

# Literacy in the outdoors webinar

## 11 November 2020



Please note the protocols for the session

Please take a moment to say hello in the chat box and tell us where you are and what the weather is like there



### Protocols:

- Mute your microphone
- Turn off your camera
- Post comments, questions and thoughts into the chat window
- The chat will be facilitated
- The first part of the event will be recorded.
- Pin the presentation to the screen to enlarge it

**Twitter: #LearnOutdoors  
@STEMedscot**

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators



# Literacy in the Outdoors

Wednesday 11 November

Natalie White

Learning Outdoors Support Team (LOST)

East Ayrshire Council

Twitter @natsywhite and @eaclost

# Why Outdoors?



- Mess
- Risk
- Space
- Noise
- Artefacts
- Authenticity

- Health benefits
- Connections to nature
- Multi-sensory experience



# Exploring some of the benefits of developing literacy outdoors

# 10 Reasons Why...

*...the value of reading, writing, talking and listening outside for children and young people of all ages is significant.*

- It makes the learning and teaching of spelling and grammar **fun, relevant and interesting**
- CYP can **sculpt and shape their imaginative thoughts**...helps them understand about **creating a setting with words**
- ...**inspiration for writing poems**...results are consistently of a **better quality**
- As we move from place to place, our thoughts, feelings and actions change. This helps us understand that this happens to characters in a story too. We can make our **character descriptions more authentic**
- ...nothing like reading a ghost book or horror story in a creepy place...**The setting doubles the atmosphere created**
- **Functional writing has additional purpose and relevance**
- Real life experiences help us develop our vocabulary and comprehension...**Sometimes concepts that are read about in a book do not make sense until they are seen, felt or experienced for real**
- We're not reading at our desks...**Reading for pleasure should be at leisure**
- **The art of naming**, describing and knowing about the world around us matters.
- **Children engage with their learning outside** and this has a knock-on effect back in the classroom.



<https://creativestarlarning.co.uk/literacy-outdoors/10-reasons-why-i-teach-literacy-outside/>

# Natural England evidence briefing - links between environments and learning

- Substantial evidence of a positive association between learning in the natural environment and delivery of learning processes and outcomes e.g. cognitive outcomes and attitudinal, social and developmental outcomes
- Body of evidence demonstrating positive associations between multiple forms of learning in the natural environment and a range of educational, social, developmental, and mental or physical health outcomes.
- CYP learning in natural environments have higher achievement in reading, mathematics, science and social studies, P.E. and drama
- Longer term and 'progressive' experiences result in the greatest benefits - children with below average achievement make the most progress
- There is some evidence of an association between high levels of 'connectedness to nature' in children aged 10-11 and higher achievement in English examinations
- Extra attention should be paid to supporting participation of those with low incomes to ensure parity in opportunity to participate.

# Wilderness Schooling: a controlled trial of the impact of an outdoor education programme on attainment outcomes in primary school pupils

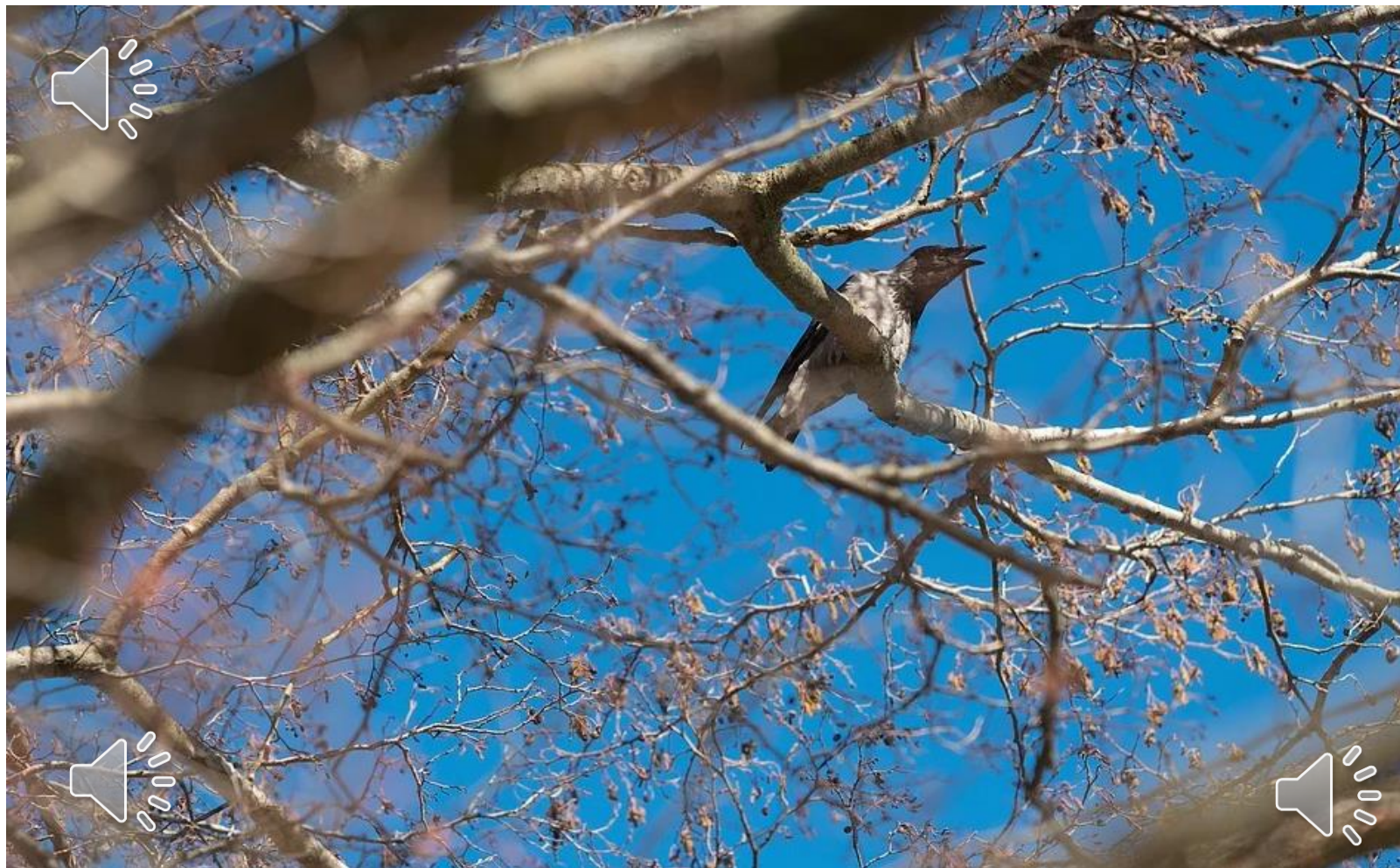
**Key research question:** Does Wilderness Schooling have a positive impact on educational attainment in children aged 8–11 years old compared with conventional schooling?

- Study explores the educational impact of a structured curriculum-based outdoor learning programme for primary school children
- Results indicate that children who participated in the outdoor learning programme increased their attainment in English reading, writing and maths significantly more than children who received conventional classroom-based schooling
- Uniformity of the attainment gains: in each curriculum area, the data show children in the intervention group learning at a faster rate than the controls, evidenced by greater increments of scores over time...particularly in English reading.

<https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/wilderness-schooling.pdf>



# How can exploring sounds outdoors help children's early reading skills?





# How can exploring sounds outdoors help children's early reading skills?

## Building auditory discrimination skills

### Early level benchmarks

- Hears and says the different single sounds made by letters.
- Hears and says patterns in words.
- Hears and says letter blends/sounds made by a combination of letters.

LIT 0-01a / LIT 0-11a / LIT 0-20a

ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a

hat  
cat  
bat

v w

b - e - d

ba - na - na

# How can exploring nature help children's early reading skills?



# How can exploring size, shape, colour, pattern and texture of natural objects help children's early reading skills?

Building visual discrimination skills

## Early level benchmarks

- Knows the difference between a letter, word and numeral.
- Uses knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words.
- Uses knowledge of sight vocabulary/tricky words to read familiar words in context

ENG 0-12a / LIT 0-13a / LIT 0-21a

## First level benchmarks

- Uses a range of word recognition strategies independently.
- Decodes unknown words by locating and pronouncing familiar letter patterns and blends.

ENG 1-12a





# How can building a shelter help to develop children's listening and talking skills?



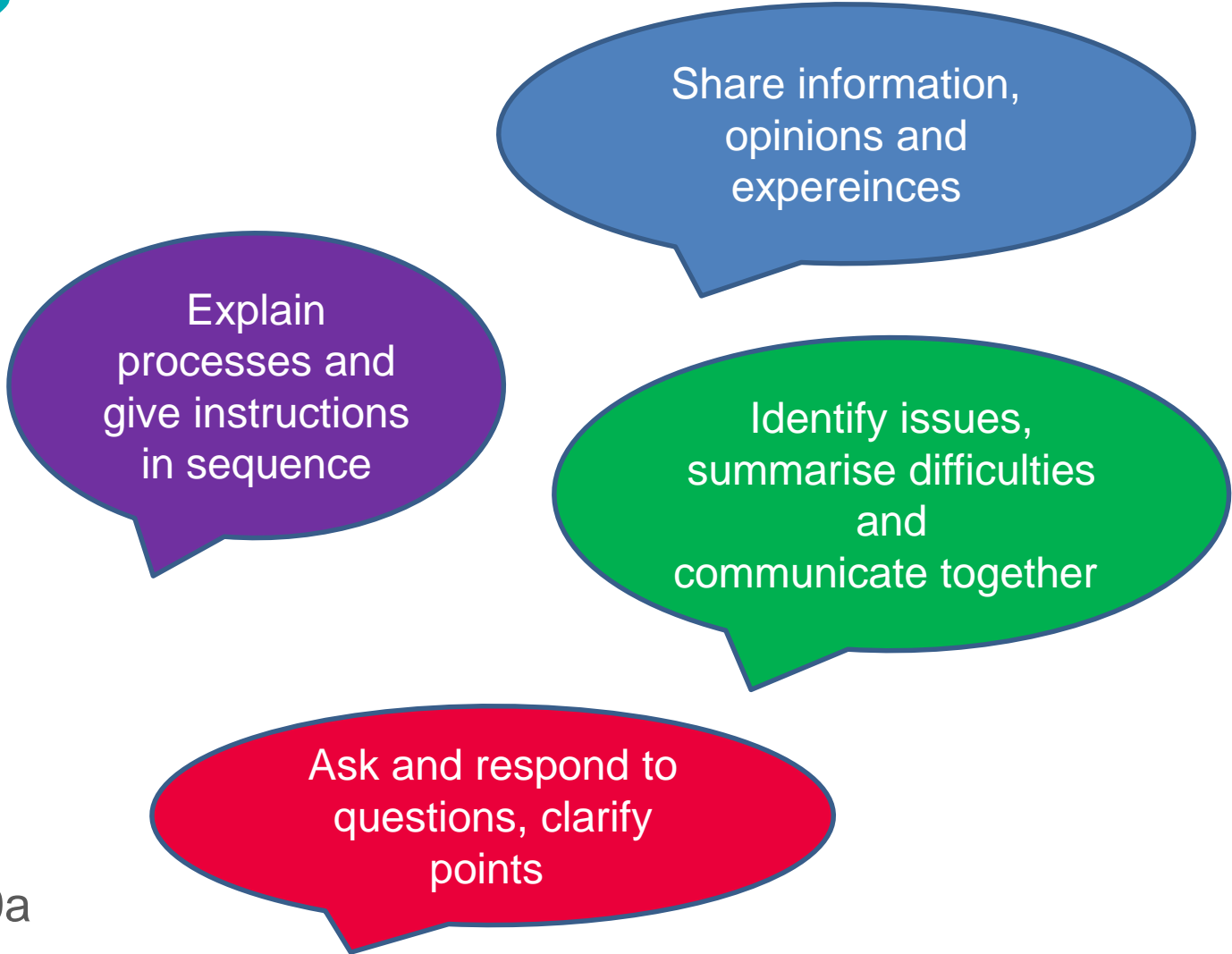
# How can building a shelter help to develop children's talking and listening skills?

## Second level experience and outcome

When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:

- share information, experiences and opinions;
- explain processes and ideas;
- identify issues raised and summarise main points or findings; and
- clarify points by asking questions or by asking others to say more.

LIT 2-09a



Explain processes and give instructions in sequence

Share information, opinions and experiences

Identify issues, summarise difficulties and communicate together

Ask and respond to questions, clarify points



# Literacy at Third Level

## Experiences – reading in context

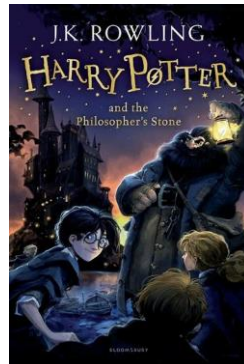
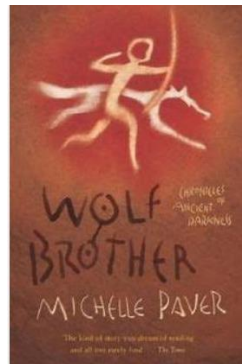
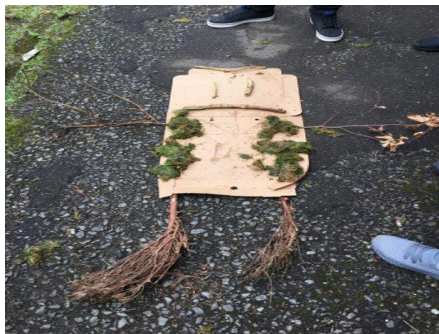
A monster Calls – Patrick Ness

The Doorstep Mile – Alistair Humphreys

Harry Potter – JK Rowling

<https://youtu.be/ToFrjAuyzxXE>

Wolf Brother – Michelle Paver

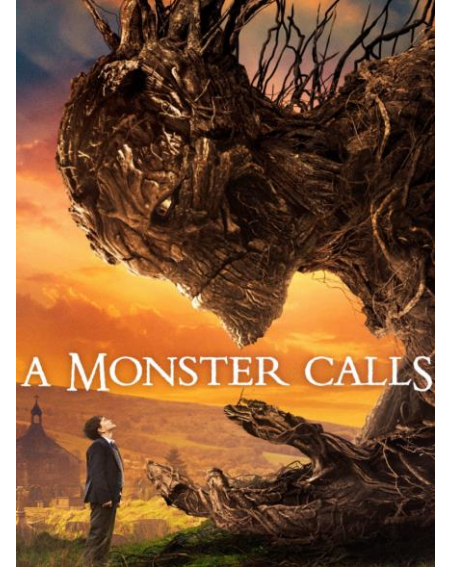


## A monster calls

Chapter about a fight in the school playground. Read in context.

Opportunities for

- Script writing
- Diary entry
- Creative writing





# Literacy at Fourth Level

## Poetry

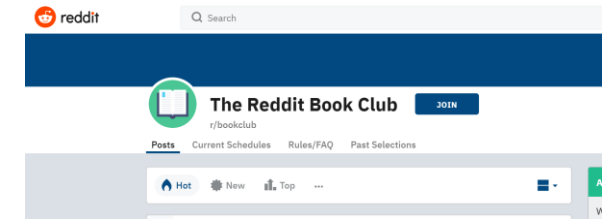
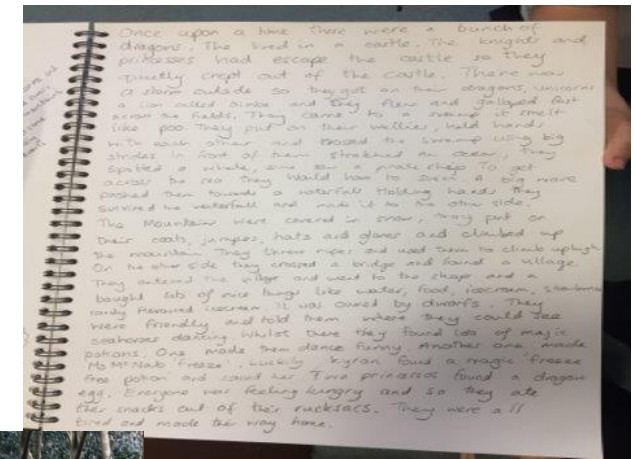
- Assynt by McCaig
- I wandered lonely as a cloud by Wordsworth
- Up early in the Morning by Burns

## Reading for Pleasure

- Listening to stories in different settings
- Texts from different cultures and contexts

## Skills for Life

- Meeting public in their work environments – DYW increase in vocabulary of different contexts
- Gathering research – talking to local population in surveys
- Meeting members of the public – coffee mornings



# The refreshed narrative

## Outdoor Learning across the four contexts



### Opportunities for personal achievement

Children at all levels can engage in a variety of awards

RSPB wild Challenge, Heritage Hero Award, John Muir Award, Gardening Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award....

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/home/learning-at-home/>



### Interdisciplinary Learning

Books are a great way to share learning across lots of different subject areas-

The Lorax – book study

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/the-lorax-literacy-activities/>



The Owl who was afraid of the dark

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/the-owl-who-was-afraid-of-the-dark/>



The Curriculum  
'the totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education'

Pupils involved in design of school grounds using audit tools -  
<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/litter-audit-and-pick/>

Pupils at Park Special School co-constructing their residential experience –

<https://learningaway.org.uk/case-studies/importance-learning-park-school/>



Learning maths at home outdoors:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/numeracy-and-maths/>

So much Science outside!

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/science/>

Feel good with Health and Wellbeing activities linked to some great books

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/health-and-wellbeing/>

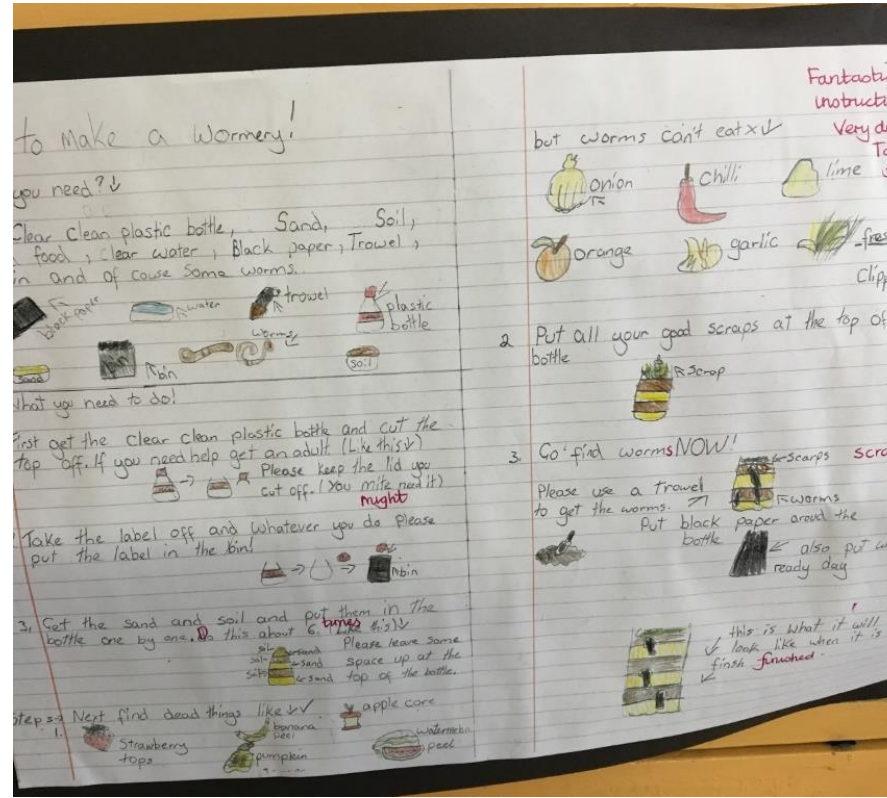


### Ethos and life of the school as a community

### Curriculum areas and subjects



# Curriculum areas and subjects

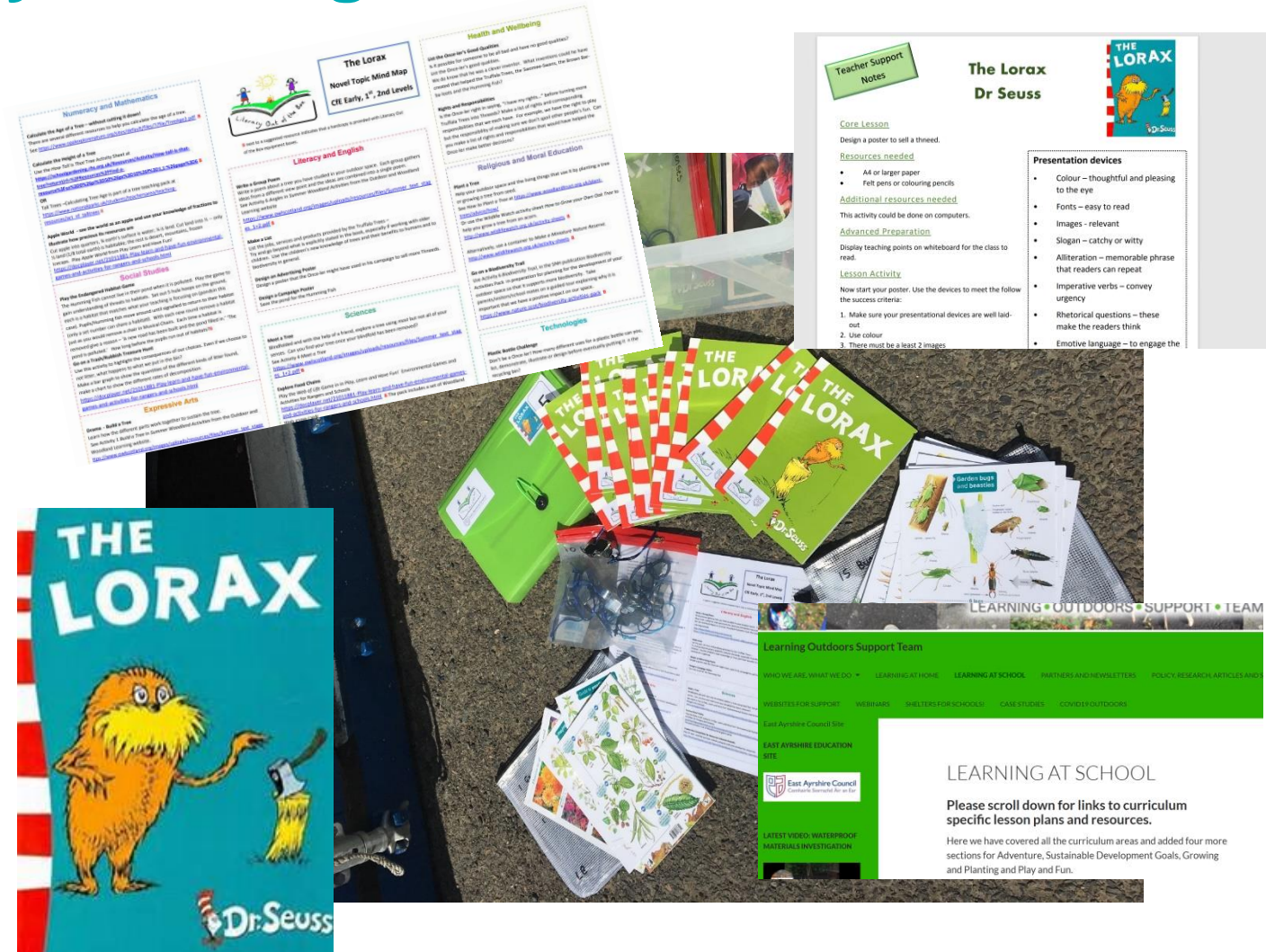


<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ea/learningoutdoorssupportteam/literacy-at-school/>

# Interdisciplinary Learning

## Literacy out of the box

- Identify a book-theme/message
- Read it and identify parts outside
- Start a mind map – add ideas under each curriculum area.
- Create key lessons – sparkle
- Don't reinvent the wheel!



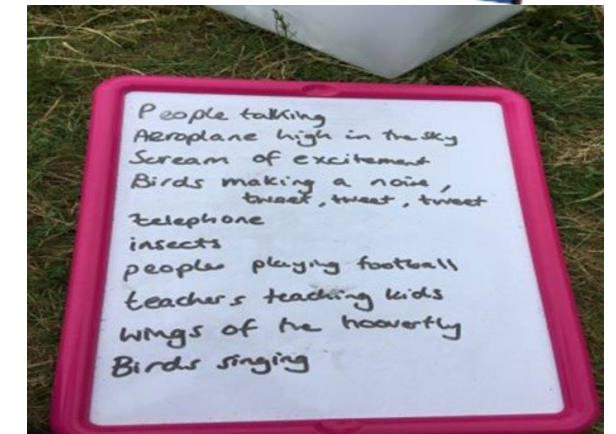
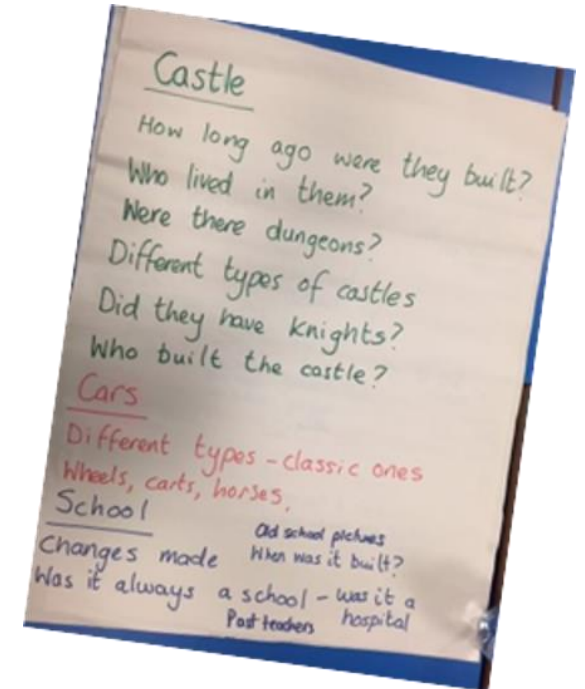


# Opportunities for personal achievement

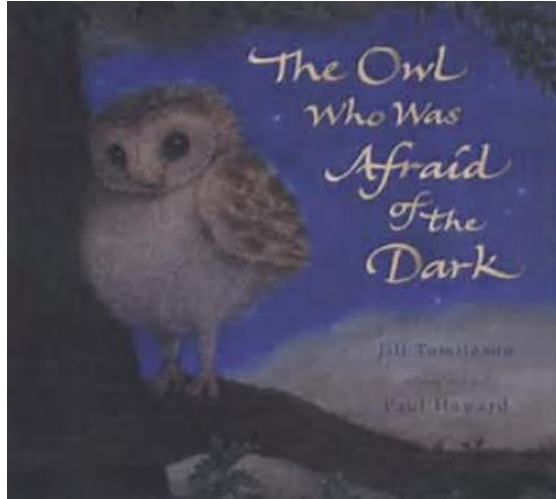
RSPB Wild Challenge <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-teachers/schools-wild-challenge/>

Heritage Hero Award <https://archaeologyscotland.org.uk/learning/heritage-hero-awards/>

John Muir Award <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award>



# Ethos and life of the school as a community

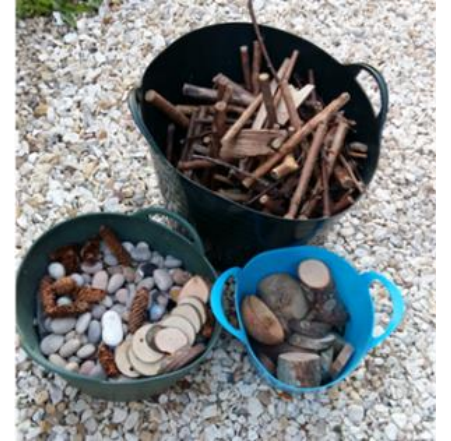




# Quick Literacy Activities

Minimal equipment – loose parts, found materials, chalk, rope, dry wipe boards and pens

- ‘Write’ phonemes in unusual materials
- Phoneme hunt
- Write spelling words in chalk
- Word wall ; adjectives (using senses), comparatives, verbs, nouns
- New vocabulary – introduce a new word in context
- Adventure story/trail



A young boy with brown hair, wearing a grey hoodie, is sitting on a rocky outcrop overlooking a body of water. He is holding a red clipboard and a red pen, writing in a notebook. The background shows a calm body of water with a few small houses on the distant shore and rolling hills under a cloudy sky.

JOHN  
MUIR  
TRUST

FOR  
*wild* LAND &  
*wild* PLACES

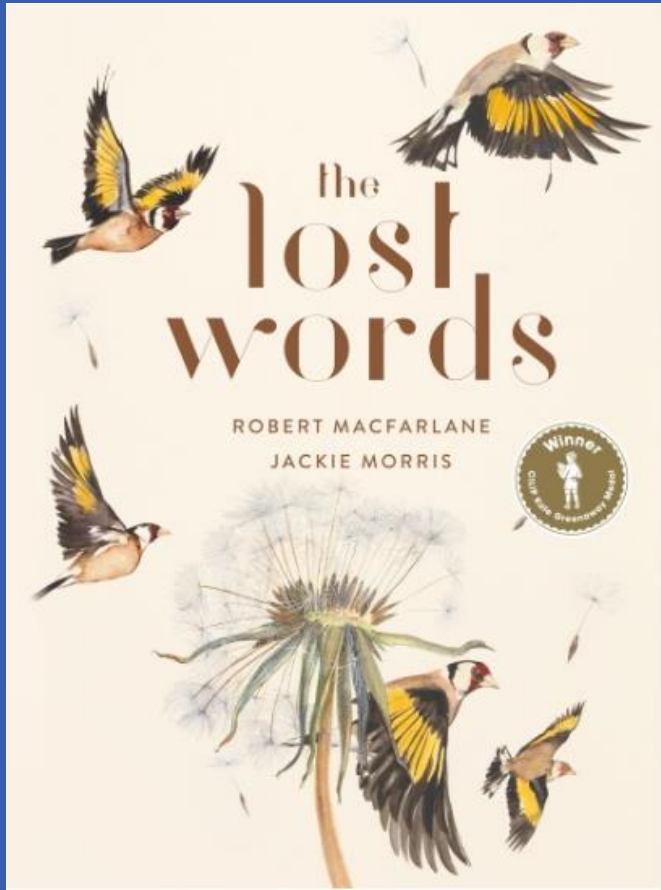
# Literacy & Nature

with The Lost Words

Rebecca Logsdon  
Scotland Education Manager

[Rebecca@johnmuiraward.org](mailto:Rebecca@johnmuiraward.org)

# The Lost Words



*“Building vocabulary and increasing curiosity about language remain core to this, along with providing relevant, real-life stimuli for writing and increasing learner engagement in opportunities to write across a variety of genres. ...The Lost Words can support learning in these areas”. Michelle Moore, QIO for Literacy*



# Explorers Guide - hands on

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*wild* LAND &  
*wild* PLACES



**Wren 2**  
Listen, seek, find, speak  
• Robert Macfarlane reading the *Wren* spell  
Search: BBC Today Macfarlane Wren  
• Kerry Andrew performing the *Wren* spell, as Jackie Morris paints  
Search: Morris Wren Whirrs

#### Wonder words

- What do these mean?
  - furze
  - etches
  - glitches

Can you find any synonyms? Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

#### Seek, find, speak

- What is meant by 'the world around her slows'?
- What is the chief characteristic that the writer conveys?
- What techniques does the writer use?

[Alliteration, internal rhyme, repetition, onomatopoeia, half rhymes, pauses]

- Make a list of the words related to movement. Why do you think the writer chose these particular words?
- What metaphors are used for wren?
- What does the last line suggest?

#### Writing challenge

- Choose a creature that moves very quickly. Observe the creature closely, using a film if a live example is unavailable!
- Create a word-hoard of movement words, using a thesaurus to extend your lexical treasury.
- Think of two metaphors you could use to suggest the creature's quality.
- Create your own spell, using the ideas you have gathered, playing around with the order to create the most impact.
- Practice reading aloud and perform, adding any sound effects that will enhance the delivery.

**Wren 1**  
Seek, find, speak  
• What do you think the twisted lines represent?  
• What do you notice about the thorns?



**Wren 3**  
Seek, find, speak

- Make some observations about the painting and compare with the previous two illustrations.

#### Research challenge

- What is the collective noun for wrens?
- What does the Latin name for wren, 'troglodytes,' mean? Why do you think this name

was chosen?

- Find out five fascinating wren facts  
Search: BBC Nature Wildlife Wren
- Find out about the 'hunting the wren' tradition.
- Find out the names attached to the wren in Wales, England, Scotland and the Netherlands. [Welsh - 'Druid,' English - 'Jenny,' Scottish - 'Dreathan-Donn,' Dutch - 'Little King']



#### Further reading and listening

- *King of the Birds* a fable from Aesop  
Search: Little Brown Wren King Birds
- *King of Birds* by Karine Polwart  
Search: YouTube Polwart Birds
- Compare this with a traditional Zulu story  
Search: Canteach Birds Zulu
- What are the similarities and differences?
- *Birds and Words* by Charlie Harper: compare the ways in which birds are depicted by Charlie Harper with the writing and art in *The Book of Spells*.
- *Little Wren* performed by Kerry Andrew  
Search: YouTube Kerry Andrew Wren

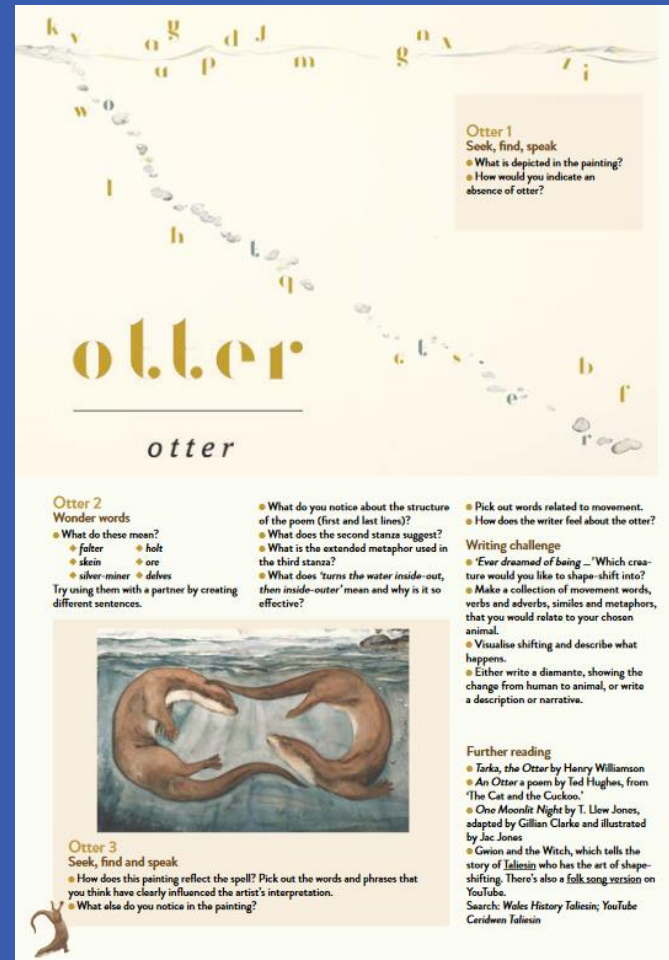


# Explorers Guide – hands on

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FOR  
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*wild* PLACES

Ever Dreamed of  
Being.....



**otter**

*otter*

**Otter 1**  
Seek, find, speak

- What is depicted in the painting?
- How would you indicate an absence of otter?

**Otter 2**  
Wonder words

- What do these mean?
- falter holt
- stein ore
- silver-miner delves

Try using them with a partner by creating different sentences.

- What do you notice about the structure of the poem (first and last lines)?
- What does the second stanza suggest?
- What is the extended metaphor used in the third stanza?
- What does 'turns the water inside-out, then inside-outer' mean and why is it so effective?
- Pick out words related to movement.
- How does the writer feel about the otter?

**Writing challenge**

- 'Ever dreamed of being ...' Which creature would you like to shape-shift into?
- Make a collection of movement words, verbs and adverbs, similes and metaphors, that you would relate to your chosen animal.
- Visualise shifting and describe what happens.
- Either write a diamante, showing the change from human to animal, or write a description or narrative.

**Further reading**

- Tarka, the Otter by Henry Williamson
- An Otter a poem by Ted Hughes, from 'The Cat and the Cuckoo'
- One Moonlit Night by T. Ulew Jones, adapted by Gillian Clarke and illustrated by Jac Jones
- Gwion and the Witch, which tells the story of Taliesin who has the art of shape-shifting. There's also a folk song version on YouTube.
- Search: Wales History Taliesin; YouTube Ceridwen Taliesin

**Otter 3**  
Seek, find and speak

- How does this painting reflect the spell? Pick out the words and phrases that you think have clearly influenced the artist's interpretation.
- What else do you notice in the painting?





The Lost Words with Tullochan and Knoxland Primary





Outdoor Learning  
Weekly sessions  
Literacy based on  
real tasks  
Use local locations

MT Learning Challenge  
New 2020  
Real Learning  
Competition  
100%

MT Learning Challenge  
New 2020  
Real Learning  
Competition  
100%







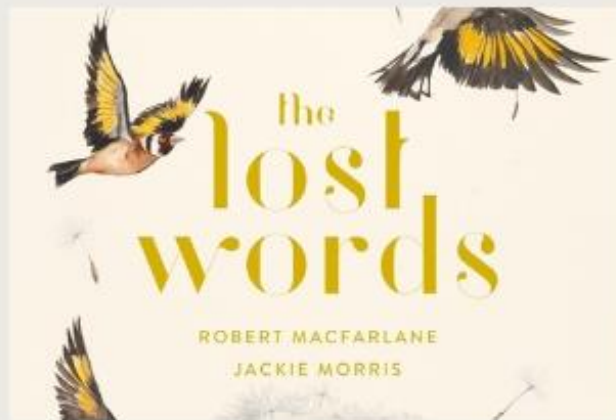












## An Explorer's Guide to The Lost Words

This free guide by Eva John accompanies *The Lost Words*. It's for anyone with an interest in nature, words and images who wants to explore further some of the ideas and creatures conjured up by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris in their enchanting 'spell book'. It's especially useful for teachers and educators.

[pdf](#) | [issuu](#) | [pdf \(single page\)](#)

### Free Posters

dandelion

*dandelion*

Dandelion - The Lost Words Poster

### Kingfisher

kingfisher

*kingfisher*

Kingfisher - The Lost Words Poster



# Resources

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padlet



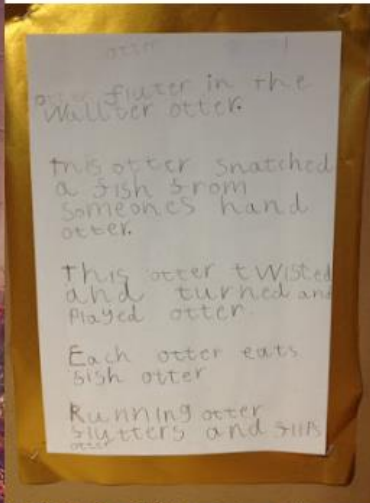
Lost Words for Schools Padlet + 4 • 1mo

## Lost Words for Schools Padlet

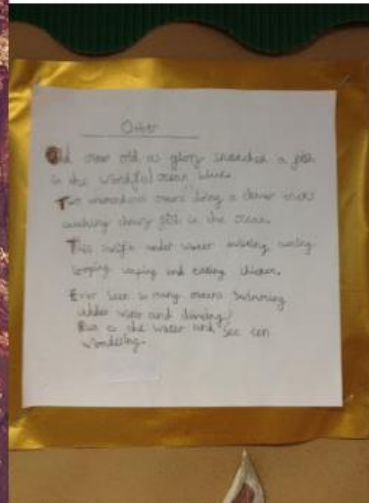
Made to help save the lost words and encourage children and educators to reclaim nature. Posts are intended for use in schools. Please add your own!

SIGN UP LOG IN SHARE

Y2 otter poem (2)



Y2 otter poem (1)



Y2s do otters (2)

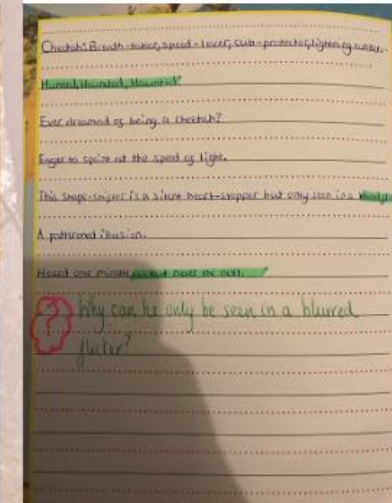


Y2s do otters (1)



First adder painted for The Lost Words. I reworked it, to paint a younger, fresh and beautiful golden female adder, who I met on the hill one day.

Cheetah spell



Bluebell Soul

This is the remnant of gold I remained after gilding the b



A 14 year old's response to plastics in the environment...



hhfwomsM3MR86HBw.mp4  
2:05 video

Seek, Find, Speak

An outdoor theatre companion to The Lost Words premieres at Timber Festival in the National Forest this summer.



Glowing acrostic poem (1)



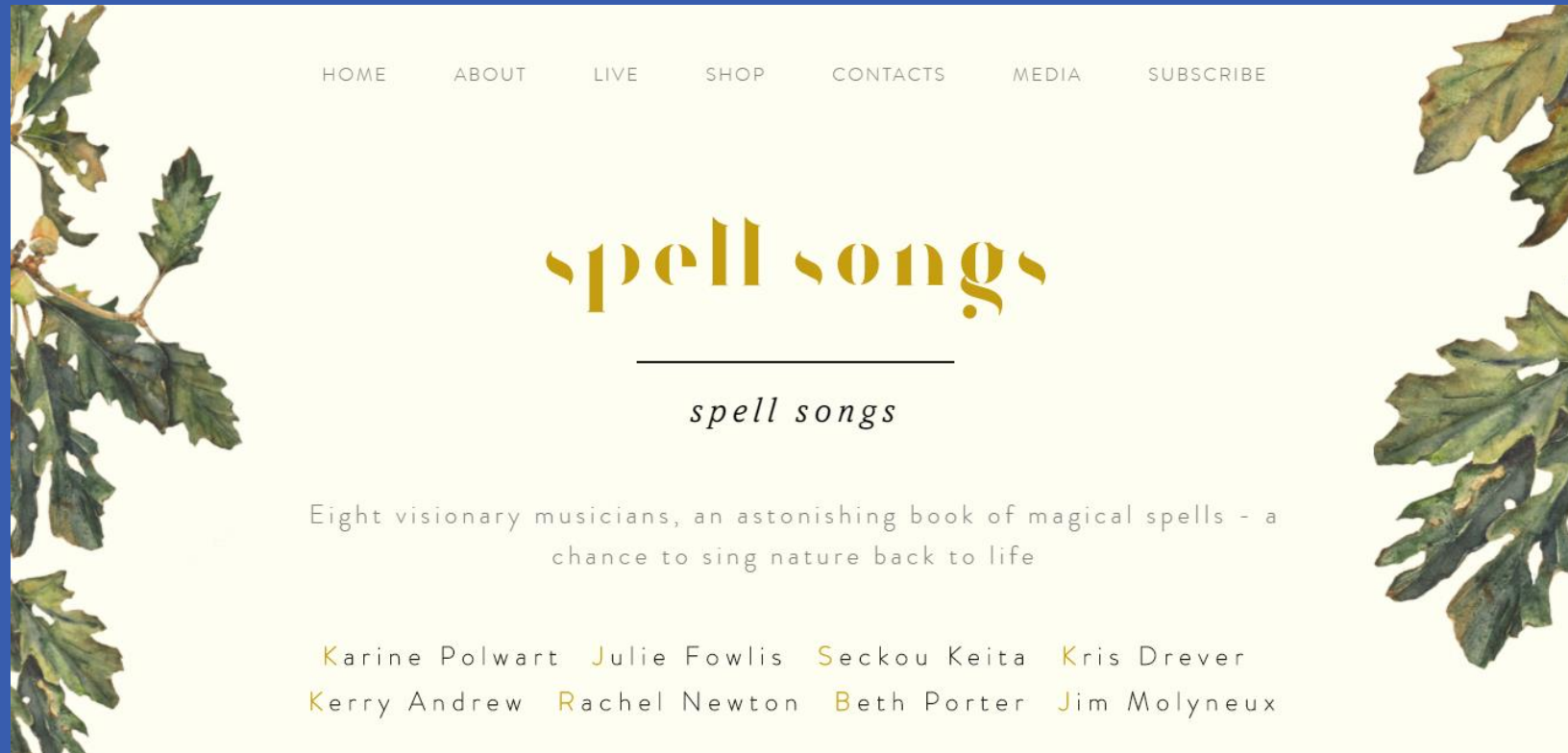
Glowing acrostic poem (2)



Wall display waiting for t  
childrens' work

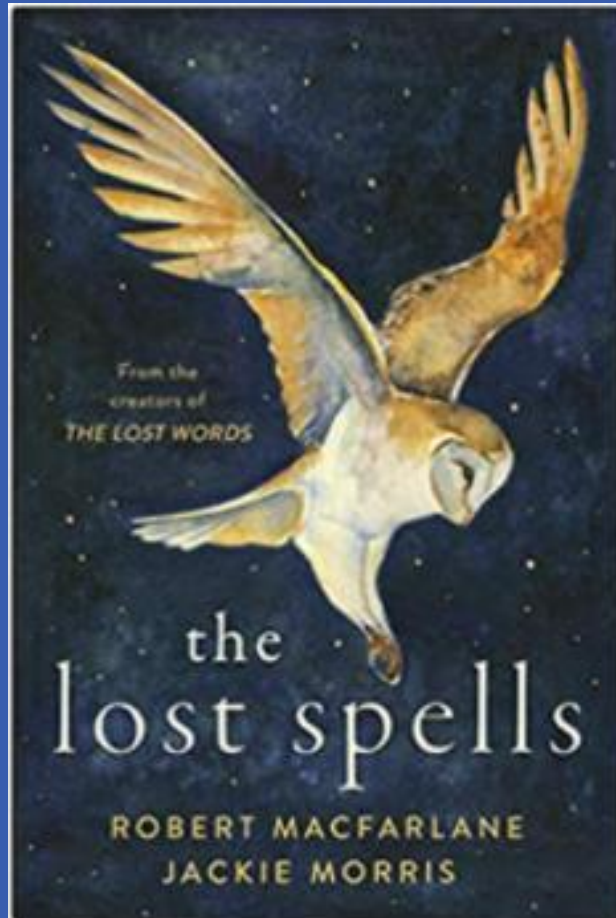


# Resources





# Resources

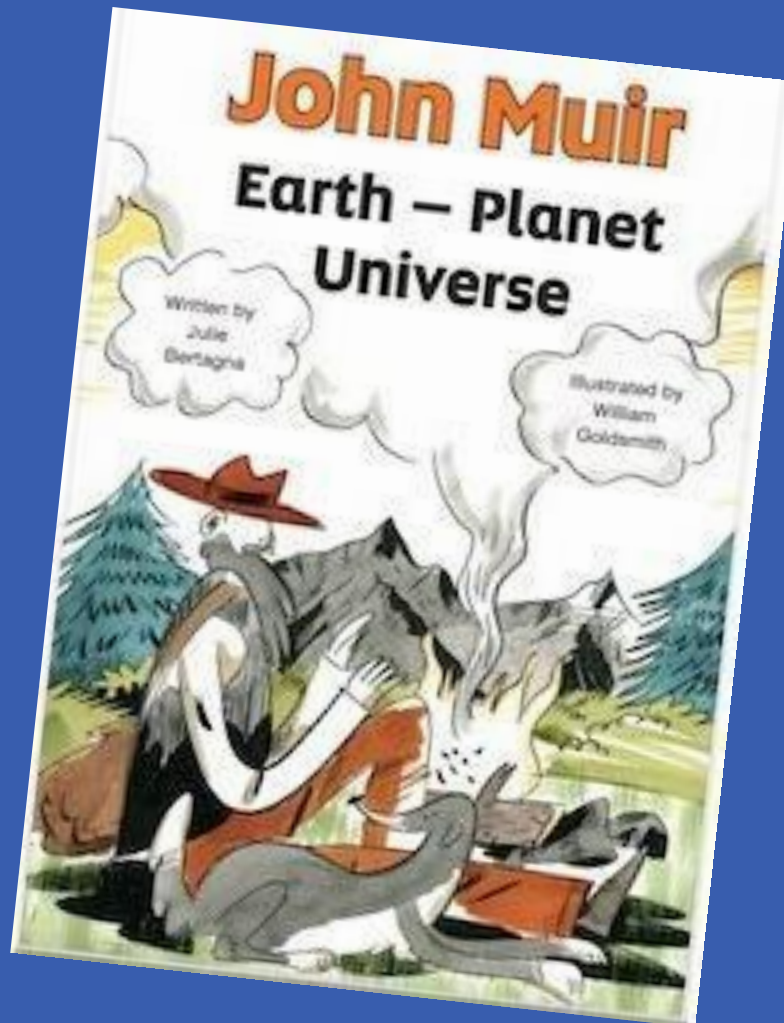


Red fox, moth,  
daisy, jackdaw, jay,  
gorse, swifts,  
goldfinch, oak,  
hare, barn owl,  
**heartwood**, curlew,  
egret, grey seal,  
gannet, thrift,  
woodpecker, beech,  
swallow, silver  
birch

# Resources

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*wild* PLACES



## RESOURCE GUIDE Literacy & Nature

JOHN  
MUIR  
AWARD

wild places:  
DISCOVER  
EXPLORE  
CONSERVE  
SHARE

### otter otter

Other otters river without father – what a  
tugger under out of foot and into water!  
This shape-shifter's a drier breath-taker, a  
sure heart-stopper – but you'll only ever spot  
a shadow flutter, below down, and never  
(unless never) other otter.  
This leafy creature's a drier drinker – with  
mouth as wide as a horse's, black pool deep  
and deep, when its mouth is open and  
steeper, turns the water inside out, then  
its life out.  
Ever dreamed of being otter? That  
otter underwater thunderbolt, then  
it's making history!  
Fix to the riverbank, when dreamer's old  
tree's old and change your weather, just  
you'll other being into other – and water  
live in otter without father or water.



© Robert Macfarlane & John Muir Trust, 2014

"Language is written deeply and richly into our relationships with landscape and with nature: there as the place-names on our maps, and the many names of species, common and rare, with which we share our lives." Robert Macfarlane

#### What is Literacy?

Literacy is traditionally understood to be the ability to read and write. In practice, it's a far wider concept based on communication skills, including speaking and listening. The ability to use language effectively lies at the centre of development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning, our wellbeing, and our sense of personal identity. Literacy skills are therefore of great social, emotional and economic importance to each individual as well as to society as a whole.

In an education context, literacy is recognised as a key foundation for learning. It's fundamental to all areas of formal learning as it often unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities in all aspects of life, laying foundations for lifelong learning, employment and social interactions.

"Literacy is about loving life and expressing it in different ways." Juliet Robertson, Creative Star

Resource Guides on: John Muir, Campaigning, Biodiversity, Wildlife Gardening, Surveys, Outdoor Access, National Parks, AONBs, Outdoor Learning, Sustainability



# Links



[www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/the-lost-words](http://www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/the-lost-words)

Scottish Book Trust Blog:

[www.readingchallenge.scot/blog/2019-02/outdoor-reading-journeys-lost-words](http://www.readingchallenge.scot/blog/2019-02/outdoor-reading-journeys-lost-words)

Padlet: <https://padlet.com/LostWordsforSchools/lwfs>

Use/share using hashtag [#TheLostWords](#).

Spell Songs: musical

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCmmCD0vZd2YueMgn7cv5YjA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmmCD0vZd2YueMgn7cv5YjA)

# Outdoor learning/Learning for Sustainability Wakelet

## <https://wakelet.com/wake/dx8-511rFvLFU03cIV9eh>

enables learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. An effective whole school and community approach to LfS weaves together global citizenship, sustainable development education and outdoor learning to create coherent, rewarding and transformative learning experiences.



### PBL at Home: Wonder While We Wander

PBLWorks

A father reflects on leveraging his young son's natural curiosity to create a project.

### The Lost Words

Johnmuirtrust

Information, links, and education resources about The Lost Words collaboration between Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris.



### The Wild Network

The Wild Network

The Wild Network is on a mission to rewild childhood. There is a growing understanding that our children need more Wild Time so The Wild Network shares stories to inspire and co-designs innovative solutions to the systemic barriers through Wild Labs, so we can all thrive.

### STEM ES

Follow



### Resources for outdoor learning and play — ideas for teachers and parents

Outdoor Classroom Day UK & Ireland

These resources include outdoor lesson and play ideas, for you to use on Outdoor Classroom Day and to help you make getting outdoors part of every day!



### At home | Eco-Schools

KeepsScotlandBeautiful

While schools are closed due to the Coronavirus outbreak, access our online resources for home-based sustainable, environmental education.

314 178 are Tweeting about...



### The Royal Highland Education Trust

Rhet

The Royal Highland Education Trust are a non-profit, education charity that help young people develop food literacy through experiential learning. We work with farmers, teachers, educators and businesses alike to provide the best possible learning experience for children aged between 3 and 18 in Scotland.



### Home - Wildlife Watch

Wildlifewatch

55 tasks over the school year for homework. It is aimed at middle



### Managing Risk in Outdoor Learning

Gov

In organised outdoor learning it is common for there to be a residual level of risk that is judged to be tolerable and in balance with the benefits that will accrue. It is desirable to give equal consideration to risks and benefits throughout the planning process to avoid benefits being eclipsed by a small possibility of harm.



### Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits - Going Out There

Going Out There

Going Out There - Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits This framework has been developed in partnership by the Scottish Government, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE).

### Citizen Science and Curriculum for Excellence

Gov

Education Scotland is a Scottish Government executive agency responsible for supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education.



### Nature Education Ideas & Resources For Teachers - The RSPB

The RSPB

We're passionate about getting young people outside & experiencing nature. From school to special places further afield, we have something to meet your needs



Resources

TEACH COG



# Keen for more outdoor learning professional learning?

**Outdoor learning summary page** <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/a-summary-of-outdoor-learning-resources/>

**Online teaching learning outdoors 2 hour module (SAPOE):**

- <https://professionallearning.education.gov.scot/learn/learning-activities/teaching-learning-outdoors/step-1>

**Previous webinars:**

- HT's journey <https://youtu.be/Oecsj8AXiTA>
- OL across the 4 contexts <https://youtu.be/CeFrR2iLy7Y>
- Using digital tools to capture, create and share outdoor learning <https://youtu.be/YS32oAUJL7w> and a Sway with all the links from the session <https://bit.ly/33ekdJ5>
- Numeracy and Maths in the outdoors [https://youtu.be/dyzhJn\\_M6DU](https://youtu.be/dyzhJn_M6DU)
- Outdoor learning with a focus on ASN <https://youtu.be/8M5pXcpmjek>

# Further opportunities

## Upcoming webinars

- RME and outdoor learning 19 November
- Equalities and outdoor learning 23 November
- Social Studies and outdoor learning 25 November

**Wakelet - Outdoor learning** <https://wke.lt/w/s/beXI3C> and family activities  
<https://wakelet.com/wake/KMW1WM-0qbHCxN8MJACVu>

## Keep in touch

[STEM Nation Webinar Team](#) - joining code kz41xx4



Thank you



# Outdoor Learning Webinar Evaluation

<https://bit.ly/2FwUZNP>

Share your outdoor  
learning, and tag us at  
**@STEMedscot**  
**#LearnOutdoors**



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