

Creativity

Being creative involves being, or doing, the best one can whilst pushing the boundaries in some original, valuable or relevant way. The ability to be creative helps us to solve problems and cope with things unseen, develop communication and thinking skills, provide us with a sense of satisfaction and achievement to build self confidence. Creativity is often most readily associated with the arts, but we can be creative in any field and creativity can be introduced into any area of the curriculum.

Why creativity?

School grounds and the outdoor environment can, with careful planning, provide a stimulating, imagination-firing, creative learning environment. Teachers have an important role to play in shaping creative learning environments and letting pupils know that they are valued. Teachers should encourage pupils to assess and evaluate their own creative efforts.

Ideas to promote creative learning

Could your grounds be laid out more imaginatively to give pupils progressively more difficult physical challenges? Can your grounds provide an environment for pupils to develop and perfect motor co-ordination, kinaesthetic and practical skills? Is there scope to reflect the school community, for example the architectural achievements of different ethnic groups in the school? These features could be long or short-term additions to the grounds. What scope is there for pupils to be involved? What sources of metaphors exist naturally in the grounds which could inspire creative thinking? Could this be extended or added to by the pupils?

Andy Goldsworthy as a source of inspiration

Through a study of the work of Andy Goldsworthy (*Hand To Earth: Andy Goldsworthy - Sculpture 1976 - 1990* by Andy Goldsworthy, ISBN 0500511721), pupils could be encouraged to create similar temporary pieces of art using natural materials from your school grounds. The images could be captured using digital cameras and used in ICT work.

Mazes

Create mazes in your grounds. Traditional spiral mazes have a calming, contemplative effect, whereas mazes with choices are more energetic and lively. These could be temporary: paths can be cut from an area of long grass; daffodil bulbs can be planted in a precise shape; pieces of stone can be placed to outline a maze; or playground chalks could be used to mark out mazes on concrete.

Sculptures

If you want a more ambitious project, you could work with a local willow weaver to create a structure or sculpture for your school grounds.

Role playing

Provide opportunities for role playing. For example, if you have a growing area, why not have a 'market' constructed from a table from where produce can be sold? Bicycles can be turned into delivery vehicles with baskets to carry the produce.

