

WILD
IN THE
PARK

Navigation Station - KS3

This is a 90-minute lesson. With 15 minutes dedicated to the walk-down from the Creativity Pavilion (based at the entrance to the East Court) to the Peace Garden at the beginning and 15 minutes to return. The times listed are to act as a guide to support you.

WRITTEN BY

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Seven years ago Mark set out to explore rewilding and how it can support meaningful engagement in the world. During this time he led a people powered movement called The Wild Network - for the Rewilding of Childhood, which was born out of the film, Project Wild Thing; vimeo.com/68072823 Together they built a thriving community of mums, dads, teachers and community activists all seeking to take action towards a wilder world.

He is a speaker/activist, strategist, facilitator and brand activist exploring meaning, purpose and participatory leadership through human rewilding and life centred design.



Overview...

The ability to find our way around the land is one of the oldest and most important skills for any human. Long before we had GPS and Google Maps we would learn how to read the

landscape using a whole range of clues. The good news is that we can still do that today and in the process learn a whole load about ourselves and the places we live.

Resources...

- Natural materials found on site
- A compass



Objectives and Curriculum links

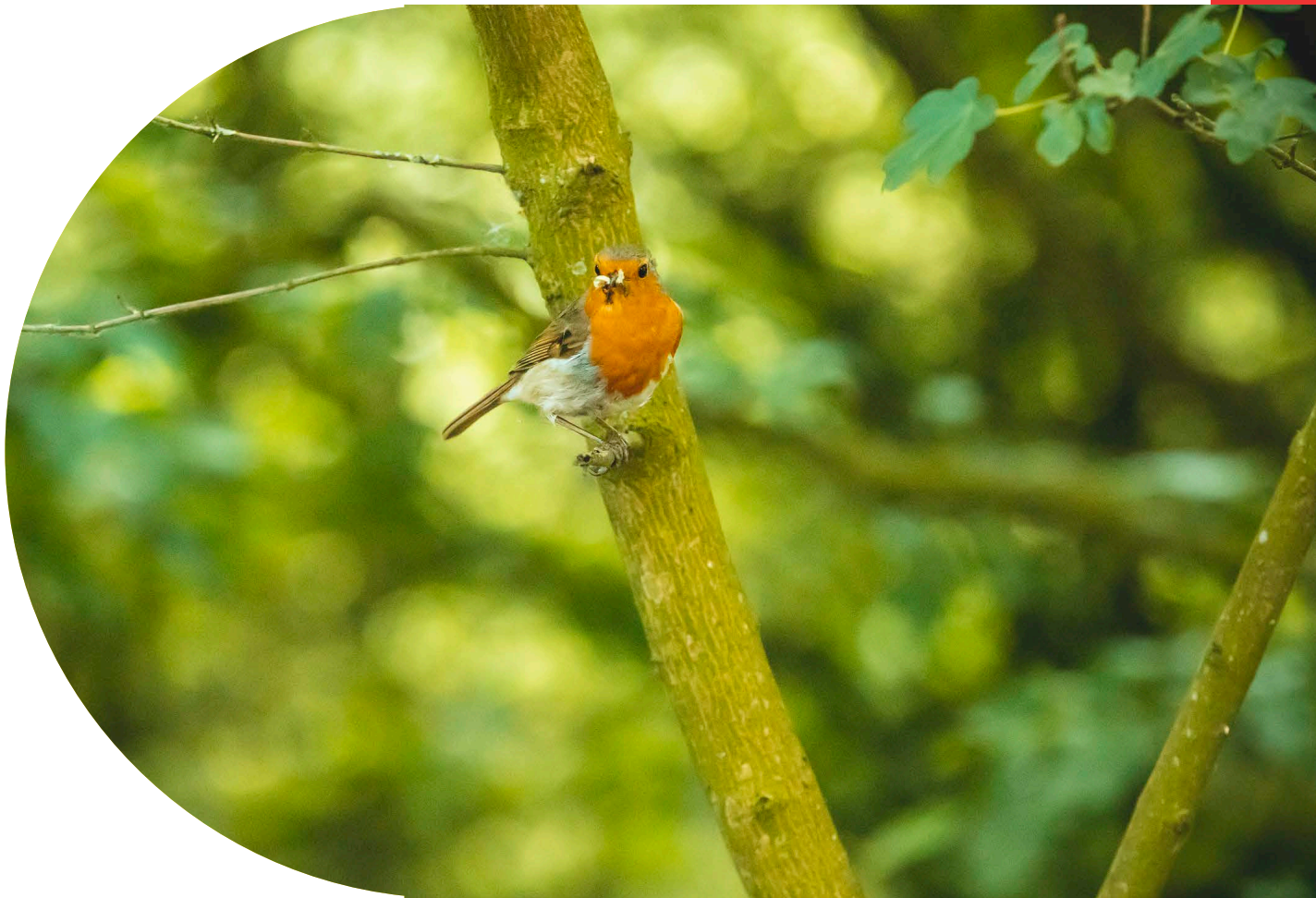
This lesson enables children to:

- Treat animals in the environment with care and sensitivity.
- Observe and recognise some simple characteristics of minibeasts and other living things.
- Work together as part of a group or in pairs, taking turns and sharing fairly.
- Develop curiosity and interest by exploring their surroundings using their senses.
- Communicate through conversation by sharing experiences, ideas and information with each other.

Setting the scene [on the walk down to the Peace Garden site]

This lesson can start up in the main learning zone, as you pass through the Rose Garden heading downhill you will notice a line of trees to your left. These are oak trees that formed the old field boundaries of the original dairy

farm that was here long before the Palace. Ask the children to imagine what it might have been like in those days. What might it have sounded like, looked like, even smell like? In what ways is it different to now?



Directions [0-15 minutes]

When the children are sat in the circle ask them without talking to point in the direction of south (clue - central London is due south from the transmitter hall). How many got it right? How did they know? Was it guesswork or did something else give it away?

Explain the other cardinal directions and use a mnemonic device to aid children's memory, such as the sentence "Never Eat Shredded Wheat." You may want to ask the students to come up with their own versions!

Clear a space near to the seated area, then find an object, such as a branch, to depict north. Ask the children to use materials in the area to mark the other directions.

Now is the time to check how accurate our homemade compass is. First explain what a compass is and how it functions. Then use the compass to test the accuracy of where the children placed objects to mark directions. Make any needed corrections.

You now have your compass - how close were you based on your intuition? How might you get closer?



Natural Navigation [15 - 30 mins]

There are a number of ways that we can use nature to help us with directions. Ask the children if they can think of any?

Trees and the direction of the sun are often our most useful guide.

In the UK the sun spends most of its time in the southern part of the sky. Trees, like all green plants, need the sun to survive and thrive

and you will find that growth of all trees is stronger on its southern side - they are never symmetrical. The side that gets the most sun will grow more densely and appear 'heavier' than the side that is shaded by the trees' own leaves. This effect is easiest to spot in isolated deciduous trees, a big lone oak in a field will usually demonstrate this quite well. Trees in woodland are competing with each other with sunlight and so the effects become confused.



A similar method is to look for lichen and mosses on the trunk of the tree. Unlike trees themselves they like cold, damp surfaces, which tend to be the northern side.

Using these two techniques ask the children to head out into the space and see if they can identify north and south in this way. One trap is

to look at a tree from only one angle and then wonder why it is not offering up its secrets. Each tree changes in appearance as you walk around it and so it is important to make a couple of circuits of a tree whenever possible.

Ask the children to come back to the circle and invite them to share what they discovered.



Making a 3D map [30 – 60 mins]

Now we know our directions and how to find them we're going to make our own maps. First we need to split into small groups, 4 or 5 is the ideal size. Invite them to spend 5 or 10 mins as a group exploring the space (remind them not to roam beyond the boundary of the wooded area).

Ask the children to take notice of the things that they see. What features are there? Are there trees or other natural or man-made objects that stand out? Are there hedges or fence lines? Where are the paths? Take a note of anything you see in as much detail as possible. They might like to give names to the main features

“the wiggly jiggly path”, “the fallen down tree”, doing this will help them remember. When they return, their task is to recreate the site with a 3D map. In an area about 1m x 1m invite the children to use natural objects to mark out the main features they can remember. Can they create a detailed map of the site based on what they discovered?

Once everyone has finished visit each map in turn, ask the group to point out the main features. Can the other students find the corresponding spot on the site? Have some fun using each map to explore.

