



Practical Considerations for Developing an Outdoor Learning Landscape, Garden or Playscape

- ⊗ Is the project (aka: outdoor classroom, garden, natural playscape) concrete, interesting, and relevant to the children?
- ⊗ Is the project dense in potential meanings, both emotionally and intellectually?
- ⊗ Does the project allow children to freely learn, explore, play, investigate, and apply basic skills and dispositions (that are consistent with your standards and expectations)?
- ⊗ Is the project rich in possibilities?
- ⊗ Does the project allow for varied activities during different parts of the day and different times of year?
- ⊗ Is the project able to sustain long-term interest?
- ⊗ Is there potential for representation and application in a variety of media, senses, and/or subjects?
- ⊗ Is the project sensitive to the cultural context of children and families?
- ⊗ Is the project familiar to children?
- ⊗ Are the teachers knowledgeable and comfortable guiding children outdoors?
- ⊗ Are the teachers knowledgeable and comfortable about the topic(s)?
- ⊗ Are there ample resources available?
- ⊗ How will the project remain sustainable (education and maintenance)?

Some Criteria for Determining the Merit of Study

The focus of learning in the outdoors goes far beyond standards and proficiencies. A few criteria for determining the merit of a study are whether a project provides opportunities:

- ⊗ to pursue real inquiries
- ⊗ for teamwork, community building, and communications
- ⊗ for individual strengths to shine
- ⊗ to showcase learning as a journey of exciting discovery and exploration
- ⊗ for incorporating the learning of knowledge and skills relevant to development across ALL content areas and target age(s).