



Looking At
Sticks

This week the children showed a great interest in sticks when visiting our local woodland so we decided to use this as the basis of our week 5 inquiry.



The children were interested looking at the different variety of sticks that we had found. Some stated the sticks they were looking at were longer/shorter than the one their peers had. Some of the twigs were smooth where as some were more rough and bumpy.

Immediately the children turned to their imagination using the sticks as objects such as a wand and a sword waving it from side to side.



A provocation was set up with a variety of sticks and different colours and sizes of wool. The children then got the chance to use their fine motor skills and wrap the wool around the sticks. They got to choose their wool and further discussed the different length in the wool and what they thought would fit around the sticks.

Adding the wool to the stick gives the children a different perspective and more objects were being identified as being similar. One of the girls used purple wool and remembered her hair brush was purple and thought they were similar in looks.



Child “ This looks like my hairbrush. My hairbrush is purple just like this”

Child S “This is like the sword in my games and you can use it to get the bad guys”

Child “ This could be a fairy wand for magic spells”

Child E “ my stick is more jaggy than M’s. Can I get a stick like that” – referring to his friends stick which was smoother

The children were given a variety of sticks to investigate the differences between.

Child A “This is the longest stick”. This sparked a discussion about the different lengths and the children began trying to find sticks that were bigger and smaller.

Child B “This is the smallest stick”.

The children began placing the sticks in order from the smallest to the largest height.

Another child had found a stick which they thought was smaller. We concluded that the stick was a lot thinner than the shortest one but still slightly longer.

Another child found a very thick stick “This stick is the fattest” we compared a few of the sticks by their width.

Child C found a long stick which was slightly thicker than the others and began using his imagination and turned the stick into a sword. His friend then got a stick and copied resulting in the two boys having an imaginative sword fight.

The girls then began finding smaller sticks and were using them as props such as hairbrushes and witches' wands. Child D was casting spells on her peers with the girls being turned into frogs and sheep.

Child E wanted string for her sticks. We began with getting three sticks similar in height and width and tied them together making a wee pyramid. She then gathered leaves for the sides to cover it up. “Its like a wee den”.





The interactions with the children were a success and the children were very engaged with the different experiences offered. A variety of boys and girls participated in the activities resulting in a range of outcomes and the activities turning slightly different paths. A lot of rich vocabulary was used when discussing the different sticks and the children were commenting on “width, length, smoothness, roughness” of the sticks.



Talking Tubs

As part of our learning journey into the wonders of nature, the children that I work with had a fascination with sticks (specifically willow branches) and therefore, this was the natural resource that was presented to them in the “Talking Tub” along with a variety of other sticks, spirit level, magnifying glass and measuring tape. At first, there was a lack of interest from the children who chose to engage with the activity but then one child made a pivotal discovery which was borne from their natural curiosity and need to investigate.





Child A

“There is a big, giant hole and that’s where bugs live.”

“I see something down the hole.”

Child B

“This stick is like a little horse or a broomstick.”

“This is a sword.”

Child C

“I’m looking for bugs but there are no bugs.”

“I know that bugs live in trees.”

“I’m a real nature boy, coz I like being outdoors.”

“I want to see inside the cover of the stick.”

Child D

“I like the sticks and if I add another one, it will be much, much taller.”

“I like how the stick feels and smells.”

“The stick is now a different colour.”

“I have stripped the willow stick.”

Virtual Nature School – Week 5 Colour As part of our continued learning journey into the wonders of willow, the children explored the colours that willow displays. Where they were able to identify the variety of colours easily such as yellow, orange, green etc., I decided to add a little twist to their learning by way of inviting them to look through various coloured lenses that represented how other animals see willow. Through doing this, it involved the children to predict how it would look prior to wearing them as well as describe how they saw the willow when wearing the lenses.

Child A (Looking through the eyes of an astronaut) “It’s all black when I see an astronaut’s glasses.”

Child B “It looks like honey.”



“Looking At” textures and exploring how they feel
The provocation that was presented to the children today was in response to their interest in willow the previous day. The children had previously explored the talking tub, this time they were investigating willow branches with greater depth which was exciting due to them having previously stripped the willow bare. Their investigations into the texture of willow, involved them painting the wood, stamping the wood into paint and then marking paper with it and rubbing it with chalk to exposure the fine lines that travel around it. Where this was fascinating to watch, what I found extremely interesting was the children’s ability to compare their findings from the previous days with that of today’s.

I have noted below, the conversations that the children had when investigating the textures and patterns that the willow offers the world.





Child A

“It’s dried out. Yesterday it was wet and today it is dry.”

“The skin of the willow looks like dinosaur scales.”

“The wood feels soft and I like it.”

Child B

“The stick has got lumpy bit.”

“It’s like a tail and it feels good.”

“It feels hard outside and soft inside.”

Child C

“I like painting the willow. It’s fun.”

Child D

“I’m looking at the jaggy bits because they are rough.”

Child E

“It feels waxy and it feels rough and bumpy.”

Child F

“It feels cold the stick.”

“Today it feels rough.”



Child C "It looks like pink and blue."

Child A (Looking through the eyes of a dinosaur)

"It looks normal colours. It's like orangey red."

Child B "This willow is blue, and you are blue too."

"It looks yellow as well."

Child B (Looking through the eyes of a dog) Wow! This is blue and yellow."

Child A "It's yellow. The willow is all yellow."

Child D (Looking through the eyes of a cat.) "It looks black."

Child A "Everything is blue when I use one eye."

Child E "It looks like normal yellow and blue the willow."

Child F (Looking through the eyes of a unicorn.)

"It's like a rainbow the willow. It's so pretty."

"It's a rainbow. It's like a unicorn the willow and it's like a star."





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Child C
“We are strapping the sticks to the willow to make a broom.”

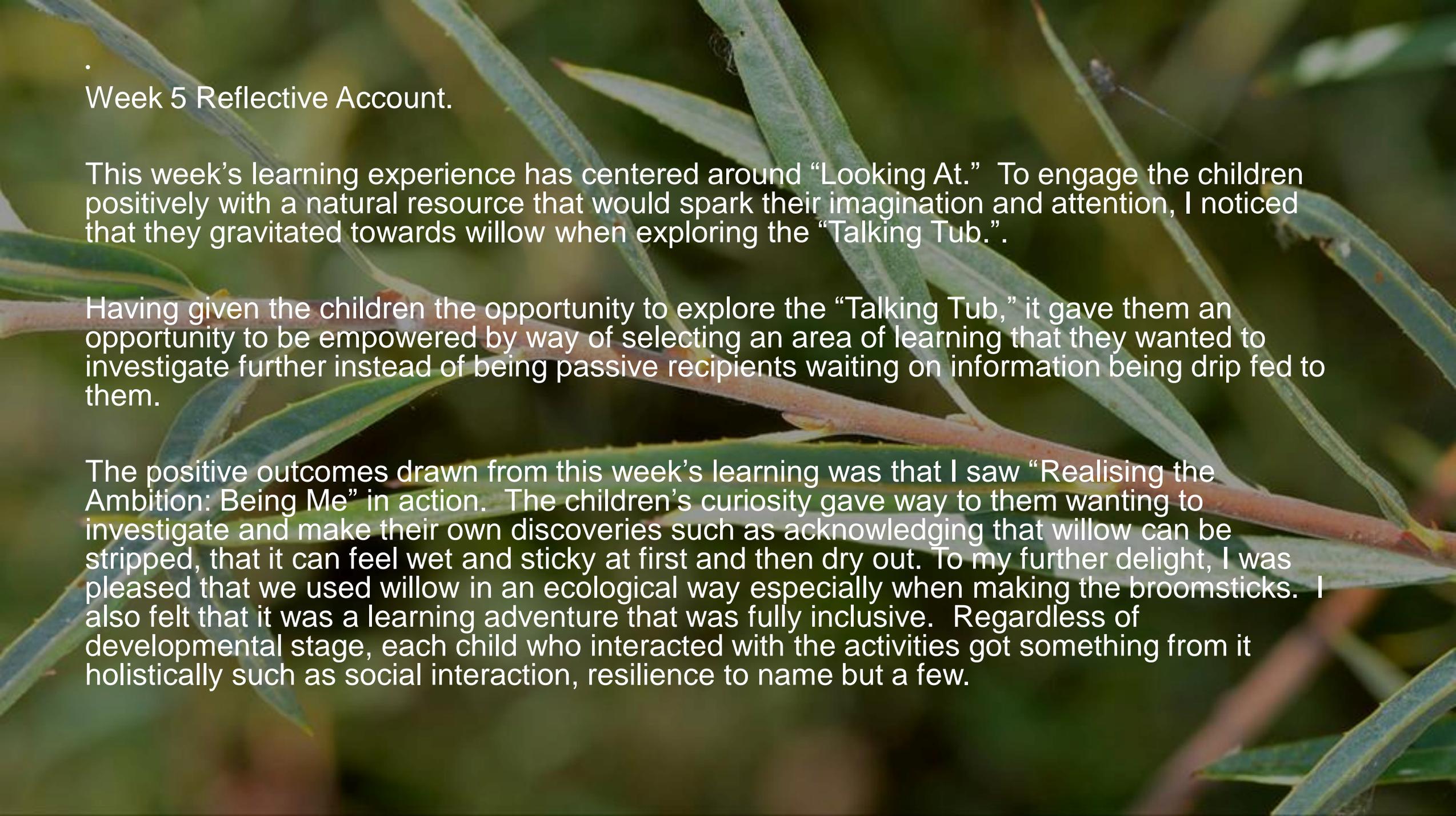
Child D
“The broom is sleeping.” It’s like a hedgehog.”

Child E
“I can fly on my broomstick.”

Child F
“The brooms are a girl broom and a boy broom that they love each other. It’s Stick Man and Stick Lady.”

“Child G
“I’m sweeping the stones.”



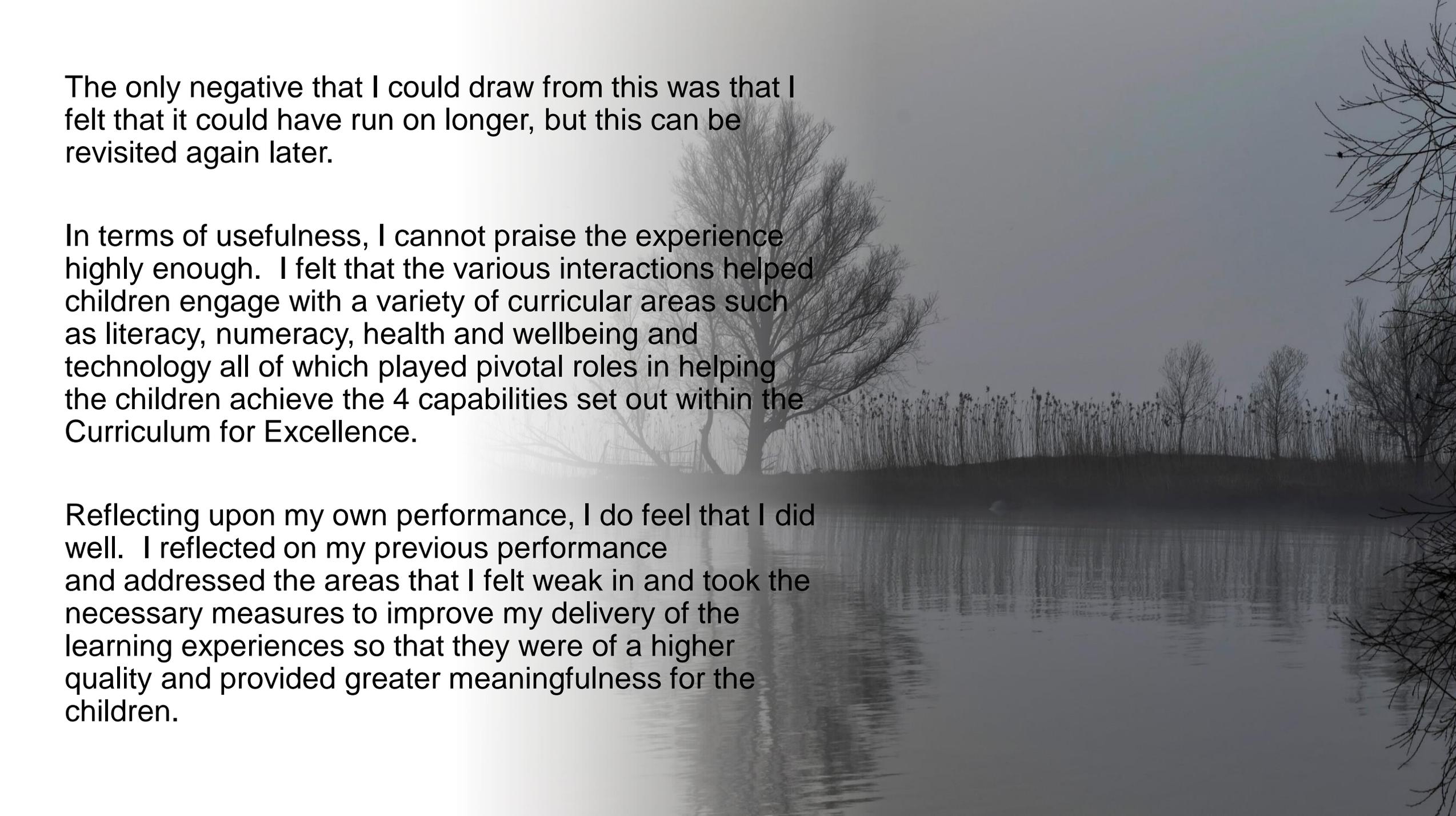
A close-up photograph of willow branches and leaves, showing the texture of the bark and the shape of the leaves. The background is blurred, focusing attention on the foreground branches.

Week 5 Reflective Account.

This week's learning experience has centered around "Looking At." To engage the children positively with a natural resource that would spark their imagination and attention, I noticed that they gravitated towards willow when exploring the "Talking Tub."

Having given the children the opportunity to explore the "Talking Tub," it gave them an opportunity to be empowered by way of selecting an area of learning that they wanted to investigate further instead of being passive recipients waiting on information being drip fed to them.

The positive outcomes drawn from this week's learning was that I saw "Realising the Ambition: Being Me" in action. The children's curiosity gave way to them wanting to investigate and make their own discoveries such as acknowledging that willow can be stripped, that it can feel wet and sticky at first and then dry out. To my further delight, I was pleased that we used willow in an ecological way especially when making the broomsticks. I also felt that it was a learning adventure that was fully inclusive. Regardless of developmental stage, each child who interacted with the activities got something from it holistically such as social interaction, resilience to name but a few.



The only negative that I could draw from this was that I felt that it could have run on longer, but this can be revisited again later.

In terms of usefulness, I cannot praise the experience highly enough. I felt that the various interactions helped children engage with a variety of curricular areas such as literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and technology all of which played pivotal roles in helping the children achieve the 4 capabilities set out within the Curriculum for Excellence.

Reflecting upon my own performance, I do feel that I did well. I reflected on my previous performance and addressed the areas that I felt weak in and took the necessary measures to improve my delivery of the learning experiences so that they were of a higher quality and provided greater meaningfulness for the children.