 'water', the whole team must start again from the beginning.
- When one of the two teams finishes the game the first round ends. You can now start the second round informing the participants that the game will be repeated with a small change: the trainer will chose a team that will get less 'islands' to step on during the game.
- The team which will be negatively affected by the new arrangement will face an increased level of difficulty in completing the race.

• After the end of the activity ask the group why they think the team with less 'islands' lost. The youth worker should then explain that the removing of 'islands' is representing the effects of climate change to sea levels. Have a small discussion on why they think only one team was affected and discuss what affects could be happening that they don't see in everyday life.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What have you learned/experienced today?
- What happened? Any interesting moments?
- How did you learn?
- How was the cooperation with your partner?
- How would you describe your role?
- Did you like the game?
- Did the team work well?
- How did you feel in your roles?
- How did you feel during the second round with more/less resources?

ACTIVITY NAME ₩ ↔ COUNCIL FOR RESPONSIBILTY

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 1 to 2 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To understand what being sustainable means
- To understand how individuals can improve the environment
- To improve communication skills
- To improve debating skills
- To improve conflict resolution skills

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Entrepreneurship
- Inclusion
- Active citizenship
- Environmental value

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• Card Print outs found in appendix

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What does sustainability mean?
- Sustainability is ensuring that we have future resources for the next generation.
- It means not using 'finite' or 'irreplaceable' products such as coal, and instead seeking products which can be replenished easily such as wind energy.
- What does eco-friendly products mean?
- Products that have been designed to have little or no damaging effects on the environment.
- What does renewable energy mean?
- Energy that is produced without limitations using natural elements such as Sun, wind, tides etc.. Non-renewable energy includes fossil fuels such as oil or coal that have a limited quantity and will eventually run out.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Give a short introduction about sustainability, being ecofriendly and renewable energy.
- Split the group into smaller groups (no more than 5).
- Hand out category and sentence cards found below.
- Explain to the groups they need to read each sentence and discuss which category they belong to. There are four categories to choose from (individual, business, community and government).
- Groups should discuss and explain why they think it belongs in that particular category.
- If there is time, groups should present their agreement with the larger group.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations

ACTIVITY NAME ₩ ↔ COUNCIL OF ALL BEINGS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 45 min

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increase verbal communication
- Increase listening skills
- Increase intercultural communication
- Increase conflict resolution skills

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Inclusion
- Environmental Value
- Entrepreneurship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Notebook and pens/pencils
- Category cards found in the appendix.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

None

INSTRUCTIONS

- This activity can be done outside.
- Split the group into smaller groups.
- Ask the groups pick a card from random categories (humans, trees, ocean, reptiles, fish, birds, flowers, minibeasts, soil, freshwater, mammals, amphibians, air).
- The groups should discuss and write down:
 - What do they eat?
 - Where do they live?
 - What are their threats?
 - If you had to speak on behalf of the wildlife what would you say?

- After 30 minutes of the groups discussing and writing down their answers, they should elect one person to be their spokesperson.
- This spokesperson should present what they have discussed.
- Each group will have the chance to speak and will often find that the categories overlap.
- If categories overlap, ask the group if there is a way to keep everyone happy?

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations

ACTIVITY NAME # 🔆 🛻 ECO FASHION SHOW

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 2-3 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increased ability to work in a team
- Increased leadership skills
- Innovative thinking

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Environmental Value
- Entrepreneurship
- Inclusion
- Communication
- Active Citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Old clothes
- Sewing material
- Fabric glue. Scissors
- Natural materials

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- Why should we reuse and recycle clothing?
- Reduces greenhouse gases. Saves landfill space. Conserves energy. Can help charities. It's easy.
- more information can be found here: http://www.planetaid.org/blog/6-reasons-to-recycle-yourclothes

INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask each young person to bring an item of clothing they do not mind being altered.
- Each person should go outside and collect items of nature they would like to put on their clothing. Please tell the group to only collect items that aren't living (e.g. tell them not to pick flowers or leaves).
- Once they have collected as many items as they would like, have them glue or sew the items onto the clothing they brought.
- This activity is designed to let out their creative, try encouraging them to design the clothing around what nature means to them or how they think nature affects their mood.
- Once the clothing has been finished, the group should have a "fashion show" and explain to people what the clothing represents to them.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increase the ability to work in a team
- Increase their leadership skills
- Increase their creative thinking
- Increase awareness of being more environmentally friendly

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Environmental Value
- Entrepreneurship
- Inclusion
- Communication
- Active Citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• Paper, pens and pencils.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What does sustainability mean?
- Sustainability is ensuring that we have future resources for the next generation.
- It means not using 'finite' or 'irreplaceable' products such as coal, and instead seeking products which can be replenished easily such as wind energy.
- What does eco-friendly products mean?
- Products that have been designed to have little or no damaging effects on the environment.
- What does single-use mean?
- Something that is made to be used only once and is unrecyclable. For example plastic bags, straws, plastic packaging, toothbrushes.
- How to make a sustainable product?
- Designed with recyclable or biodegradable materials. Designed to be used more than once.
- More information can be found here: http://www.bpf.co.uk/Sustainable_Manufacturing/Design/ Designing_Sustainability.aspx)

INSTRUCTIONS

- With the group discuss what eco-friendly and sustainability means and how products can be more eco-friendly.
- Divide the group into small group's 4-5 people.
- Ask them to discuss what environmental issues they see on a daily basis
- From this discussion they should design a product that is more eco-friendly that could be sold on the market.
- They should write down why they have designed it like this and how the community could benefit from this product.
- When they have the final product and idea they have to "sell" the product to the rest of the group. They need to convince everyone why they would benefit from this product.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide help?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?

ACTIVITY NAME **# *** FOREST SPIRITS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 1,5 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Ability to operate in a team
- Communication skills
- Ability to orientate in nature
- Awareness of importance of preserving natural resources

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Inclusion
- Entrepreneurship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Blocks of clay (number depends on the number of smaller groups you want to create).
- Have a wooded area or field in mind to have this task.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

Research the area for open spaces and wooded areas so you can take the young people for this activity. Clay will be hidden around the site, so the more places to look the better. When selecting the clay you will use for this task please use natural clay as some clays may have harmful chemicals for the environment. Edible clay's are also available for young people with additional needs.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Before the group meets, hide small pieces of clay around your chosen open space. Have them hidden in a mixture of easy and hard places to make the activity exciting.
- Divide participants into smaller teams that don't usually work together and bring them to the prepared space.
- Explain to them that their task is to find blocks of clay (1 per team) hidden in the forest/field and to create their "forest spirit" of the team on one of the trees, by using only clay and other available natural resources.
- They also need to create a story about the spirit and explain why they designed this "forest spirit" for the rest of the group.
- At the end of the session, after debriefing, close it with storytelling on how the spirits will stay behind them to keep the forest safe.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- How was to work in your team?
- What role did you have?
- How did you like the process of collecting materials from the nature?
- How did you express your creativity?
- How did you feel in the nature?
- How do you think you can preserve the nature in your everyday life, what "spirits" can you create?

ACTIVITY NAME ∰ ♀ FOREST SUMMIT

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 15 / 1,5 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Presentation skills
- Ability to express own opinion
- Communication skills
- Conflict resolution skills

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Active citizenship
- Inclusion
- Environmental value
- Entrepreneurship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Papers, pens,
- playing cards found in the appendix.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What is logging?
- Logging is the process of cutting down trees and transporting the logs to sawmill.
- What is illegal logging?
- The harvesting procedure itself may be illegal, including using corrupt means to gain access to forests; extraction without permission or from a protected area; the cutting of protected species; or the extraction of timber in excess of agreed limits.
- What are the consequences of logging?
- Logging can lead to long-term consequences such as deforestation, endangering species and environment and endangering natural habitat of various animals.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Split the group into 3 small groups; trees, villagers and jury. Jury should have only 3 people. Each tree and villager should pick a playing card to determine their character.
- Explain to participants that there will be a forest summit where they will, as heads of all the trees in the forest and representatives of the village, have a big discussion on whether the forest should be (1) cut down to save the people in village from freezing or (2) kept intact, but with severe issues for the village.
- Each participant should stick to given character.
- They have 30 minutes to prepare their speech and their arguments. With a presentation to show the jury.
- Both of the groups should nominate a spokesperson.
- The spokesperson should present their arguments to the jury and a decision should be made on their arguments.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- How did you feel while presenting, and how while debating?
- How was it to hear and accept other participants' arguments?
- Were there any conflicts and how did you solve them?

ACTIVITY NAME ₩ 🔆 ₩ HIDING FROM PREDATORS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 12 / 30 min

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Communication skills
- Knowledge about food chain

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Environmental Value
- Active Citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Available resources in nature,
- cards with the name of an animal written on each one that link together to form a food chain

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What is camouflage? Camouflage is when living organisms visually disguise themselves with the same or similar colours to their surroundings.
- Why is camouflage important? Without camouflage an animal would be recognised and spotted more easily by a predator. For example, a grasshopper is green to hide in grass from birds or other predators.
- Examples of camouflage animals:



INSTRUCTIONS

- Before the activity starts place images of camouflaged animals in their natural environment (for example, a chameleon in a tree) around your starting point for young people to try and identify the animal in the image. This can lead to a discussion about camouflage and why this is important.
- The group walks a given distance down a nature trail, while the leader explains the rules.
- Each player is given time to hide along the trail.
- They may travel no more than 15 feet from either side of the trail
- Players can use anything in the natural environment to provide camouflage.
- The leader waits five minutes until all players are hidden. They walk the distance of the trail ONCE ONLY, and tries to find as many people as possible.
- After his walk, he calls out, and watches to see where all the successful 'animals' hid.
- This game can be repeated many times, with different players taking the role of the searcher.
- Once the task has been completed discuss as a group which of the hiding places were harder to find and why this may have been. Link this is to why it is important for animals to be camouflaged.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- What was your role?
- How did you choose how to camouflage?
- How did you feel when predator was searching for you? How was to be in the role of a predator?
- How can you relate this session to situations in the nature?



ACTIVITY NAME ₩ ↔ INNOVATIVE ECO-FRIENDLY SOLUTIONS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• From 12 to 32 / 1,5 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increased understanding of the connections between culture and Nature.
- Increased understanding of ourselves and our identity
- Increased understanding of intercultural aspects of nature
- Increased knowledge of other countries environmental responsibilities

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Employability
- Active Citizenship
- Communication
- Inclusion
- Environmental Value

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Paper sheets, flipchart, pens.
- Trainer Hosting Organization

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

Examples of innovative eco-friendly solutions:

- Example of innovative eco-friendly solutions
- India has invented an eco-friendly method to fight the high temperatures during the hot periods. Using recycled materials such as plastic bottles, people created air coolers that don't need any additional energy.
- (More information can be found here: https://www.futureentech.com/2016/05/an-eco-friendlycooling-device-eco.html)
- A study in 2015, showed that each European citizen produced 31kg of just plastic waste every year
- (More information can be found here: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/04/europeancountries-most-plastic-waste-per-person/)
- How to make zero waste toothpaste (Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIpTXQI7qT0)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Introduce the group to why eco-friendly ideas are important and what can be done from the examples in background and research. Explain that it can be easy and cost effective to use eco-friendly products.
- Divide the participants into small groups. Each group should be given a country at random.
- Ask each group to research on environmental problems/issues in their given countries and try to come up with an innovative eco-friendly solution easily adoptable in their countries, helping themselves with sketches if needed. Each group can have more than one eco-friendly solution to present.
- They will need about 20-30 minutes to complete this task.
- After they have researched, each group will present their "Innovative Eco-friendly Solutions" to the other participants.
- Each group will implement their best ideas, creating prototypes, sketches or writing their ideas down with the objective of presenting them as a social media campaign or displaying them through an exhibition with support from the youth workers.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- Was this activity useful?
- Do you think it could have been done better? How?
- Do you think you did enough to fight environmental problems? What more could you do?
- Do you think enough people is informed about green alternatives to their everyday activities?
- How does education and information play a role in this problem? Is education and information something you can do once in a while or it needs constant attention and effort?



GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 30 people / From 1 to 2 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To observe minibeasts in a local habitat and make a record of animals found
- Able to describe what a minibeast is and give examples
- To understand the importance of minibeasts and the habitats they live in
- To ask questions about minibeasts and the habitat that they live in

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Environmental Value
- Inclusion
- Active Citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Minibeast ID sheets/cards
- Magnifying glasses/pots or eye lopes
- Plastic Tray
- Clipboards, pencils and paper

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What is a minibeast?

 A minibeast refers to invertebrates, which is the name given to living things that don't have a backbone.
 They are the most numerous of the animal kingdom.
 They have an external skeleton (unlike vertebrates)
- What habitats do minibeasts live in?

 A habitat is the home for minibeasts. Large numbers of minibeasts can be found in every main habitat rivers, ponds, lakes, marshes, grasslands, woodlands, hedgerows and seashores. Gardens and buildings can also be home to some minibeasts. Some minibeasts like to be in dark and damp places and some like to be on leaves and flowers. A beating tray is a plastic tray or sheet that is placed under a tree, bush or shrub to help find minibeasts that eat leaves. A branch that is above the tray or sheet will be shaken to encourage minibeasts to fall out for young adults to have a close look.

• How can we encourage more minibeasts? There are lots of different things you can do in your garden to encourage more minibeasts.

Bug hotel – Lots of mini beasts like to be dark and damp. Building a home for them if the garden doesn't have lots of place for them to live will help to encourage them. Log and stone piles – Put a log or large stone in an

earthy corner and wait for different minibeasts move in. Show the groups how to lift and replace the log or stone very carefully so minibeasts do not get squashed.

Wildflower garden – Plant a patch of colourful flowers to attract bees and butterflies. They love lavender,

cornflowers, marigolds and poppies and herbs such as thyme and majoram.

Bees – Bees are very important for the environment, as they are pollinators! Their numbers are declining because they do not have enough food or their habitat is vast. Building bee hotels, planting flowers or having small pools of water for them to drink from will help encourage bees to visit your garden.

- For more information please refer to these links:
- What is a mini beast?
 https://ypte.org.uk/factsheets/minibeasts/print
- What habitats do mini beasts live in? https://ypte.org.uk/factsheets/minibeasts/where-dominibeasts-live

• Bug hotel

https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/givenature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/build-abug-hotel/

• Wildlife garden

https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/givenature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/makenew-wildlife-friendly-plants-to-share-the-love/

• Bees

https://thehoneybeeconservancy.org/how-to-save-thebees/

INSTRUCTIONS

- Youth Workers/Social workers will have a discussion with the group about what a minibeast is and what habitats they may be found in.
- The group should be split into teams of 3-5. Each group is required to do a beating tray.
- Each group should have a nominated one person to shake the plant.
- When the plant is being shaken the rest of the group should close their eyes.
- Once the plants have been looked at, the groups should look under rocks and logs for other minibeasts.
- They will spend 30 minutes looking for and collecting mini beasts.

- When traps are collected every insect should be put in its own magnifying pot for analysis. Bees, wasps, butterflies and moths should not be put into pots and the groups should not attempt to touch them as they are very fragile or sting. If the groups see them they should be recorded.
- Using ID guides the groups can work out what their mini beasts are
- Record all the different minibeasts found and where they were found.
- Once minibeasts have been recorded they should be returned to where they found them.
- At the end of the session youth workers/social workers should discuss with the group how they think minibeasts could be encouraged to visit. See background research to see how that can be done. These methods can be done in the garden to encourage more minibeasts.
- Once the activities have been done, the groups can wait a few months to do this activity again. Observations may differ with more habitats and food.



FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide help?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?



ACTIVITY NAME ∰ 🔆 ₩ NATURAL SYMPHONY

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 12 / 50 min

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- · Ability to identify various natural resources
- Creative expression

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Entrepreneurship
- Inclusion
- Communication
- Environmental value

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• None

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

• None

INSTRUCTIONS

- Each participant is given 10- 15 minutes to find objects in nature that make a noise when banged together, or blown on, or rubbed together. These can be sticks, grass, pine cones etc. Please ask participants not to pick any living organism.
- Participants bring back their 'instruments' and a conductor is chosen, who organizes the group into a semi-circular orchestra.
- Each musician is allowed to 'tune' his instrument, so the rest of the group can hear the different sounds. If a player can play more than one instrument at the same time, he is welcome to do so.
- The conductor can then choose a familiar tune with an easy rhythm, and lead his orchestra in song. Let the players make requests for songs they would like to play; give musicians the opportunity to work on 'solos' that they can perform for everyone.
- If the group is comfortable the activity can be linked to Nature Poem and can be performed to the public.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- How did you use the nature as your resource?
- What did you learn?



ACTIVITY NAME **₩ ★ ▲** NATURE EXPLORERS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• No limit / 2 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness of the importance of nature
- Increased knowledge about the ecosystem
- Increased awareness of individual roles towards nature

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Inclusion
- Communication
- Environmental value
- Active citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Notebook
- Pens/Pencils

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- What is an ecosystem?
- An ecosystem is all living things that interact and rely on each other in a particular system. An example could be an ocean or a forest. Ecosystems are vitally important to determine the health of the environment.
- more information here:

https://eschooltoday.com/ecosystems/what-is-an-ecosystem.html

- What is a food chain?
- Every living thing needs energy in order to survive. Energy is obtained from food. A food chain shows how each living organism gets food and interacts with each other. Food chains start with plants and end with an animal. (e.g. leaf -> caterpillar -> sparrow -> fox)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Find an open space for everyone to work in and spread out. The group needs to work individually.
- Ask everyone to find a maximum of three natural items that they believe they cannot live without.
- Once they have found an item, ask them to write down what it is and why it is important to them. If they would like, they could also sketch the item.
- All items should be left in its natural habitat.
- In a group discussion (if it is a large group should split off to smaller groups so everyone has an opportunity to speak) everyone should say: -
- Why the item is important to them.
- Why they think it is important in nature.
- If the group are struggling to discuss why the item may be important to nature, prompt them to talk about the ecosystem and food chains. (for example why might a flower be important for bees and humans). For information about food chains and ecosystems please see background and research.
- Once the group discussion has been completed, ask the group how they could improve the area to encourage more wildlife.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did this task made you feel?
- Do you feel that you were able to think independently?
- What kind of feelings did you experience by knowing that you have an important role in the natures ecosystem?
- How did it feel to do an individual presentation and present your items to the group?
- What was most important in solving the task?

Activity Name ∰ ♀ NATURE POEM

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• No limit / 1 to 2 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To promote critical thinking and creativity
- To learn how to communicate differently
- To appreciate environmental value

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Employability
- Communication
- Environmental Value

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• Pen and paper

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

- How to write a poem
- Here is a beginners guide on how to write a poem

https://penandthepad.com/write-poetry-beginners-2112739.html

- Examples of poems
- Research should be made on finding different nature poems for the group to read.
 Two example poems can be found in the appendix.



INSTRUCTIONS

- Give a short introduction to what a poem is and how one can be written.
- Hand out examples of poems for groups to read and can work from.
- Individuals should write a poem about:
- Why nature is important to them
- Why nature is important.
- How humans affect nature.
- Give the individuals 30-45minutes to write about a category of their choice
- Once completed each person should read and discuss their poems.
- If the group is comfortable the activity can be linked to Nature's Symphony and can be performed to the public.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide a solution to the environmental issue?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?



"Nature" Is What We See

"Nature" is what we see— The Hill—the Afternoon— Squirrel—Eclipse— the Bumble bee— Nay—Nature is Heaven— Nature is what we hear— The Bobolink—the Sea— Thunder—the Cricket— Nay—Nature is Harmony— Nature is what we know— Yet have no art to say— So impotent Our Wisdom is To her Simplicity.

Emily Dickinson

Nature

O Nature! I do not aspire To be the highest in thy choir, -To be a meteor in thy sky, Or comet that may range on high; Only a zephyr that may blow Among the reeds by the river low; Give me thy most privy place Where to run my airy race In some withdrawn, unpublic mead Let me sigh upon a reed, Or in the woods, with leafy din, Whisper the still evening in: Some still work give me to do, -Only - be it near to you! For I'd rather be thy child And pupil, in the forest wild, Than be the king of men elsewhere, And most sovereign slave of care; To have one moment of thy dawn, Than share the city's year forlorn.

Henry David Thoreau

ACTIVITY NAME 聞 ☀ ₩ NATURE SIT SPOTS

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 people.

As long as participants feel comfortable.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Being able to self-reflect and build communication skills
- Train the senses to be more aware of the natural surroundings
- How to observe and appreciate nature
- Gain a better understanding of the relationship between nature and humans
- How to be more attentive towards the environment
- The basic relationship between local ecosystems and seasonal changes

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Environmental Value
- Active Citizenship
- Inclusion
- Communication

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Notebook for a journal
- Pens/pencils/crayons
- Mat to sit on (optional)
- Appropriate clothing for weather (e.g. waterproof/warm clothing, sun hat, sun cream)

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

The activity can be done as an icebreaker or a main activity. Regularity has also been shown to benefit as they can reflect on how the felt at the start and then a few weeks later. Prompts for the nature sit spot activity can be related to scientific inquiry, artistic expression, and personal reflection, responses to current events or famous literary quotes. They can be linked to anything related to previous sessions or what young people are most interested in.

Prompt Ideas: -

Session 1: - S.P.O.T

Senses – Ask participants to use all their senses when sitting Perceptions – Ask them to think about what other participants might be able to sense in their spot. Can they see different things to them? Do they think the others might see the World differently? Do they think others could be hearing different things?

Observations – When visiting frequently they will be able to observe and notice the changes in the natural world Tell – discuss and tell others about what they felt during the sit spot.

Session 2: - Train your senses

Start with one sense and with practice they will learn how the different sense are linked and it will encourage a deeper connection to nature. Get them to take a journal with them, encourage them to write what they experienced after using each sense.

Listen – have them close their eyes and concentrate on one sound – the birds, rain, traffic

See – open their eyes and look around at the smallest details – patterns in tree trucks, movement of the leaves, colours.

Touch – ask them to close their eyes and feel the ground around them, pick things up. Get them to describe what it feels like, is it cold is it smooth is it rough?

Smell – They can close their eyes and breathe deeply to inhale the scents around them.

Session 3: - Urban to Wild

Walk from an urban to a natural area (e.g. beach, park, wood). Train their senses as you are walking, what sights/sounds/smells are different?

INSTRUCTIONS

- Appropriate outdoor clothing should be worn.
- Instruct everyone to find their own space; they should not be able to touch anyone else.
- Choose a prompt idea from background and research or create your own.
- It is better to start at a shorter time (5/10 minutes) and working up to 20/30 minutes.

- If session 3 has been chosen, the session should start in an urban area. Group should sit for 5 minutes and walk towards your chosen natural site for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, the group should sit for an additional 5 minutes. This should be repeated until your natural area has been reached.
- Depending on the prompt they will need to take a diary/sketch book/note book with them to write/draw in whilst doing the activity.
- At the end of each sit spot session everyone should discuss in groups what they felt/saw. If it's a large group split into small groups of 6-8. This way everyone has an opportunity to discuss.
- Over time they can compare what they felt in the first session and their latest session. This can help show that their attitudes towards nature and their ability to focus and concentrate can change over time.
- Session 1 After each of their nature sit spot sessions the group should discuss and share their feelings. If it's a small group they can discuss all together, if it's a large group split into smaller groups so they can discuss amongst themselves – split into groups that don't usually work together.
- Session 2 After each day with the 30 day nature sit spot challenge everyone should write how they felt during the session, what they saw/heard/smelt/touched and how they felt after the session. At the end of the 30 days, the group should discuss and compare how their feelings may or may not have changed over time.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide help?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?



ACTIVITY NAME ₩ ↔ SAVE THE TREE

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 people / 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Ability to work in a team
- Leadership skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Awareness of importance of nature preservation

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Environmental value
- Inclusion
- Entrepreneurship
- Active Citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Rope (long enough so all of the team members can hold on to it in the line)
- Tree or other fixed object around which rope can be tied into a knot.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

This activity is an ice breaker activity. Guide on effective storytelling: http://www.eldrbarry.net/roos/eest.htm

INSTRUCTIONS

- Introduce this activity through storytelling about a storm that is threatening to seriously damage the tree which gives the life to whole forest and its inhabitants. The only way to prevent it is by fixing it strongly: by tying a knot around it. However, it can be properly done only if all of the participants do it together.
- Instruct participants to stand in a line, whilst holding part of the rope with both hands.
- During the workshop, nobody is allowed to let go of the rope with any of the hands; in such case, the whole task needs to be done from the beginning. Sliding down the rope is allowed.
- The task of the group is to tie a knot around the tree without letting go of the rope. The rope around the tree should be tied close and all of the participants should stay holding the rope without touching the tree.
- Observe the communication, resolution of possible conflicts and roles of participants. In case of not holding rope with both of the hands, the whole task should be started all over again.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide help?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?

ACTIVITY NAME ₩ ♀ ₩ SOULMATE IN NATURE

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 1,5 hours

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Getting to know other participants / remembering their names
- Increased ability to express yourself verbally

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Inclusion

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• None

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

• None

INSTRUCTIONS

- Give instructions to participants to stand in the circle. You can choose a random person to start. If the group is large and time is short, divide the group into 2 smaller teams.
- The task of each participant is to say their name and a plant or animal that starts with the first letter of their name. They should try and use something that they have a connection with.
- They should also describe in 2 sentences why this plant or animal is their "soulmate in nature" the reason why they chose it.
- For example "My name is Susan and I like sea otters. Sea otters are my soulmate in nature because I like cuddles and so do they. Sea otters work in teams to keep warm and find food. I like working in a team and help others complete tasks at work."
- The participant starting after should repeat the name and plant/animal of each of the participants who presented before. This helps them remember their colleague's names.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you choose your plant/animal?
- How do you think it is connected to you?
- How did you like choices of other participants?
- How was it to remember and repeat the names?
- Do you know the names off all participants?

activity Name ∰ ♀ THE MAGICAL RIVER

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 25 / 50 min

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Team responsibility (did it matter if only a few of you made it across the river?)
- Communication (the importance of checking on the person behind you before stepping onto the next stone)
- Identifying individual strengths and weaknesses.

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Inclusion
- Environmental Value
- Entrepreneurship
- Active citizenship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- 2 ropes, or another way of marking off the river's edges.
- 8 or 9 carpet squares or tarp pieces, or anything else to use as river stones.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

• None

INSTRUCTIONS

- Lay two ropes on the ground parallel to each other, about 20 feet apart.
- Have the participant's line up on one side of the rope, and tell them that they are looking at a magical river.
- The teams must get their entire team across the magical river, but it is too hot to swim across, and too deep to walk across. (Obviously, they cannot walk around the river, since it does not end just because the ropes do).
- The only way to get across is by using the large river stones that you provide (such as carpet squares, poly spots or paper plates). Give the participants about eight or nine river stones so that they have enough to get across with one or two left over.

- Advise the group that this challenge isn't about physical abilities, but rather it is about communication.
- Unfortunately, the current in the river is so strong that it actually sweeps the stones away if someone is not holding them down (with a hand or a foot for example).
- Also, the stones swell up once they are placed in the river, and they become too heavy to move again, so they must remain where they are placed.
- If they let go of the stones, they cannot use them again. If all the stones cannot be used anymore they have lost the challenge and would need to start again.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How did you feel while fulfilling your task?
- How was to work in your team?
- What role did you have?
- Were there any conflicts and how did you solve them?

ACTIVITY NAME 🛱 🔆 TREE ORIENTATION

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• Up to 20 / 1 hour

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH

• none

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Leadership and communication skills
- Developing respect and understanding for other people
- Conflict resolution skills

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Environmental value
- Inclusion
- Entrepreneurship

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

• Blindfolds for as many people in the group



INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide the group into pairs (preferably into pairs that don't usually work together)
- Explain to the pairs there will be three parts to this activity.
- Person A (A) is the leader. Person B (B) is blindfolded. With an agreed starting point.
- A will hold onto B and lead them to a particular tree/bush/flower
- B should then use their senses to "get to know the plant". Touching, smelling and listening to the surrounds.
- Once B is comfortable that they know the plant well enough, A should lead them back to the starting point.
- Once they have returned, B should remove their blindfold and try and find their plant. A should give them simple hints/clues if B is stuck.
- When they have found their plant they should go back to the starting point and put their blindfold back on.
- A should then lead B back to their object with using just simple voice commands. B trust will be completely on A and A is responsible for their safety.
- A and B can now switch roles and complete the activity again. Different trees/bush/flowers should be chosen.
- Every age group could be potentially included in this activity; however supervision would be required for younger children and young adults who haveadditional needs.
- The sense of taste could be also introduced if possible, participants could identify together flavours such as fruits, vegetables etc.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- How did you feel during the exercise?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should lead?
- How was the cooperation with your partner?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Did you enjoy the game? What did you like/dislike about it?
- Were there any conflict? and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What did you learn out of this game? Would you do something differently next time?

ACTIVITY NAME ∰ ☀ WILD, CREATIVE AND ARTY

GROUP SIZE & DURATION

• No limit / 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To appreciate nature and being outdoors in a different way
- To expand their creativity
- To connect with nature using their creative imagination
- To learn how to communicate their experiences and points of view

KEY COMPETENCES DEVELOPED

- Communication
- Environmental Value
- Inclusion

RESOURCES & HANDOUTS

- Frames of different sizes example of this frame can be found in the annex, they can be easily made from scrap paper.
- Paper, pencils and crayons.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask the group to find their own spaces.
- Each person will have a set of crayons/pencils, some paper and a frame.
- They can place or hold their frame over what they would like to draw (e.g. on the ground or over a tree branch).
- They will then sit and draw what is in the frame from their perspective. They can use just a pencil or lots of different colours. This session is all about individuals experiencing nature using their creativity and imagination.
- Present their drawings and explain to the group what each means to them.

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION

- How would you describe your task?
- What kind of feelings did you get by knowing that you are the one who should provide help?
- How was the cooperation within the group?
- How would you describe your role?
- How would you describe communication?
- Were there any conflict and if yes, how did you solve them?
- What was most important in solving the task?
- How can you connect this workshop with real life situations?

APPENDIX







Council of all beings





GREETINGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THIS BOOKLET

IN PARTICULAR TO

- European Commisson and the Erasmus+ programme
- EUPA
- BirdLife Malta
- Positiva Milano
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- EU Diaspora
- Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology











