

A Guide to Nature-Based Pedagogy for Early Childhood Programs



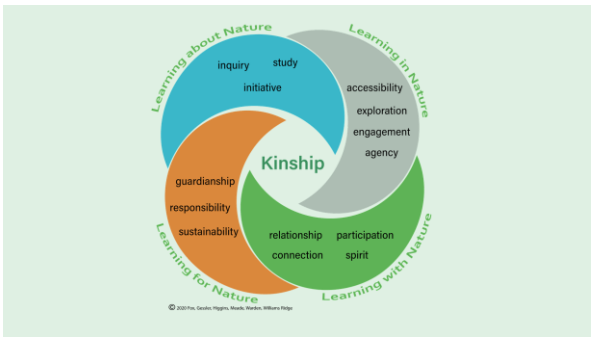
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“Kinship is rooted in a **deep kind of knowing** that includes, but goes beyond, cognitive understanding. Humans, like other living things, are social beings. We **live in relationship to others**, not just with other humans, but with the entire natural world.”

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About the Environmental Kinship Guide

Kinship is based on the understanding that everything in the natural world is interrelated and that humans are a part of this as cohabiters.



- ✓ **Practical**
Every-day, pragmatic examples for educators and administrators alike through award-winning nature-based pedagogy.
- ✓ **Inclusive**
Intentional practices from a variety of places, cultures, population densities, and communities.
- ✓ **Community**
Creating an interrelational dialog on fostering environmental kinship in the early years.

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Learning About Nature

Developing fascination for ecology

- Questioning what is noticed in the environment

Examples: Wondering aloud about why burrs stick to clothing, asking why the riverbed is dry, pondering what a frog might be trying to communicate with its calls, expressing curiosity for a snowflake, asking about the clouds out the window

- Observing differences and similarities in nature

Examples: Exploring differences in the texture on the bark of trees, pointing out variations of color on the same type of flower, noticing different

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Learning With Nature

Appreciating the connection between everything on Earth through daily participation

- Observing how everything in nature is connected and does not operate/function in isolation through slowing down to notice

Examples: Hearing the bird calls and starting to be aware of what they convey

- Engaging with the concepts around connection and interdependence

Examples: Noticing spirality in fir cones, a shell, and a flower; talking about the impact of the removal of a stone

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Children's Environmental Kinship Guide Outline
 A public approach to teaching and learning about, in, with, and for the whole of the natural world
 by Rachel and Ari Hager for the ACE Center for Ecology, Education, and Community, ACE Center for Ecology, Education, and Community, ACE Center for Ecology, Education, and Community

Learning About Nature:
 Differentiated and developmentally appropriate

LEVEL

LEVEL 1

1. Observe and describe
2. Question and wonder
3. Compare and contrast
4. Classify and categorize
5. Measure and quantify
6. Record and document
7. Communicate and share

LEVEL 2

1. Observe and describe
2. Question and wonder
3. Compare and contrast
4. Classify and categorize
5. Measure and quantify
6. Record and document
7. Communicate and share
8. Reflect and evaluate

LEVEL 3

1. Observe and describe
2. Question and wonder
3. Compare and contrast
4. Classify and categorize
5. Measure and quantify
6. Record and document
7. Communicate and share
8. Reflect and evaluate
9. Apply and transfer

Learning In Nature:
 Differentiated and developmentally appropriate

LEVEL

LEVEL 1

1. Observe and describe
2. Question and wonder
3. Compare and contrast
4. Classify and categorize
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6. Record and document
7. Communicate and share

LEVEL 2

1. Observe and describe
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ACE Center for Ecology, Education, and Community


The Environmental Kinship Guide is a framework for learning about, in, with, and for the whole of the natural world. Kinship is based on the understanding that everything in the natural world is interconnected and that humans are a part of that as well.

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The Nest Protectors

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Learning For Nature

- Advocating for environmental action**
 - Having the courage to speak out for the benefit of nature**
Examples: Engaging people for not recycling correctly or for using single-use plastic bottles; asking other children to not pull leaves off trees and flowers off plants; writing letters or making videos to send to local governments/politicians to highlight local nature issues; instigating public signs for the protection of indigenous flora and fauna in parks/land; taking part in local advocacy activities; telling stories of leaders that have taken a stand and how they did it, what happened, and how it made a difference.
 - Educating their wider family and local community about sustainable practices**
Examples: Re-enacting what they have learned about recycling and worm farming at the center in their home, including the whole family on forest excursions.

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Learning About Nature



● **Gathering information based upon organic natural interests**

Examples: Seeking out books on fossils if interested in fossils, asking to speak to a beekeeper if interested in bees, keeping digital photos to chart the spiders found around the school if interested in spiders, collecting various leaf shapes if interested in leaves

● **Reflecting upon observations**

Examples: Bridging information from a past learning experience with insect homes to a new experience with mammal homes, connecting weather pattern observations to weather effects on local ecology, analyzing observations of local flora and fauna and their uses in the community, linking fall migration to spring migration observations, bridging investigations of local waterways to how they are utilized by the community, connecting natural observations in student journal or portfolio

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Learning ABOUT Nature

The Study of the natural world.

- Inquiry
- Study
- Initiative





Learning IN Nature

The affordances provided in nature

- Exploration
- Engagement
- Agency

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Learning WITH Nature

Fostering kinship with the natural world.

- Relationship
- Participation
- Connection
- Spirituality




Learning FOR Nature

Recognizing the role of reciprocity in humans' connection with the rest of nature.

- Guardianship
- Responsibility
- Sustainability

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Using the EKG to see the learning in children's experiences and to guide curriculum planning

- What do I observe?
- What can I do to deepen their exploration in this moment?
- How can I use this moment to scaffold their learning on a specific learning goal for this child?

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Our accessibility responsibility



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Accessibility



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Nature Indoors & Out



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Nature Indoors & Out



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**Giving children & teachers
time for experiences,
documentation, and reflection**

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The Blueberry Award



Title: Jayden's Impossible Garden
By: Milina Mangal
Published: 2021

Blueberry Honor Book/Picture Book. Timeless and vibrant, this story highlights the beauty of intergenerational relationships and the power of imagination and perseverance in bringing the vision of a community garden to life. Jayden's love nature in the city will inspire readers to see their environment as bursting with opportunities for growth and connection. Age Range: 4 - 9 years

Call Number: JPicture Manga M



Title: Fatima's Great Outdoors
By: Ambreen Tariq
Published: 2021

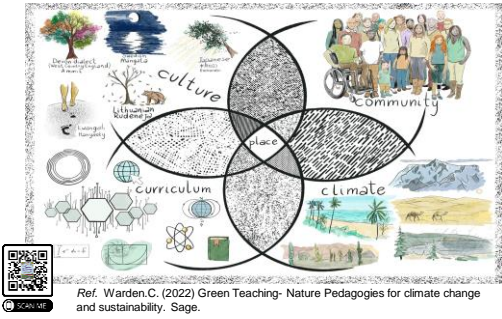
Blueberry Honor Book/Picture Book. An immigrant family embarks on their first camping trip in the Midwest in this picture book by Ambreen Tariq, outdoors act

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"When we develop an awareness of the way that humans are participants in a larger ecosystem that is the Earth, we can embrace the idea that we live with the Earth, not we live on the Earth." EKI, p. 11

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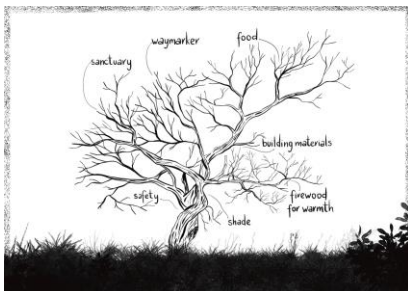
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Ref. Warden.C. (2022) Green Teaching- Nature Pedagogies for climate change and sustainability

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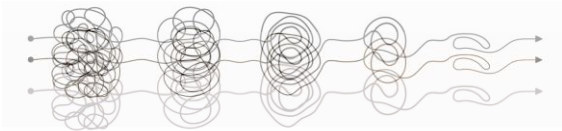
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Entanglement

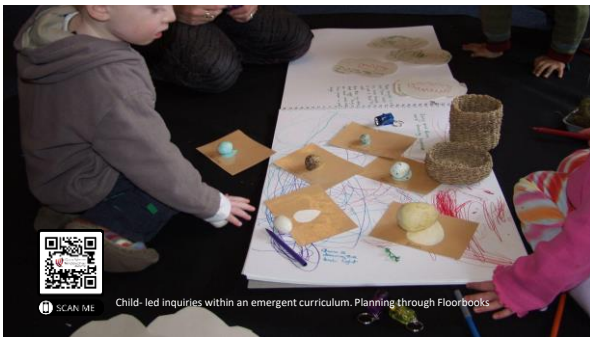


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Entanglement



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Community of practice



www.environmental.kinship.org

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