

The background of the slide features a dense pattern of vibrant green leaves, likely from a tree or shrub, with visible veins. Below the leaves, there are soft, circular ripples in a light blue-green color, suggesting water. The overall aesthetic is natural and serene.

Keep the Sense of Wonder

Exploring A Sense of Place with Young Children

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Basic Principles

- Successfully experience rich in-depth scientific inquiry
- Draws from children's experiences, engaging and can be directly and deeply over time
- Discussion, expression, representation and reflection
- Teachers actively support & guide



Reflect on our own childhood experiences

Did you have a special place?

Where are you?

How did you feel?

Prior Experiences



- Outdoors and in
- Start from where each child is

“I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”

—Isaac Newton





Outdoor Classroom naturec urricula

- child-centered
- inquiry-based learning model
- use all of their senses as they observe their environment
- sort, classify, count, compare, and examine
- Naturally encourages wonder
- Teachers guide children to integrate these experiences into cognitive concepts

Emphasis on Inquiry



- Ask open-ended questions
- Think about what observation tells them
- Gathering data
- On going dialogue



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Developmentally Appropriate Practices

- **Observing** Noticing, gathering information – what do you see? How does it feel?
- **Identifying** Labeling the information with a name allows understanding universally
- **Comparing** Pointing out similarities and differences between
- **Classifying** Organizing information into meaningful units
- **Communicating** Sharing information with others and explaining
- **Utilizing** Generalizing information from one experience

Sharing Observations & Ideas



- Small & large group
- Learn to listen
- Value differences in ideas



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Documentation and Recording

- What is seen and thought
- Reflections
- Patterns
- Springboard for more exploration







Supporting Wonder Documentation and Defense

- Carefully document – shutterbug
- Connect to academics
- Childhood health issues
- Inclusive
- Rough & Tumble play decreases bullying
- Counteracts Nature Deficit Disorder



Our knowledge of child development and learning allows us to make predictions – but only general predictions- about the kinds of activities or experiences that will interest children within a certain age range and further their development and progress.

Supporting Wonder Filled Play

- Bring the classroom materials out
- Loose parts
 - Large blocks
 - Crates
 - Tires
 - Wagons
 - Sand
 - Buckets
 - Paint
 - Logs
 - Poles
 - garden





“To stand at the edge of the sea, to sense the ebb and flow of the tides, to feel the breath of a mist moving over a great salt marsh, to watch the flight of shore birds that have swept up and down the surf lines of the continents for untold thousands of year, to see the running of the old eels and the young shad to the sea, is to have knowledge of things that are as nearly eternal as any earthly life can be.”

Rachel Carson



FairyHouses

A Fairy House is a gateway through which our enchanted imaginations can play in the magical realms – and a doorway the Fairies can use to visit our world. Interacting with a Fairy House awakens the creative mind, engages the imagination and opens a doorway into the real Fairy World. When you acquire a Fairy House, you are honoring and stimulating the sense of wonder deep within you and creating a passageway for communication with the unseen.



Wonder? Magic?



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When is a mud puddle more than just a mud puddle?



- Mud is a simple wonder. A wonder awaiting the child in all of us.



Wonder, wonder everywhere



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Importance of Exploration

Supportive
environment

Time

Space

Access

Give a sense of that
wonder and
interactions are part
of our lives



Repeat Experiences in New Ways



“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.” —
Albert Einstein





Nurturing Wonder through Nature

- Responds to children's individual strengths and needs
- Everyday experience is the foundation
- "Trial and error" welcomes error as information
- Involve a wide range of developmental levels
- Supports an integrated curriculum

Share the joy - keep the wonder



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-TheSense ofWonder



If facts are seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom,

then emotions and impressions of the self are fertile soil in which the seeds must grow.

The years of early childhood are the time to prepare the soil.

- Rachel Carson



MudPuddles andDandelions

When I look at a patch of dandelions,
I see a bunch of weeds that are going to take over my yard.
My kids see flowers for Mom
and blowing white fluff you can wish on.

When I look at an old drunk and he smiles at me,
I see a smelly, dirty person who probably wants money and I look away.
My kids see someone smiling at them and they smile back.

When I hear music I love, I know I can't carry a tune and don't have much rhythm so I sit self-
consciously and listen.
My kids feel the beat and move to it. They sing out the words.
If they don't know them, they make up their own.

When I feel wind on my face, I brace myself against it.
I feel it messing up my hair and pulling me back when I walk.
My kids close their eyes, spread their arms and fly with it,
until they fall to the ground laughing.

When I pray, I say Thee and Thou and grant me this, give me that.
My kids say, "Hi God! Thanks for my toys and my friends.
Please keep the bad dreams away tonight.
Sorry, I don't want to go to Heaven yet.
I would miss my Mommy and Daddy."

When I see a mud puddle I step around it.
I see muddy shoes and dirty carpets.
My kids sit in it. They see dams to build,
rivers to cross and worms to play with.

I wonder if we are given children to teach or to learn from?
No wonder God loves the little children!!

"Enjoy the little things in life,
for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things."
Just a reminder about the important things in life.

I wish you mud puddles and dandelions!

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