

# Imaginative Ecological Education (IEE)

## Some Teaching Activities – Primary

### Loose Parts Play Challenge

Give children a natural object, such as a stick or a rock, and challenge them to imagine two other things the stick or rock could be.

- Students can pose “I wonder” questions about the object. What would they like to know about it? What do they already know?
- Challenge students to create a game using the object (perhaps with two rules for the game or two do’s and two don’ts). Alternatively students could be asked to create a game that engages one part of the body and/or draws attention to some aspect of the local place.
- As an extension, students could use the object later for some creative writing in a journal.

### Redirect Attention

Identify a local bug or rodent and talk about its features and habits. Have students imagine they are this living thing and then consider what questions that insect/animal might have about the world. What will this being do today? How will it move? Where will it go? Play as this animal or bug would. Write a ‘day in the life’ of this being.

### Metaphors of the Day

Examine a metaphor that connects nature and humans.

Example: She has a stormy disposition (students could collect metaphors linked to different themes. In this case, the weather.)

### Sounds of Silence

Have students identify all the sounds of animals or objects (natural if possible) that are moving. For example, things they are aware of because they can hear them. Next: have students identify/think about creatures/things that are not stirring or making a noise we can hear.

### Balance Day

Identify objects that balance. Spend 10 minutes in the playground looking for anything balancing.

- Encourage students to balance different natural objects like rocks or sticks.
- Challenge students to balance on different parts of their body.
- Challenge students to balance on someone else.
- Have students disorient themselves by spinning around and then attempt to balance.
- Ask students to think of ways to combine balance and movement.

### Nose Day

- Honour noses by focusing on smell. Connect smell to all the topics of the day!
- Honour and highlight animals with the best sense of smell.
- Spotlight some amazing feature of animal senses.

### Ears Day

- Look at images of types of ears and classify them.
- Compare animals or insects that have the best hearing with those with the poorest or weaker hearing.
- Have a class discussion as to how we extend our sense of hearing.
- Focus on sound in relation to all learning topics of the day.

### Touch Day

Discuss the idea of “touch”—what is it like to “touch” someone? (literally and metaphorically).  
What is it like to be touched?

- Discuss the extremes or limits of touch.
- Engage different body parts in feeling the way through the day (You might play the “what is it game” in which students are blindfolded and they use different body parts to identify things around them (e.g. fingertips versus elbows, knees...). What did it feel like to feel? How does the world feel to the touch?

### Movement Day

Discuss predators and prey and how animal movement affects each.

- Each student can become an animal with a different “animove”. How hard or easy is it to replicate the movement of this animal? Why?
- Students can race, in role, as different animals.
- Students can be challenged to create a “place ballet” where they combine their animoves to create a dance that has the movements of animals, bugs, and natural objects (e.g. branches in a wind).

### Paws, Hooves, Feet

What different feet have walked on this land? Identify as a class the names of as many local animals/insects as possible. Students can first discuss, then begin to imagine and then draw their different prints. Next they might look for evidence of paw/hoof/foot shapes in the playground. You might assign different animals/insects for students to research. What is the shape of these animals’ paws/feet? Students can draw these shapes on cards and then work as a class to create classifications for them.