

Playfulness as an attitude is essential in nature-based learning because it invites curiosity, openness, and emotional engagement.

Bringing artistic creations and playfulness in our work create the connection to the natural world without fear of judgment or failure.

EXPERIENCE: MY FOREST WALK

This experience uses visualization and the creation of a montage of shapes and colors inspired by the forest walk to support embodied learning, making nature feel more alive and personally meaningful.

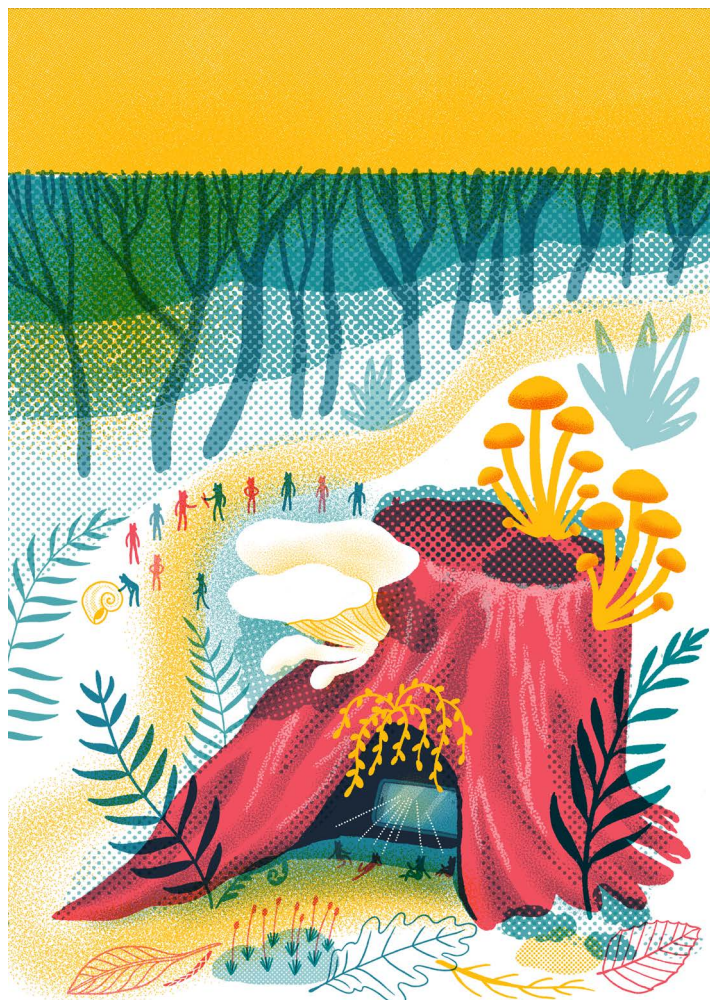
The duration of the activity depends on the time available for both the creative process and the reflection, but a minimum of 45 minutes is recommended.

Materials needed: A4 paper sheets, crayons, chalk pastels, pre-cut collage pieces, glue.

Please refer to the following annexes for the description of the process and the cut-out materials.

CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTIONS ON THE METHODOLOGY

- How comfortable did you feel bringing playfulness into the session, and what does that reveal about my own facilitation style?
- How did playfulness in this experience influence the group's engagement and willingness to be active and creative?
- How can you intentionally integrate playfulness into serious or structured content without losing depth or purpose?



ANNEX 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

Invite participants who have previously taken part in the forest walk to join an imaginative reflection exercise. Each person will individually recall the stories, feelings and impressions they experienced during the walk.

Ask participants to sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor. Invite them to close their eyes — or, if that's not comfortable, they can softly gaze downward. Let their body relax, and gently bring their attention to their breathing. Ask them to notice how the air flows through their body.

20 seconds of silence

Now invite them to recall the forest walk. Ask them to remember how they prepared for the experience, what it felt like to arrive in the forest, and how it was to meet the others...

What emotions were present? What was it like to enter the forest? What feelings arise now as you remember that moment?

10 seconds of silence

Ask participants to reflect on the time they spent in the forest. What moments do you remember? What details — scents, sounds, colors — come to your mind? What experiences did you have? What did feel new or exciting?

20 seconds of silence

Now gently invite them to return from their memory-forest back to the present moment. Make them open their eyes, stretch a little and get ready to continue with a creative task.

Ask them: 'On the sheet of paper in front of you, draw a path — the path you walked during the forest experience. It might be curving or straight, it may lead somewhere — or not. What does your forest walk path look like?'

5 minutes of individual drawing in silence (you can put some relaxing and/or nature related music)

Place the cut-outs on a table or on the floor, and invite participants to choose as many as they like — selecting those they feel drawn to or that connect with their forest walk experience. – 'Now you can continue enriching your drawing using the colorful collage pieces in front of you. Place any piece on or around your path in a way that best expresses what you experienced during your forest walk. Allow yourself playfulness and creative expression.'

Plan at least 15 minutes for creative work

'Give your artwork a title. Choose a partner (or a small group of 3-4 people), and share your piece with them.'

15-20 minutes for small-group sharing

Closing

Ask everyone to come back to the main circle. If there's time, invite each participant to share their artwork with the whole group in 1-2 minutes, telling the title they gave it and why.

If there isn't enough time for a full round, you can instead create an exhibition by displaying the artworks side by side on a free wall surface (you can also write or print the titles separately).

Then, in the closing round, invite everyone to say one sentence about how they feel now. This one-sentence round can be done standing, even after the longer sharing circle.

Preparation Tips

You can either pre-print or pre-paint colored paper for the collage, or use black-and-white shapes and invite participants to color them themselves.

Colored pencils or crayons work better than watercolor or aquarelle, as those may cause the paper to curl.

Shapes can be pre-cut by the facilitator, or adults and older children can cut their own during the session — choosing and using as many as they like.





