

## Educators recommend more outdoor learning

18th July, 2016



Researchers in Britain are telling schools that children should be doing more learning outdoors. The researchers say there is currently too much focus on sitting in classrooms to

pass exams. They say outdoor learning is important for students' social skills, health and development. It also increases their quality of life. There have been five major reports over the past decade that stress the need for students to learn outdoors and experience nature more. The researchers say that schools are not taking the advice of these reports. They say outdoor learning is on the decline in Britain. The researchers want Britain's government to act to put outdoor learning on the curriculum of all schools.

The report is from researchers at the University of Plymouth and the organisation Natural England. It says there are many benefits of outdoor learning for children. One advantage is that it builds confidence in children as they experience things that were normal for their parents, like climbing trees. Another advantage is that it makes children more aware of the environment and teaches them to respect nature. There are also health benefits as children exercise more instead of sitting in a classroom or being at home with video games. A final benefit is that it helps with the problem of what is called 'stranger danger'. This is an idea many children in the UK today grow up hearing.

Sources: *NurseryWorld.com / telegraph.co.uk / bbc.co.uk*

## Writing

It is better to learn outdoors than indoors. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

researchers / outdoors / focus / social skills / development / quality of life / advice / organisation / benefits / advantage / climbing trees / respect / nature / stranger

## True / False

- Researchers say there is too big a focus in schools on exams. T / F
- Researchers say outdoor learning increases quality of life. T / F
- Schools took the advice of five reports on outdoor learning. T / F
- Outdoor learning is becoming more popular in Britain. T / F
- The report is from the Natural England University. T / F
- Outdoor learning helps students with things like climbing trees. T / F
- Researchers say outdoor learning has health benefits for children. T / F
- Researchers say outdoor learning helps kids with stranger danger. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. currently    | a. group      |
| 2. focus        | b. presently  |
| 3. major        | c. dying      |
| 4. advice       | d. last       |
| 5. in decline   | e. emphasis   |
| 6. organisation | f. usual      |
| 7. benefits     | g. threat     |
| 8. normal       | h. important  |
| 9. final        | i. advantages |
| 10. danger      | j. guidance   |

## Discussion – Student A

- What is 'outdoor learning'?
- What are the good things about outdoor learning?
- What are the bad things about outdoor learning?
- How much time did you spend outdoors at school?
- Why is it bad for schools to only focus on exams?
- What did you think of your school?
- How does outdoor learning increase quality of life?
- Why do you think outdoor learning is on the decline?

## Phrase Match

- |                                    |                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. currently too much focus        | a. outdoor learning          |
| 2. It also increases their quality | b. 'stranger danger'         |
| 3. five major reports over the     | c. the decline in Britain    |
| 4. outdoor learning is on          | d. confidence                |
| 5. put outdoor learning on the     | e. of life                   |
| 6. there are many benefits of      | f. on sitting in classrooms  |
| 7. it builds                       | g. past decade               |
| 8. teaches them to                 | h. benefits                  |
| 9. health                          | i. respect nature            |
| 10. the problem of what is called  | j. curriculum of all schools |

## Discussion – Student B

- Was it better to be a child 20 or 30 years ago?
- How important is it for children to climb trees?
- How can we teach children to respect nature?
- What was the best thing for you about school?
- What advice would you give to schools?
- What are the dangers to children of video games?
- What do you think of the idea of 'stranger danger'?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Spelling

- there is tylnecur too much focus
- social skills, health and tonedvemelp
- over the past eacdde
- taking the deciva of these reports
- learning is on the lecendi in Britain
- on the rmicuculur of all schools
- there are many ebeitsnf
- it builds neoncefdci in children
- Another tegvaanda is that...
- teaches them to crestep nature
- children esxrceei more
- the problem of what is called 'gstraren danger'

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. b	2. e	3. h	4. j	5. c
6. a	7. i	8. f	9. d	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – IT

You think IT is the most important school subject. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important about their subjects. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): physical education, English or social responsibility.

### Role B – Physical education

You think physical education is the most important school subject. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important about their subjects. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): IT, English or social responsibility.

### Role C – English

You think English is the most important school subject. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important about their subjects. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): physical education, IT or social responsibility.

### Role D – Social responsibility

You think social responsibility is the most important school subject. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important about their subjects. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): physical education, English or IT.

## Speaking – School

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important subjects at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| • physical education    | • woodwork |
| • English               | • history  |
| • religion              | • IT       |
| • social responsibility | • design   |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.