

In partnership with



Warwickshire



Your school nursing service

Play, Explore, Enjoy



Outdoor Activities for Warwickshire

Compass



What's *inside*?

This pack is full of ideas for games and activities you can do outside! We hope these ideas will help you play and explore with your family and friends in your local green spaces (parks, woodlands, gardens and more). The activities are easy to follow, fun to do and hopefully will encourage you to make up your own games.

There are lots of lovely parks, woodlands and walks in Warwickshire that you can explore and play games along the way. See page 3 for information on sites close to you!

There is nothing like making up your own games in the green spaces too - this pack is just the tip of the iceberg!

If you need some more inspiration, want to explore further afield or would like to take part in some organised outdoor activities, then visit the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust website to find out lots more:

www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

This pack has been developed by Connect for Health in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

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Places to Explore

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust have 67 nature reserves for you to explore and enjoy. You are never more than 6 miles away from one of our reserves. To find your closest nature reserve, you can visit our website and put your postcode in or search the interactive map warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves

Some of our reserves have more facilities than others and some are more protected due to the wildlife there, so it's worth finding out more about each one.

Some of our nature reserves have water on them – rivers, streams, ponds and lakes. These are great places to spot wildlife and fab for pooh sticks! But do stay safe around water and please do not swim in the lakes.

Many of our reserves have wildflowers on them, which are again great to enjoy and they also attract lots of wildlife like bees and butterflies. Have a look and see how many different colours you can see on them or bend down and see if they smell nice! Please don't pick the flowers or dig them up though, the bees need them more than we do!

Our woodland reserves are amazing to explore and often have lots of birds in them! We would suggest taking some binoculars if you have some, as you never know what you might spot. Stick to the paths so as not to scare them away!

You don't need to visit a nature reserve to do many of the activities in this booklet though, you can also use your local park or explore new parks and green spaces near you too!



Mini-Beast Hunting

Things you need:

A paintbrush, a plastic tub/pot with a lid.

How to play:

Take your paintbrush and pot and start looking for your mini-beasts - under leaves, on tree trunks, in long grass, in deadwood, under stones and rocks are all good spots.

When you find a mini-beast (maybe a caterpillar, worm, moth, snail, slug, ladybird) use the soft end of your paintbrush to carefully pop them into your pot! We don't use our fingers to pick them up as they are very delicate and you might hurt them.

Once they are in the pot you can then have a look at them close up. Maybe count their legs, look at their colours, look at their wings and maybe give them a name.

Then, when you have studied them enough, put them back where you found them, We don't keep mini-beasts in pots, they live in the wild and need to stay there.

We should always wash our hands after mini-beast hunting.

Staying Safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to hunt.

Even more fun:

If you want to make the fun last longer you can draw your bugs after studying them. It's also fun to find out what your mini-beasts are. There are lots of books in libraries and lots of websites to help you work out what your bug was.



Leaf Race

Things you need:

A rainy day, good puddle, wellington boots, and leaves.

How to play:

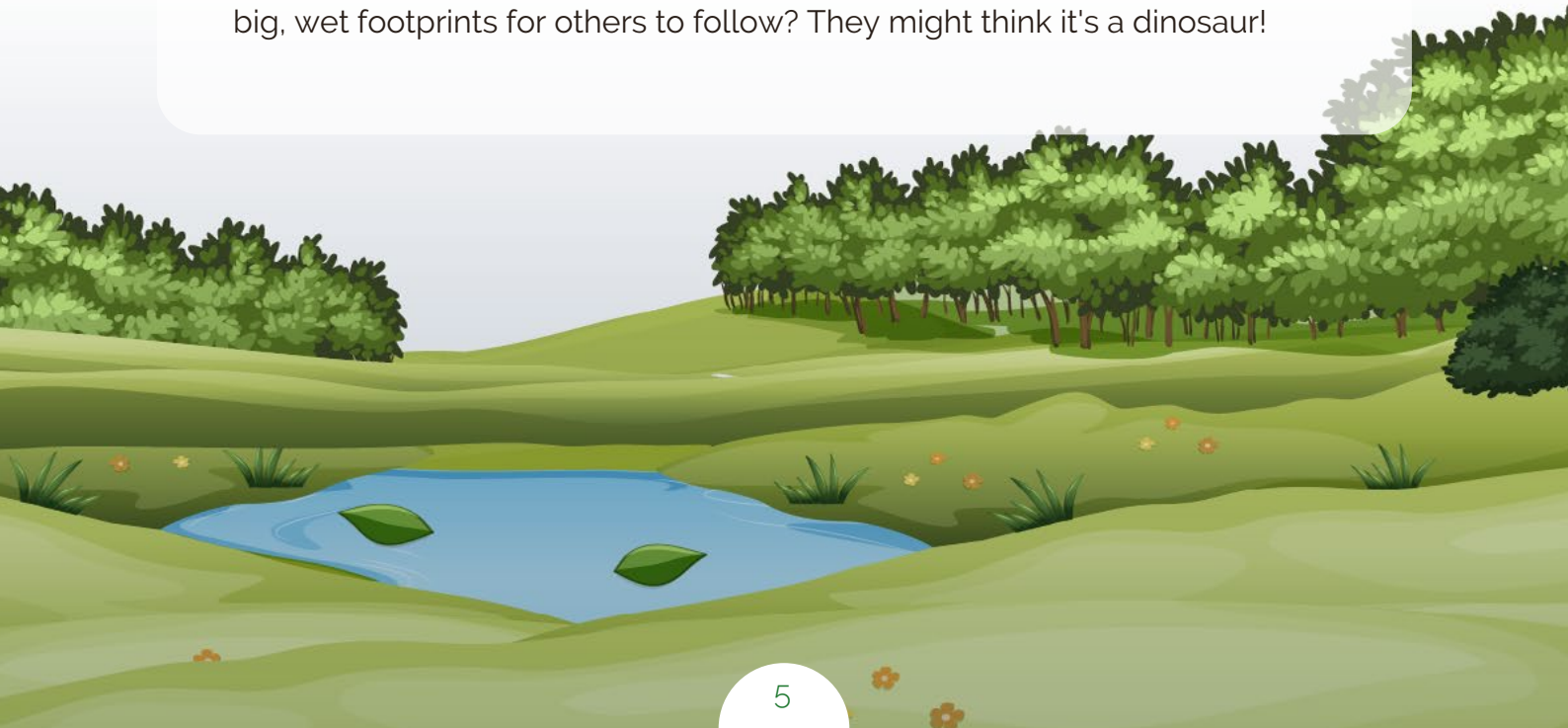
1. Find a good puddle for your leaf race - one that is at least a little bit deep and at least 4/5 steps long! Use puddles in parks, the garden or the playground.
2. Find a good leaf - one that looks like a boat would be good (a bit curled up at the ends).
3. Line up the leaf/leaves along the edge of the puddle and crouch down next to them.
4. Then get someone to say 'on your marks, get set, go!' Begin to blow your leaf to the other side of the puddle as fast as you can. The winner is the first to get to the other side.
5. Why not try different leaves to see if any are faster?!
6. We should always wash our hands after collecting up leaves and playing with water.

Staying safe:

Use puddles that are away from roads and traffic, wrap up to stay warm and dry.

Even more fun:

If you have wellington boots on then puddle jumping is always fun - how big a splash can you make? Or, if the pavements have dried, can you make big, wet footprints for others to follow? They might think it's a dinosaur!



Homes for Elves, Frogs and Fairies

Things you need:

Sticks, sticks, more sticks and maybe a few leaves.

How to play:

1. Pick a site that has some trees and ideally lots of sticks you can use.
2. Pick a tree that looks like it might be a good home for elves, fairies and frogs - they like big trees with grass at the bottom (to make a green carpet).
3. Use all the sticks and twigs you can find to make a small house at the bottom of the tree for elves, fairies and frogs. Maybe put them against the tree trunk, a front door, some windows and a bed (they all need to sleep).
4. You could get some leaves to make a pathway up to their front door too.
5. If you can, maybe use some sticks to write the name of your house.
6. We should always wash our hands after collecting sticks and twigs.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles and brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to build your house.

Even more fun:

Why not create a little village of houses if there are plenty of trees and sticks?



Scavenger Hunt

Things you need:

An egg box for 6 eggs (you can always decorate your box if you would like to), some ideas for things to find.

How to play:

1. Take your egg box to your local park, woodland or even in your garden.
2. Try to find the following things to pop into the different sections of your egg box:
 - something **green**
 - something **yellow**
 - something **brown**
 - something **spikey**
 - something **soft**
 - something **smelly**
3. Swap boxes with someone else, or show an adult, and see if they can guess which one is which.
4. We should always wash our hands after collecting things for our boxes.



Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles and brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to find your things.

Even more fun:

Why not use the bits you have collected to make a big picture? Get a large sheet of paper and arrange your collected bits into the shape of an animal, flower, or something else. You could even challenge yourself by trying to find: something heavy, something light, something rough, something smooth, something shiny, something wet, something big and something small.

Pooh Sticks

Things you need:

A river with a footbridge over it (not a road bridge).

How to play:

1. All find a good stick - have a look around the footbridge or on your walk to the bridge. The stick doesn't have to be too big, but big enough to see it in the river (maybe 10cm long).
2. When you get to the footbridge, look at which way the water is flowing. You all need to stand on the upstream side of the bridge. Line up with your sticks. Someone needs to shout 'on your marks, get set, go!'. After 'go' everyone can throw their sticks into the river.
3. All walk to the other side to see whose stick comes out first! They are the winner!
4. You can keep playing until everyone has had a winning stick! You can also decorate your sticks with leaves if you want to, to make it easier to see whose stick is whose.
5. We should always wash our hands after picking up sticks.

Staying safe:

Always use a footbridge, not a road bridge, to avoid crossing traffic to see who has won. Be careful next to the river.

Even more fun:

Why not create small rafts instead (using twigs and string)? Find a safe spot on the river where you can float them. You will need an adult to help you near the water. You might even be able to float them on puddles after it's rained.

Smelly Potions

Things you need:

A plastic or paper cup, a stick, some water.

How to play:

1. Take your cup, stick and water and find a good spot to collect some ingredients for your smelly potion. Maybe the local park, woodland or even your garden.
2. Start to smell the things around you. Smell the leaves, mud, flowers and trees. How do they smell? You can decide now whether you want to make a nice or horrible smelling potion.
3. If you want to make a bad smelling potion, pick horrible smelling things and put them in a cup.
4. If you want to make a nice smelling potion, pick sweet smelling things and put them in a cup.
5. When your cup is half full with bits you have collected, give it a smell - how does it smell now? if you think it's ready, using your stick, give it a stir. Then add a drop or two of water into the cup and keep mixing.
6. Once finished stirring, pass the cups around so that everyone can have a smell. Give your potion a name.
7. When you have finished, tip your potion away.
8. We should always wash our hands after making potions.

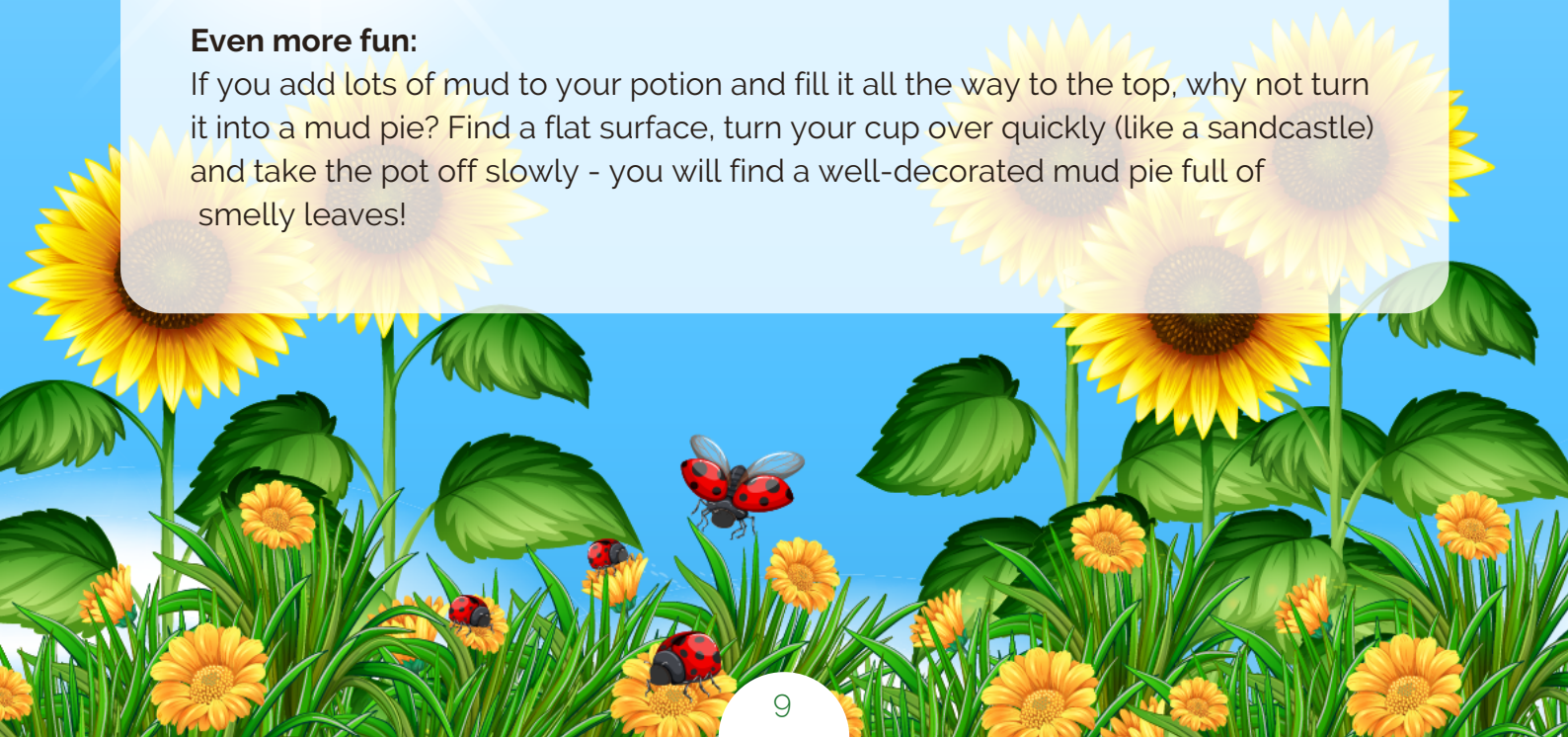


Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to hunt.

Even more fun:

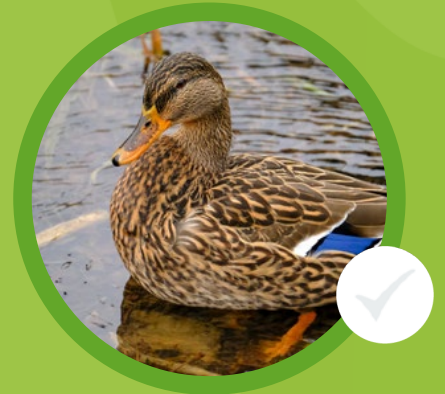
If you add lots of mud to your potion and fill it all the way to the top, why not turn it into a mud pie? Find a flat surface, turn your cup over quickly (like a sandcastle) and take the pot off slowly - you will find a well-decorated mud pie full of smelly leaves!



Wildlife 'I Spy'

Can you find the following animals, birds and insects when you are out and about or in your garden?

What else can you find?



Natural Mobiles

Things you need:

Two sticks, string, natural objects.

How to play:

1. Find two good sticks, roughly the same length (about 20cm is good).
2. Tie the two sticks together in the middle to make a cross - this will be the base of your mobile.
3. Head off for a walk to your local park, woodland or grassland and collect things you like along the way - leaves, fir, cones, sticks, feathers and flowers. Collect until you have at least 4-16 items you like.
4. Using more string, tie your lovely natural objects onto your mobile - maybe one each corner and then along the sticks to make a lovely decorated mobile.
5. To hang your mobile, tie a length of string to the middle of your cross to hang it from.
6. We should always wash our hands after collecting up sticks and twigs.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to collect your objects.

Even more fun:

You can also create great window art if you have some tissue paper and PVA glue. Collect up some natural objects (leaves, grass, feathers, seeds). Fold your tissue paper in half, making a fold line down the middle. Then open up the tissue paper and paint one half with PVA glue and stick your collected items down to make a nice picture/pattern. Fold the other (non-glued) half over and stick it down. Let it dry and then hang it in front of the window and see the sun shine through.

Be a Tree

Things you need:

Nothing, just you and a friend.

How to Play:

1. Find a park or woodland where there is space for one of you to lie on the floor without getting too wet or muddy.
2. Get one of you to lie down and spread out your arms and legs to make a shape like a tree (legs are the trunk, arms are the branches, fingers are the twigs).
3. The other one can then collect up leaves (take any that have fallen from trees first rather than picking them), twigs and maybe some feathers, and begin to decorate the friend on the floor and turn them into a tree! Maybe add leaves to each of the fingers, maybe add some twigs growing out from their hair, or use some feathers to create the shape of a bird on their arm like it's sitting on a branch.
4. Once you have finished, you could take a photo to show your friend how they look as a tree, then swap over.
5. We should always wash our hands after collecting sticks and twigs.



Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to be a tree.

Even more fun:

Why not pretend you are a tree growing from a seed! Curl up in a small ball, tight as you can. Then get someone to pretend to be the rain on you, causing the tree to grow. Stretch your arms up first, wiggling your fingers like new leaves growing, then stretch your head up and begin to stand up (really slowly), growing taller and taller. When you are standing up, wave your arms like branches blowing in the wind!

Muddy Monsters

Things you need:

Old bucket/container, mud, water, other natural materials.

How to play:

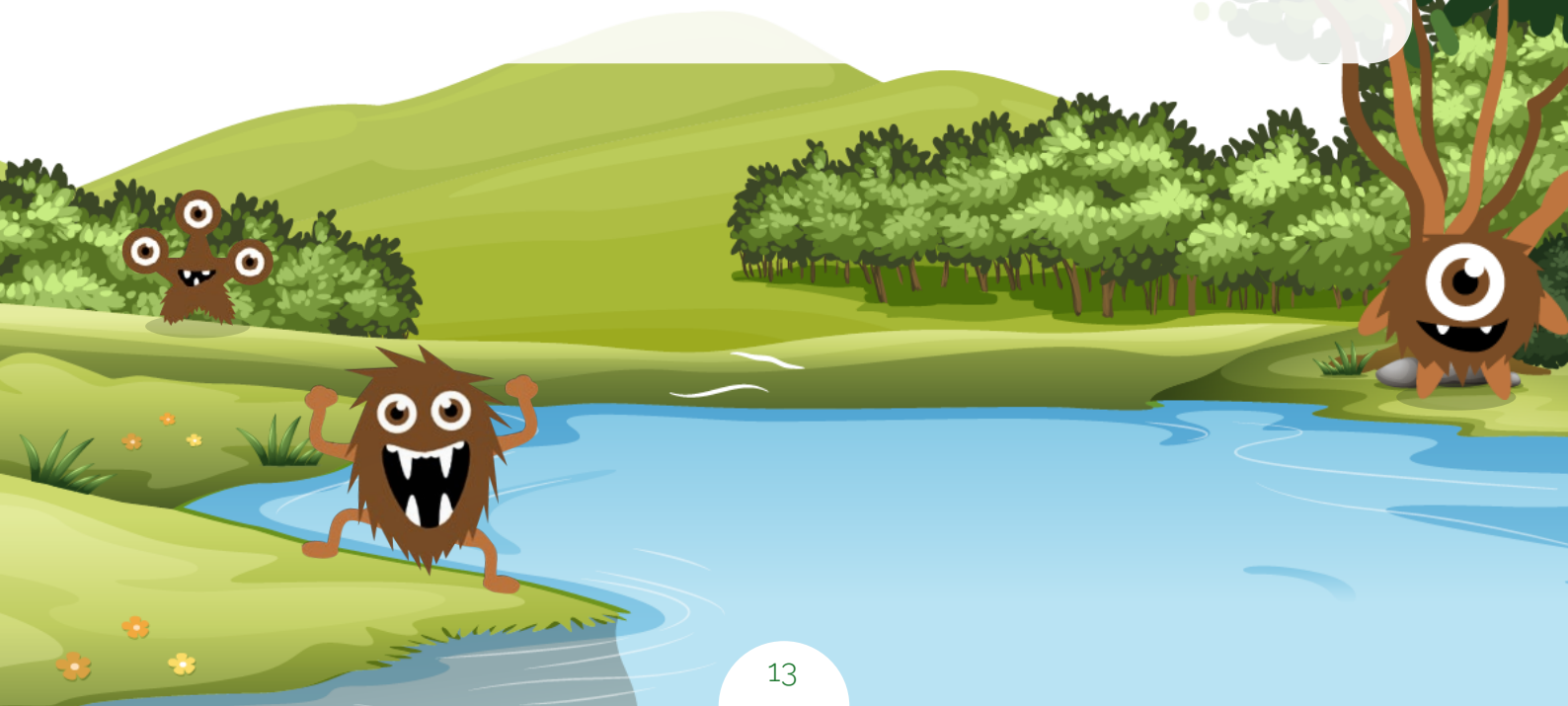
1. Collect a lot of mud into a bucket and add a drop of water. Using your hands mix the two together until it becomes sticky.
2. Pick up some of the mud in your hands and roll it into a ball.
3. Take the ball of mud and push it onto the trunk of the tree. It should stick! (it should remain round-ish).
4. Add some natural materials to turn it into a face - stones for eyes, grass for hair, leaves for ears, small twigs for the nose, red leaf for the mouth.
5. Leave it to dry.
6. We should always wash our hands after collecting mud and other natural materials.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to collect your mud and place your muddy monsters.

Even more fun:

Once you have made one, you will want to make some more, so why not make a whole tribe of muddy monsters? Come up with a name for the tribe, and name each monster before coming up with a story about how they got there.



Natural Crowns

Things you need:

Paper cut into a headband (long enough to fit around your head), sticky tape/glue, box/bucket (not essential).

How to play:

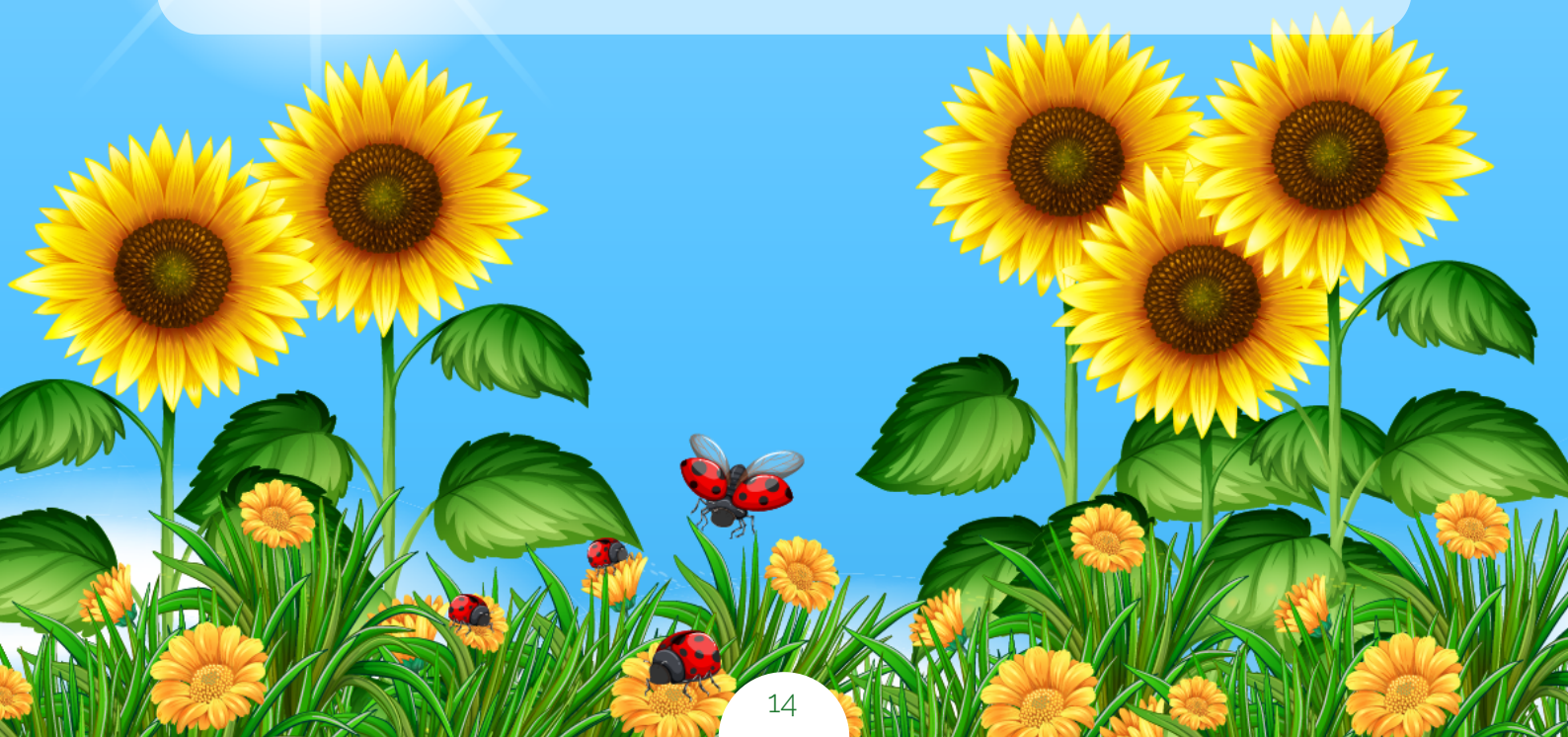
1. Find a good green space with some leaves and/or grass and maybe some daisies. Using your box/bucket, collect some leaves you like (look for different colours, shapes and sizes) and some long grass.
2. Take these back to your bases (maybe a bench or blanket) and decorate your headband by placing your collected bits on the paper.
3. Once you are happy with it stick these all down with your sticky tape/glue.
4. Place your decorated headband around your head to measure what size it needs to be. Stick your crown together and wear it with pride!
5. We should always wash our hands after picking up leaves.
6. Why not play a game of Robin Hood - pretending you live with your merry men and build a camp.

Staying safe:

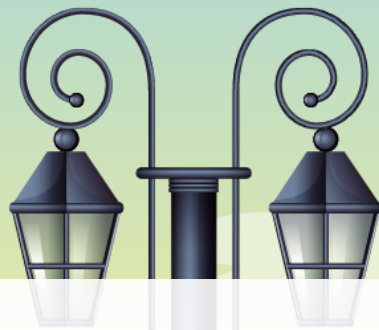
Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to hunt.

Even more fun:

If you find some good sticky mud, why not draw some tribal style marks on your face to go with your natural crown?



Nests



Things you need:

A park or garden where the grass has just been mown.

How to play:

1. Head to the park/out in the garden after the grass has been mown (when it smells lovely).
2. Collect up some of the grass and begin to shape it into a pretend nest - a big circle is the best shape!
3. Keep collecting grass until your nest is complete and then you can decorate it - maybe add some leaves to the sides, sticks to the middle or stones to make an entrance.
4. If you have made your nest big, you can sit in it.
5. We should always wash our hands after collecting grass and other natural materials.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to make your nest.

Even more fun:

Why not make the biggest nest you can and see how many other people can fit in the nest with you. You could also make up a game where the nests are used as safe zones, like tig!



Barking Up Every Tree

Things you need:

A wax crayon, paper.

How to play:

1. Find an area where there are some trees and choose your favourite - maybe feel the bark on each one and see what it feels like first!
2. Place your paper on the trunk of the trees as flat as you can.
3. Using the side of the wax crayon, colour an area of paper, this should leave the pattern of the bark. Move onto a different tree and do the same thing.
4. We should always wash our hands afterwards.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to do your rubbings.

Even more fun:

Why not have a go doing some leaf rubbings too! Turn any leaf over - with the underneath facing up (veins showing). Place the paper on top of the leaf. Using the side of the wax crayon colour over the leaf. You should clearly see the leaf shape and its veins. Why not cut these out and make a tree collage?



Natural, Noisy Band



Things you need:

Sticks, fir cones, stones, a pot with a lid (jam jar, margarine tub).

How to play:

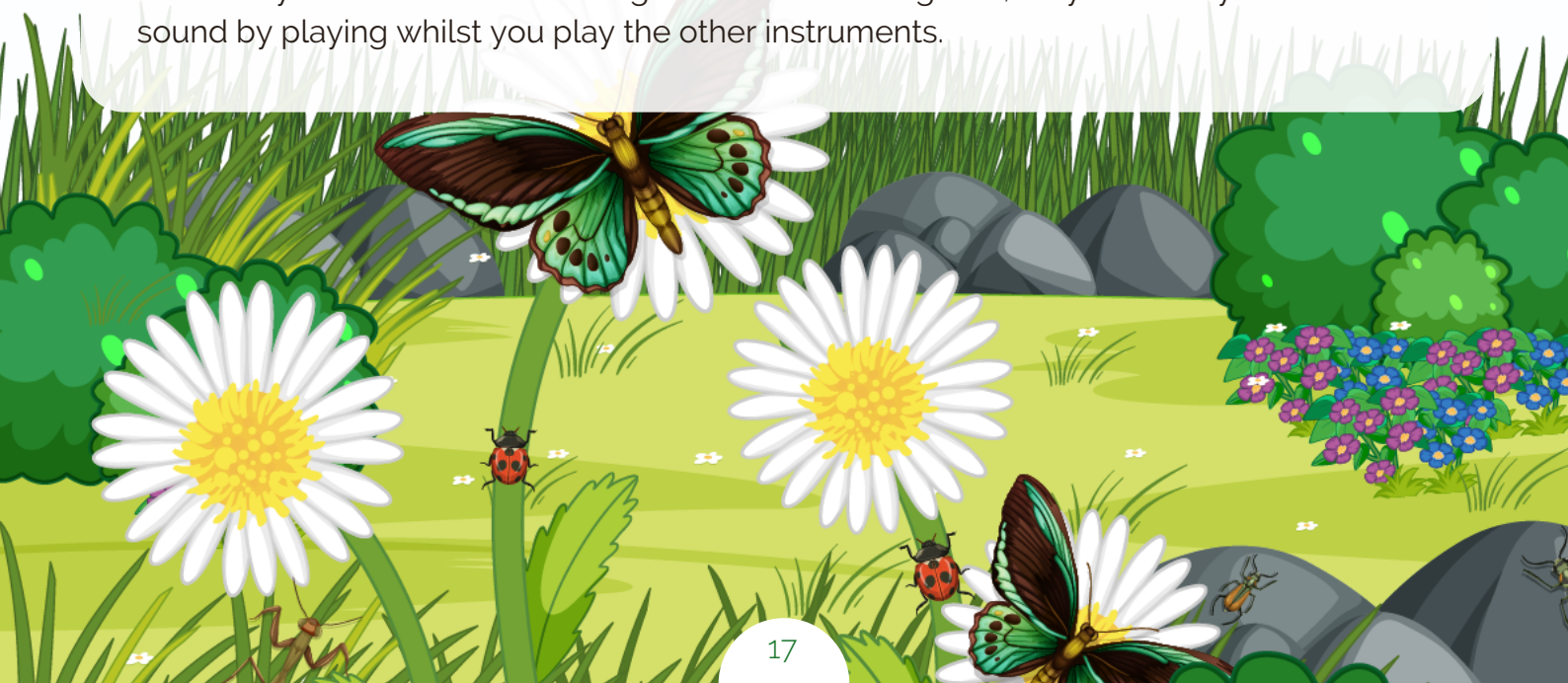
1. Take a walk to your local green space (park, woodland, riverside) and collect up 2 thick sticks, Also collect up a fir cone if you can find one. Then have a look for some small stones that will fit into your pot.
2. Now you have all you need for the band. Pop your stones into your pot (and put on the lid) - give it a good shake to get a great noise.
3. Tap your two sticks together to make a good noise, or tap them on a tree or the floor to make a good noise too!
4. Use one of the sticks and scrape it across the fir cone to make a great noise, or hit the bottom of the fir cone like a drum.
5. Now you have all your musical instruments, start to play a song - twinkle twinkle little star is a good one. See if you can play it really quietly to start with, then see if you can play it really loud.
6. We should always wash our hands after collecting natural objects like sticks, cones and stones.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles and brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to collect your bits.

Even more fun:

If you have an adult with you that knows how to play a blade of grass (by pulling it tight between your thumbs and blowing over the blade of grass), they can add your musical sound by playing whilst you play the other instruments.



Art for All

Things you need:

Lots of natural objects, camera (so that you can take a picture).

How to play:

1. Collect up lots of sticks, twigs, grass, leaves and stones, etc. You will need plenty to make your large pieces of art.
2. Find a clear space, maybe a clearing in the wood or an area of low/mown grass.
3. Use everything you have collected to create a picture of whatever you like! Hedgehog, tree, person. Maybe use large sticks to create a frame to put your picture in.
4. Take a photo of your artwork so that you can show other people. Your artwork can be left on the ground for the other people in the area to have a look at. You could even make an arrow out of sticks to direct people to it.
5. We should always wash our hands after collecting up natural materials.



Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to collect your materials.

Even more fun:

For little ones, it might be easier to take a large sheet of paper and let them create a picture on that by picking bits and putting them on the paper in any shape they want (so they can clearly see the outline).

Row, Row, Row your Boat

Things you need:

A large piece of paper, pens.

How to play:

1. You can play this game indoors or outdoors, by the side of the river is always fun though, so you can imagine you are on the river.
2. Find a large sheet of paper (the bigger, the better).
3. Using the pen, draw a boat on the paper. It can be as simple or as complicated as you like.
4. Place the paper (with the boat drawn on it) onto the floor and then sit in the boat outline.
5. Sing the song, 'Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream. If you see a (think of an animal that lives in water - crocodile, shark, whale), don't forget to scream!'
6. Then sing the song again and maybe change the animal that you encounter.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles and brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to row your boat. Keep a safe distance from the river and do not try to use your boat for real - you will sink.

Even more fun:

It's always fun to do this activity with lots of children. If you have one, why not put a blue sheet or tarpaulin onto the ground to be the stream/river? You can then place boats onto this.



30 Shades of Autumn

Things you need:

Natural materials.

How to play:

1. Go for a walk to your local park.
2. This game is all about looking for different colours, so whilst walking around look for natural materials that are different shades of colours - green, brown, orange, yellow, red.
3. When you have found as many different shades of these colours as you can, place them down on the ground in colour order (starting with the lightest colour and working towards the darkest). You could put them a long line, a circle or even a spiral.
4. If you/or the adults you are with have a camera, take a picture of the artwork.
5. We should always wash our hands after collecting natural materials.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles and brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to collect your materials.

Even more fun:

Try and create artwork that includes all the colours of the rainbow.



Through the Park



Below are some more simple activities you can try:

Leaf Bingo

How many different shaped leaves can you find in the park?

River Bingo

What can you see along the river as you walk past or over it?

Cloud Gazing

Lie on your back looking up into the sky (at the clouds). What shapes can you see? Are there any faces or animals?

Shape Spotting

Look out for shapes in nature, maybe a tree that looks like a face, a stone that looks like a heart or a fallen branch that looks like a snake.

Teddy-bears Picnic

In nice weather, why not take your teddy bears down to your local green space and have a bite to eat. They always love a trip out and about especially if there is a chance they may get some food.

Staying safe:

Check where you are playing for any glass, dog poo, nettles or brambles - if you find any of these then find somewhere else to play.

Our service explained For parents/carers

Connect for Health is a school nurse-led service that supports children, young people and parents/carers. Warwickshire families with a school age child (aged 5-19, or up to 25 for people with SEND) can get in touch with any concerns related to health and wellbeing.

The support we offer includes one-to-one advice, parent/carer workshops on key topics such as sleep and continence, resilience workshops for children, a healthy lifestyles programme, and specialist support such as healthcare plans for children with medical conditions that affect their school day.

Our team also carry out the National Child Measurement Programme and Health Needs Assessments in schools; you'll receive a full description of these initiatives if your child is invited to take part.



What can Connect for Health help with?

- Continence.
- Sleep.
- Behaviour.
- Healthy eating & physical activity.
- Oral health.
- Friendships and relationships.
- Bullying.
- Changing school.
- Parenting.
- Emotional wellbeing, including stress and anxiety.
- Many other health & wellbeing topics.



If you would like help with any of these topics, please don't hesitate to get in touch using the details below. Our office hours are Monday - Thursday 9 am - 5 pm and 9 - 4.30 on a Friday. If your child is age 11-19, please pass on the details of our ChatHealth text messaging service which they can access for friendly advice from a nurse.

Learn more on our website & download our referral form - scan here or visit compass-uk.org/c4h



Text Parentline (parents/carers): **07520 619 376**
Text ChatHealth (young people 11-19): **07507 331 525**
Call us: **03300 245 204**
Email us: connectforhealth@compass-uk.org



@schoolhealthC4H



@compassc4h



@c4hwarwickshire





This booklet was produced in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, the leading local independent conservation organisation. Our mission is to bring people closer to nature and create a land rich in wildlife.

Supported by our passionate members and dedicated volunteers we are working to bring about nature's recovery across Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull through practical action, education and influencing behavioural change. To achieve our mission, we're working in partnership with local councils, farmers, businesses and communities to make Warwickshire a better place for wildlife and people.

We want our local area to be full of wildlife and our wild spaces to be cared about by everyone

Find out about the amazing wildlife that we have in Warwickshire, discover more about how we're protecting it and read about our vital campaigns to give wildlife a voice.

Plan your visit to one of our nature reserves and start exploring the wild places on your doorstep!

WILD ABOUT LEARNING!

A hub of educational resources for schools, youth groups and parents - for any child who wants to learn more about wildlife and connect with nature! We believe children and young people of all ages should have an opportunity to explore the wonders of the natural world on their doorstep and in their daily lives.



KEEP EXPLORING, KEEP PLAYING, KEEP ENJOYING

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Your school nursing service

Working in partnership with

warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Registered charity no. 209200



In partnership with

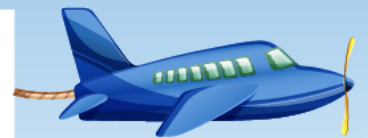


Warwickshire



Your school nursing service

Play, Explore, Enjoy



Outdoor Activities for Warwickshire