

Prince, Heather ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6199-4892> (2017) Making sense of the sensory outdoors. In: European Institute of Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE) International Seminar, 28 June - 2 July 2017, University of St Mark and St John, Plymouth, UK. (Unpublished)

Downloaded from: <https://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/3102/>

Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria's institutional repository 'Insight' must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria's institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available [here](#)) for educational and not-for-profit activities

provided that

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
- a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

You may not


- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator's reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found [here](#).

Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing insight@cumbria.ac.uk.

Making sense of the sensory

Dr Heather Prince
Associate Professor of Outdoor & Environmental Education

A photograph of two young children in a forest. The child on the left is a girl with blonde hair, wearing a bright pink jacket and blue leggings, smiling at the camera. The child on the right is wearing a purple hooded jacket and dark pants, and is holding the hand of the girl in pink. They are standing on a ground covered with brown autumn leaves. In the background, there are bare trees and a stone wall or fence.

Justification and
meaning for
learning and
pedagogy, and
wider understanding
of issues?

Through
experiencing nature
do young people
actively seek a
relationship or
connection with it?

Justification of learning and pedagogy

Creativity

Ownership

Progression

(Graham, 2014)

cumbria.ac.uk





Pedagogical *approaches*

Curiosity, exploration, inquiry,
experience, communication

Forest school?

Nature kindergartens?

Bush kinder?

Outdoor play?



cumbria.ac.uk

University of
Cumbria 

TEN
years
2007-2017



Smelly cocktails
 “The best activity I have ever done in the outdoors!” (MA International student, 2015)

Sensory activities: derived from writings and practice such as Steve van Matre (Earth Education) and Joseph Bharat Cornell. Now often not (or wrongly) attributed and many practitioners are devising their own activities



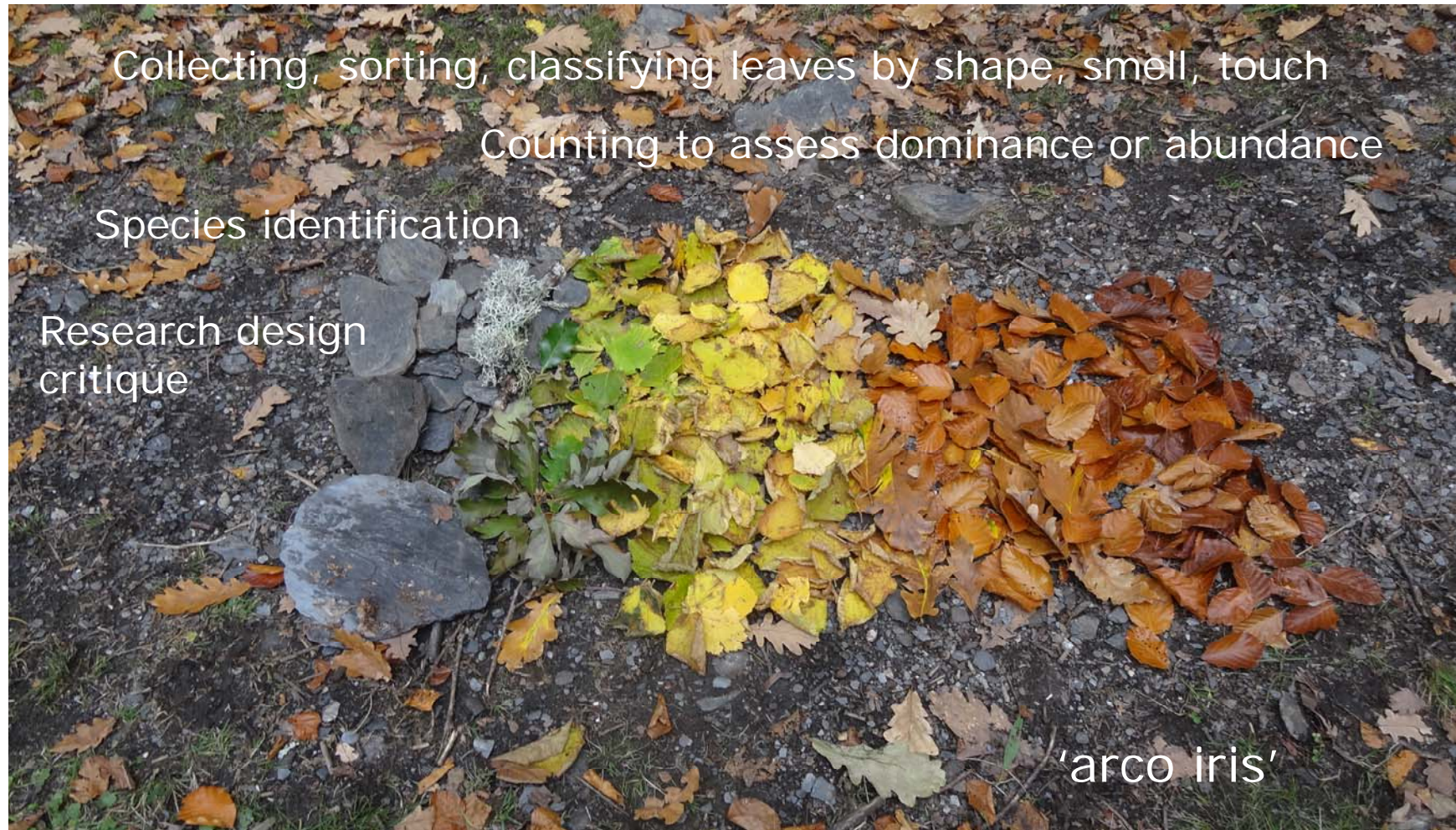
Drawing sound maps



“All young children are ever-present reminders of the fact that their senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling pay an incredible role in what is learned and retained” (Kalisch, 1999, p.30)

“Multisensory experiences in nature help to build the cognitive constructs necessary for intellectual development” (Louv, 2008, pp85-86)

Knowledge, understanding and awareness



Science, maths, language & communication, creativity

Raising awareness about disabilities



Disabling the enabled

Mask making: design & technology

Observation of deprivation of a sense on other senses, body movement & cognition



Activity: Orienteering in a small area of woodland

Co-construction of narratives about equality, diversity and inclusion.

Large scale map

Score course

Creative but nauseous students!

cumbria.ac.uk

University of
Cumbria 

TEN
years
2007-2017



Relationship or connection with nature?

Experiences in nature are indispensable foundations for the individual development of attitudes and values towards the environment (Bögeholz, 2006)

Outdoor experiences that involve understanding and experiencing nature can change behaviour and attitudes and are key attributes of sustainability (Barnes & Sharp, 2004; Prince, 2017)

To enhance sustainability, education and learning must play a key role in changing attitudes and behaviour (Cooper, 1998)

'Naturalistic necessity' (Kellert, 2012)



“‘Ways of seeing’ privileges sight relative to other sensory modalities” (Macpherson & Minca, 2005)

“Touch assumes a proximal and performative form of knowledge that exceeds representation, thus breaks a distance between subject and object” (Goesser, 2014)

‘Haptic’ experiences





Colour as a multispecies sensory process or network that generates biosemiotic material effects with their own metaphorical meaning (Yates, 2013)

Concluding thoughts

Sensory activities outdoors enhance interest and motivation (as in other outdoor experiences) and cognition, although evidence is needed

Link between sensory activities and increase in pro-environmental behaviour is complex

Can be in local and familiar environments, low cost, with limited teacher expertise (survey 2017) and address core curriculum areas

Sensory v creative?



Wild is a child

*Wild is a child who stays out until dark
Wild is the child that lights fire with bark
Wild is a child with mud on their knees
Wild is the child who climbs up in the trees
Wild is a child a long way from home
Wild is the child with no need for a comb
Wild is a child who wipes their bum with a leaf
Wild is the child who uses a stick to brush their teeth.
Wild is a child who sleeps under the stars
Wild is the child who keeps tadpoles in jars
Wild is a child who fell out of a tree
Wild is the child with their own parking space at A&E
Wild is a child that I would like to be.*

Rowan Ashworth (2007 -) Winner of the Wordsworth poetry prize, 2017

References

Barnes, P. & Sharp, B. (2004). *The RHP companion to outdoor education*. Lyme Regis, UK: Russell House Publishing.

Bögeholz, S. (2006). Nature experience and its importance for environmental knowledge, values and action: recent German empirical contributions. *Environmental Education Research*, 12(1), 65-84.

Cooper, G. (1998). *Outdoors with young people. A leader's guide to outdoor activities, the environment and sustainability*. Lyme Regis, UK: Russell House Publishing.

Cornell, J.B. (1979). *Sharing nature with children*. Nevada City, US: Dawn Publications.

Goeser, A.H. (2014). A haptic geography: How it feels to be Outward Bound. Unpublished PhD, University of Nebraska, US.

Graham, S. (2014). *Outstanding outdoor teaching and learning*. Presentation given at the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC) Lake District Regional Meeting, 17 January.

Kalisch, K. (1999). *The role of the instructor in the Outward Bound educational process*. Kearney, US: Morris Publishings.

References (continued)

Kellert, S. R. (2012). The naturalistic necessity. In Dunlap, J. and Kellert, S. R. (Eds.) *Companions in wonder: Children and adults exploring nature together* (pp.113-136). Cambridge, MA, US: The MIT Press.

Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder*. Chapel Hill, NC, US: Agonquin Books.

Macpherson, H. and Minca, C. (2005). Landscape, embodiment and visual impairment: an exploration of the limits of landscape knowledge. UNESCO University and Heritage 10th International Seminar, 'Cultural landscapes in the 21st century'.

Prince, H.E. (2017). Outdoor experiences and sustainability. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 17(2), 161-171.

Van Matre, S. (1999). *Earth Education ... a new beginning*. Grenville, US: IEE.

Yates, J. (2013). Orange. In Cohen, J.J. (Ed.) *Prismatic ecology. Ecotheory beyond green*. Minnesota, US; London: University of Minnesota Press.