

MUDDY FEET

WILD PLACES, HAPPY FACES!

Welcome to our Muddy Feet Resource Pack! Each week we will be releasing a 'Virtual' Muddy Feet session via our Facebook page

www.facebook.com/MuddyFeetOutdoorPlaygroup

We will introduce the story and theme for the week and then have a weekly resource pack available with a range of suggested outdoor activities that you can have a go at in your back garden or any outdoor space. Our 'Virtual' session is pre-recorded so can be accessed at any time.

Muddy Feet Resource Pack Week 10



Story – ‘Tree’ by Britta Teckentrup

Theme – Trees

This week's story is 'Tree.' You can hear and join in with the story on our Facebook page through our 'virtual' session this week.

Trees are fascinating and SO important, so it seemed like a perfect theme for our pack this week!

Each suggested activity is described below, including all the resources you will need – most of these are things you will have around the house/garden. All the activities can be adapted for both younger and older children and encourage free play, exploration and creativity. We have designed the activities to be very child-led and open-ended, but there are many curriculum links too!

We have broken the activities down into five days, but this is just a suggestion, feel free to dip in and out of the activities and see where your children take them!

We'd love to hear how you get on with the activities, so please feel free to share any pictures/comments to our FB page or tag us on Instagram

@muddyfeetoutdoors #muddyfeetoutdoors

Day 1

You will need:	
Tree Hunt sheet	
Variety of leaves	
mirror	
Tree Fact Sheet	



🧐 **Tree Hunt**– it is sometimes quite tricky to identify different trees – use our Tree Hunt to see if you can spot some of the trees in your garden or local area. Use the leaf shape / seeds to help you.

🧐 **Find the Tree to Match the Leaf**– this is a really great way to get children learning how to identify different trees from their leaves. Either in your garden or local area find a leaf that is on the ground – the challenge is to see if you can find the tree that matches the leaf!

🧐 **Find My Tree Game** – a game for two people. One person is the ‘leader’ the other is the blindfolded person. The ‘leader’ chooses a tree or object in the garden/outdoor space. Without revealing their choice, they lead the blindfolded partner to the chosen tree/item. Depending on the age of the blindfolded person, the leader can either lead them straight there, OR make the journey a bit more of a challenge (e.g. turning person around, leading them one way, then another) Take care when leading blindfolded person around to guide them around any potential obstacles. The ‘leader’ may want to hold hands or shoulders of partner to guide and reassure them. Once they have reached the chosen tree/item, encourage them to feel its texture, listen to the sounds around them, and feel which direction the wind/sun is coming from. The ‘leader’ then leads the blindfolded partner back to the starting point and the blindfold is removed – can they find the tree/item? This activity can be easily adapted for older children by adding in obstacles.



🧐 **Mirror walk**– if you have trees in your garden, use mirrors to look up – it’s amazing to have a different view of the trees.



🧐 **Tree tag** –this is a great game to play if you are walking through an area with lots of trees. Use the Find a tree sheet to give you some ideas – ask children to run and tag a tree with different features (e.g. tag a tree which has blossom)

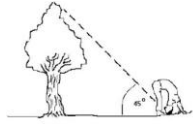


🧐 **Tree facts** – use the tree fact cards to set up a tree trail in your garden to learn some amazing facts about trees.



Day 2

You will need:	
Stick the length of your arm	
Wood slice / tree stump	
Paper, pencils, Crayons	
Natural material(leaves, flowers, twigs etc)	
Clay/mud	
Parts of a Tree Sheet	



🧠 **Measure a tree** – There are some REALLY fun ways to have a go at measuring trees!

Through your legs – Choose your tree and walk away from the tree but at regular intervals bend forwards, looking through your legs to see the tree. When you can just see the top of the tree, stop walking. Then measure the distance along the ground from the tree to you (an adult footstep is roughly 1m)

Using a stick - Find a stick that is the same length as your arm; hold it upright by one end, with your arm extended. Face the tree and line up the base of your stick with the foot of your tree, the top of the stick lines up with the crown of the tree (move closer and further away until it lines up) Then count the metre steps to the foot of the tree. The trees height is the number of steps you count!



🧠 **Tree ring art** – Each year a tree grows, new layers of bark are formed – for each year a tree has been alive, ring can be seen in its cross section. Tree rings are fantastic to look at with children to help to visualise this. If you have any cut wood, or spot any tree stumps on your walk, you can have a look at the tree rings and see if you can work out how old the tree is. Once you have had a look at some tree ring examples – encourage children to have a go at making their own tree ring patterns (Concentric Circles)



🧠 **Tree spirits** – Collect a range of natural material; see what different items you can collect. Then choose which tree you would like to bring alive with your tree spirit! Look closely, trees all have different features, you could use the tree's features to help bring it to life! Use some clay (or mud) to help you to stick your natural items on to the tree to make your tree spirit. Can you give your tree spirit a name? What will their job be – will they be watching over your garden and helping everything to grow?



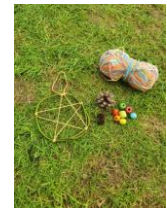
🧠 **Tree shadow drawing** - this is great to do on a sunny day, find a spot where the shadow of your tree falls, place a piece of paper here and use a pencil to draw around the shadow to make your outline of the tree.



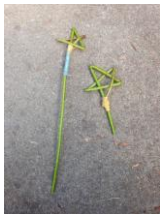
🧠 **Make a tree** – This is a great way to add in some science and talk about the different parts of trees and their functions. Using natural material you find on the ground (e.g. branches, leaves, sticks) have a go at making a model of a tree. See if you can include the following parts; roots, trunk, branches, leaves. Use the reference guide to discuss their functions.

Day 3

You will need:	
Willow/bendy sticks	
Loppers/secateurs	
Scissors, wool	
Natural materials (e.g. feathers, pine cones)	
Any other craft material you may have	
Garden twine	



🧺 **Willow dream catchers** – gently bend your willow into a circular shape and twist around itself to secure (you can add garden twine to secure too) Next attach some wool and string this across your willow circle, making whatever pattern you like. Secure your wool and make a loop at the top to hang it up. Now you can add your natural material – we used some wooden beads and pine cones to add to our dream catcher – now hang up in your window to help catch any bad dreams!



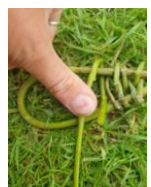
🧺 **Willow wands** – If you have some willow – you could have a go at making a star wand, to do this you will need to gently bend one end of the willow into four equally sized sections, making an M-shape. Now form these pieces into a star shape and secure with garden twine. Now you can decorate your willow wand using whatever craft material you have. If you don't have any willow – choose any straight stick and decorate this to make your wand.



🧺 **Willow weaving** – willow has been used for weaving for many years. If you want to have a go at weaving, first make a circular shape with a piece of willow and secure with garden twine. Now cut one piece of willow and secure this across the middle of your circle. Now cut several pieces of willow just longer than the circumference of your circle. Now you can begin weaving them in and out. Weave one piece under the centre piece and the next piece over and so on.



🧺 **Willow fish** – This is similar to the above activity, but instead of making a circular shape, this time make a fish shape and secure. There is no need for a central stick this time, simply weave one piece of willow in and out. If you need more than one piece, just simply start a new piece and continue.



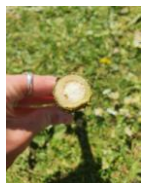
🧺 **Willow fairies** – Bend the willow into a heart shape and secure using garden twine. You can leave this as a willow heart and decorate this, or you could turn your heart shape into the wings of a fairy.

🧺 **Fairy Stick / Fishing pole** – choose a piece of willow / bendy stick. We like to decorate these with wool and then hang our fairies from them! Or you could make your stick into a fishing pole – you could add your willow fish!



Day 4

You will need:	
Elder wood	
Elder flowers	
Loppers/secateurs	
Cordial recipe – lemons, sugar, elderflowers, pan, jug, muslin cloth	
Fritter recipe – flour, eggs, salt, oil, elderflowers, sugar, pan, whisk	
Skewer / tent peg	
String/wool	
Potato	



🍷 **Elderflower cordial** – You will need: 15 heads of elderflower, 2 lemons, 2.5 litres of water and 5 cups of sugar. Collect 15 heads of elderflower. Rinse these under the tap to remove any bugs. Add water, elderflowers, sliced lemon to a pan and bring to the boil. Remove from heat and leave to infuse for a few hours or overnight (covered) Then strain the liquid through a muslin cloth or fine sieve. Return the liquid to the pan and add the sugar. Bring to the boil, stirring frequently to dissolve the sugar. Simmer for 5 minutes

🍷 **Elderflower fritters** – 200g flour, 2 eggs, 125ml milk, pinch of salt, 15 elderflowers, and sugar for dusting. Whisk together flour, eggs, salt and milk in a bowl until a smooth batter. Dip the elderflower heads in the batter and then drop in to the hot oil a few at a time and then fry until golden. Dust them with sugar and then serve!

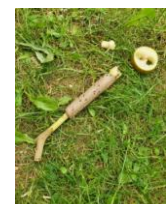
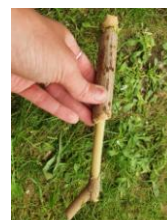
🍷 **Elder beads** – if you cut a branch from an elder tree, the centre is made of pith which can be quite easily hollowed out (and is VERY satisfying!) All you need is some secateurs (to cut the branch) and a wooden skewer / tent peg. Once you have cut the branch to the desired size, push the pith out of the cut piece using the skewer / tent peg. Once it has been hollowed out, you can use elder for lots of things.

Beads – simply cut the branch into small pieces (these will be your beads) and then hollow these out. Once hollow, you can then thread these on to some string to make a necklace.

Snake – Using the same method as above, make the segments a bit longer this time; now you can thread them on to make a snake. You can add eyes to your snake if you wish.

🍷 **Elder whistle** – Follow the instruction sheet to have a go at making an Elder whistle.

🍷 **Elder spud-gun** – Cut a piece of elder and hollow out. Then find a stick which fits into the hollow – this will be your plunger! It works well if you can find a stick with a forked end to hold on to. If you want to, you can use a knife to sharpen the end of your spud gun. Now push the end of the gun into your potato to load it! Use the plunger to shoot the potato out the end!



Day 5

You will need:	
Variety of leaves	
Crayons, paper, pencil, any other craft material you may have e.g. googly eyes	
Natural material (sticks/stones, leaves, flowers) wool/string	
glue	
foil	
Scouring pad	
String/wool	



🍃 **Leaf rubbing** – collect different leaves – then place some paper on top and colour gently with a wax crayon – you will be able to see the imprint of the veins of the leaf.

🍃 **Leaf printing** – collect different leaves – then add some paint to one side of the leaf and then use this to print on to the paper.



🍃 **Leaf people**– collect different leaves and use them to create your own leaf people. You could make different pictures using the leaves – could you make them into animals?

🍃 **Bark rubbing**– Different trees have different textured bark, similar to leaf rubbing, this time place your paper on to the trunk of the tree and rub gently with a crayon – what pattern does it make?



🍃 **Foil leaf prints**– Choose leaves with thick veins. Stick the leaves onto a hard backing (we used a piece of old wood!) Then place foil on top and rub gently so that the imprint of the leaf can be seen. Next paint over the imprint using black paint – we used acrylic paint. When this is dry, rub the paint carefully to reveal the imprint.



🍃 **Leaf symmetry** – Collect different leaves. Then carefully cut each leaf in half vertically and stick one half on a piece of paper – challenge children to draw the other half – this is a great opportunity to discuss symmetry!



🍃 **Tree mobile**– different trees produce different things at this time of year; alder trees produce alder cones, willow/birch trees produce catkins, sycamore trees produce 'helicopters' some trees may be losing some leaves or branches – see what things you can find on the ground (this is a great opportunity to have a go at identifying different trees) You could use all your treasures to create a 'nature mobile' by adding them to a stick using string / wool.



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Oak



Sycamore



Holly



Elder

Horse Chestnut



Hawthorne



Birch



Hazel



Willow



Rowan

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Elder Whistle



First cut your piece of elder to the desired length using loppers

Use a skewer or tent peg to push the pith out the centre and hollow out.

Then peel off the bark.

Next use a knife to cut a notch in your elder – this will be where the air flows out and should be about a 90 degree angle on one side and roughly 45 on the other.

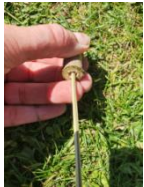
Now you need to find a piece of wood which will fit snugly inside the hollow tube – this is going to be your fipple! (I love the name!) This acts like a reed in a wind instrument. Cut this so that it is the same length as your tube from end to the notch.

You then need to make the top of the fipple flat to help the air flow – this is very much trial and error – you may need to keep taking a bit more off! I had to take more off after this picture!

Then place the fipple into the hollow tube.

You now need to find a piece of wood which fits snugly into the opposite end to block the air flow – I used a piece of the same stick I used for the fipple.

It is VERY much trial and error! Finally managed to get a sound out of mine! I'd love to hear how you get on!



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Find a Tree that...

Has blossom



Has a smooth trunk

Has a rough trunk

Has lobed leaves



Has spiky leaves



Has catkins



Has cones

You can hug

Is taller than you

Looks like something
else – maybe you can
see a face in it!





Trees communicate with each other – they are connected by a network of fungi growing in and around their roots!



Trees clear the air – they filter dangerous pollutants from the air using their leaves and bark.



Trees are good for your health – aspirin originally came from the willow tree



Trees clean water – their leaves, branches and trunk intercept rainfall and help collect pollutants from entering rivers and streams



Trees provide a home for LOTS of wildlife –oak trees can support over 280 species of insect



Trees play an important role in combating climate change – they absorb carbon dioxide from the air.



Trees are fundamental to life on earth – they release oxygen which we need to breathe!



There are lots of ancient myths surrounding trees. Elder trees have strong associations with mythology – it was said that an elder planted by your house would keep evil away!



Hazel was traditionally seen as a magical tree and was often used for magic wands!



Rowan trees were seen as protecting people against enchantment – people would carry it for protection.

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The Parts of a Tree

Crown – made up of leaves and branches at the top of the tree. The crown shades the roots, collects energy from the sun and allows the tree to remove extra water to

Leaves – produce food for the plant through photosynthesis. Cells in leaves use light from the sun, carbon dioxide in the air and water to make food

Branch – helps transport materials from the trunk to the leaves. Provide a way for leaves to collect the most sunlight

Trunk – gives tree its shape and support. It transports nutrients and water from the soil and sugar from the leaves

Roots – hold the tree in the ground and keep it upright. Take water and food from the soil. They store food for the plant

