

Teaching Resources | Teacher Training



Spring | Muddy EYFS

BEE GREEN AND ONLY PRINT IF YOU HIVE TO :)

Preparation and safety

Each season, nature will bring you the resources that you need. However, if you do not have a natural setting or lack certain natural items, try to collect these in advance of your sessions. Make a habit of going out for a walk at weekends - you'll improve your own physical and mental health, which is good for you, and you'll collect your missing items. You can also encourage parents to get collecting through your newsletters! Make your world one big healthy, Muddy community. You will get an idea of the types of resources that you need each season. The only resource that you may need to buy is air-drying clay.

Weather wise, we will provide you with ideas for all types of weather. The only time that we advise you NOT to go outside is on extremely windy days and during thunderstorms. Otherwise, there's no excuses - get yourself out there!

Always risk assess with the children present. As you enter the natural environment, spend 30 seconds talking about the dangers that the weather conditions may present, such as slippery surfaces and hot sun. If possible, offer the children a solution to any issues, such as seeking out a safe, shady area if the sun is too hot. Keep sticks low and only use stones no bigger than the palm of the children's hands. remind them to use feet first then hands when collecting from the floor and wash hands thoroughly after.

Please be aware that all guidance and resources suggested within this guide are carried out at your own risk. We stipulate that all Muddy Puddle Teacher resources and guidance must be used within the context of your own company policies, procedures, guidance, risk assessments and insurance. We do not, in any way, suggest that you follow our guidance if it does not meet the requirements of your own company policies, procedures, guidance, risk assessments or insurance. It is your responsibility to ensure that any activities or resources used are suitable for the individual needs of the children within your care, including any needs related to age, health or allergies.

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Spring has sprung!

Lets's get Muddy!

We love April showers! Let's embrace the weather, pop on your waterproofs and enjoy!

- Have a rain dance - dance in the rain, either freestyle or following simple steps making a rainy routine.
- Splash in the puddles -which is the splashiest, biggest, deepest or widest? Make use of comparative and descriptive language at every opportunity.
- Find a tree or bush and stand underneath. Gently shake to make a super rain shower.
- Put out small containers of natural ingredients - salt, sugar, flour and oats. How does the rain change them? What happens when we give them a stir?
- Choose a large puddle and throw in small stones. Extend the game as it progresses, Count how many stones get into the puddle and record scores on a chalk list or simple tally. Work with the children to devise some rules for their game. Do we stand in a certain place to make our throw? How many attempts do we have each?
- Make some simple natural boats. Use leaves, sticks or have a go at making something from newspaper. Float the boats on the puddles. Can you add small stones as passengers? This can be used to extend vocabulary at every opportunity. Where is your boat going? Who is on board? Is the water calm or choppy?
- Make a tidal wave - use sticks to 'swish' the water in a large puddle. Talk with the children about what happens and why. Float leaves on the puddle or your own natural boats. What happens when the tidal wave comes again?

Here comes Spring!

Put on your wellies, head outside and look for signs of Spring.

Point out the new buds on the trees - are they different on different trees and plants ?

Talk about the lighter mornings and evenings and, also, (hopefully!) warmer temperatures.

Try to find some frogspawn so you can observe the changes and developing tadpoles. If not, try to collect some and keep it in a large bucket or add it to your school pond!

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Muddy World?**

**Please find safety and
useful information on
our website under
'Subscribers'**

Welly maths

Embrace every opportunity to use mathematical language and encourage children to find their own mathematical problems and investigations.

Welly maths - Compare boots. Who has the biggest or the smallest? Have we got them on the right feet and a correct pair? If there are 10 children in our group, how many wellies in total?

Encourage the children to investigate their welly prints. Set up trays with mud and water in. Children step in and make their footprints. Try using a roll of recycled paper to enhance the prints. Count the footprints, recording with chalk numbers. Can we make 10? What happens if we make 1 more footprint? How many are there then?

Differentiate - This is the perfect opportunity to count in 2's (introduction to times tables!)

Pattern making - Talk about the patterns on the bottom of our boots. Are they all the same? Use a dry area or the roll of paper again to make Muddy footprints. Make a simple individual repeating pattern by printing forward and sideways. Try including a friend. Can the children continue a pattern started by an adult or a friend ? Describe and chat about our patterns.

This activity can be extended to use hands, fingers and if you are feeling brave, bare feet! Again counting, chat about patterns and problems.

The Science in Spring

Water, water everywhere!

Enjoy natural water play - Fill and empty natural containers. Try coconut shells, plant pots or recycled containers.

Puddles - Why are the puddles deeper in some parts of our area than others? Try making your own.

Provide rocks and stones so children can investigate, making a simple dam to change the puddles.

If possible, try to provide some running water e.g. a slow running hosepipe. Encourage children to fill containers, investigate the force of the running water. Move leaves and small stones. Try having a leaf or stick race, using the force of running water to move things along.

What floats and what sinks? Explain what we mean by floating and sinking and discuss the vocabulary with the children. Prepare the activity by providing a few items for the children to investigate e.g. leaves, sticks, newspaper balls etc. Then, challenge the group to find their own materials. Then, sort the items on the playground into sets of ones that float / sink.

Talk to the children about minibeasts that are more active in wet weather. Have a slug or snail hunt? Why are they active? What do they look like? How are they moving?

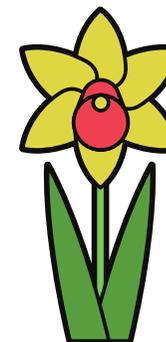
Use Muddy, wet areas to find worms too.

Our feathered friends

Springtime means birdsong!

Listen to the birds singing. What do they sound like? Can you recognise any?

- Have a class bird watch. What can you see? Make a tally or a chalk chart to record what you see and how many in 15 minutes.
- STEM activity - make a Muddy nest. Challenge children individually or in pairs to make a nest. Use sticks and lots of oozy Mud! Talk about which techniques worked best for nest building. Maybe add a few 'stone' eggs. This could be extended to maths activities using the 'eggs' and nests to work on addition and subtraction stories e.g. there are 3 nests each with 2 eggs in. How many eggs altogether? Children could make their own number stories.
- Make a 'human' nest. Use a large recycled box, add leaves, twigs and add human chicks!!



Growing together

There's nothing more awe-inspiring and magical than watching something grow from a tiny seed!

Have a look at what is growing already in your outdoor area. Don't forget to talk about trees, grass and the plants that are around.

Talk about plants that we eat. Prepare a collection of cucumber, lettuce, apples etc Have some outdoor snacks! Show the children the seeds in our food. Look for more unusual seeds e.g. cucumber seeds, tomato seeds.

Grow, grow, grow - be confident to give lots of things a try. Quick growing cress is a favourite. Plant on kitchen paper, cotton wool or soil. Bean seeds are readily available and can be simply popped in glass jars with a paper towel in and sand in the bottom. They need to be kept damp but they sprout really quickly, giving great opportunities to observe shoots, roots and leaves.

Try growing potatoes. You can buy the seed potatoes from garden centres. Leave them in the daylight for a few days so they begin to sprout or 'chit', then fill buckets with soil and plant them in the bottom. You could try recycled or cloth bags of soil too. Keep watered and enjoy watching the leaves sprout. The potatoes will take about 8 weeks to be ready but check the variety that you use. It is magical emptying the bags and buckets to find the potato treasures, then enjoy your very own chips, jackets or mash!



Spring-tastic Art

Muddy colours

Have a go at Muddy painting .:

Experiment with mud from different parts of your outdoor area to find different colours and shades. Encourage children to mix their own paint, experimenting with thickness and consistency. Try adding sawdust to add texture to the paint. Your Muddy colours can be applied to the ground, rolls of old wallpaper or stones etc. using brushes or fingers. Talk about the paint that made the best results. Try writing a Muddy paint recipe to follow next time.

Leaf prints are not just for Autumn. Have a go at springtime prints using your Muddy paint.

Using a piece of light coloured cloth. Old bed sheets or pillowcases are great. Put leaves or berries under the fabric and then 'pound' carefully with a large stone or rock until the colour is transferred to the fabric.

Muddy clay tiles

Try to source some clay either by digging it up, if possible, or using purchased natural clay. Give each child a piece about as big as their fist. Roll it into a smooth ball then press onto a flat surface using the palm of your hand to make a circular tile. Don't worry about any irregularities, it all adds to the unique quality of your tile.

Make a collection of mark-making items, such as seeds, sticks and stones. Encourage the children to search out their own resources to add to the collection.

First, experiment with the natural materials. What patterns and effects can be made? Then, have a go on the clay tiles. Can you make a springtime pattern? Can you make a face? The tiles will need to dry out, then they could form an outdoor display.

Make salt dough with 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water and mix together. Make it Muddy by adding some of our favourite ingredient - mud!

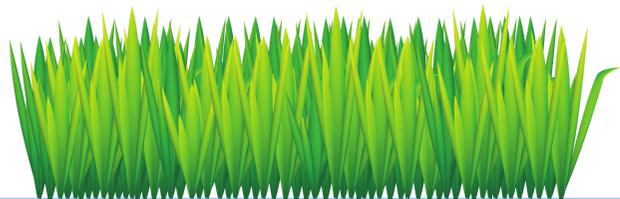
Use the dough to make a base for adding natural loose parts e.g. stones, seeds and leaves. A Muddy take on the Derbyshire well dressings.



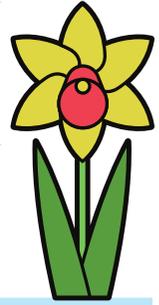
Springtime celebrations

Spring is the time for celebrating could be Easter or a celebration of the end of winter.

- Make springtime headbands or natural crowns, using willow or other bendy twigs and decorate with leaves and flowers.
- Decorate hard boiled eggs with chalk mixed with water and or mud to make a paint.
- Prepare hard boiled eggs. Add onion skins to the water when they are boiling to make interesting and beautiful colours. Take a trip to a hilly spot with your eggs and roll the eggs down the hill. Which egg rolls the furthest? How can it be measured (try using hand spans, foot strides etc)
- Have a springtime scavenger hunt. Prepare a list of items to be found e.g. small stick, shiny stone etc



Home Learning Activities



“Blossom by
blossom the
spring
begins.” —
Algernon
Charles
Swinburne

Get outdoors and enjoy springtime!

- Plant a wild flower area to attract butterflies and bees. Wild flower seeds are available in supermarkets. Sprinkle in an area of your garden, a window box or even a community space.
- Make seed bombs. Use damp soil mixed with seeds and roll into balls about the size of a walnut. Allow to dry and then put them in a variety of places and let nature take its course.
- Pick flowers and leaves, spring flowers are perfect. Put between layers of kitchen paper and between heavy books, leave for a few weeks then peep at them. They will be pressed flat and can be used on cards, book marks etc.
- Have a springtime scavenger hunt. Make a list of items to find e.g. a feather, a small leaf, a shiny stone etc
- Try growing cress in egg shells. Simply pop a cotton wool ball inside an empty shell, sprinkle on seeds. Keep damp and, when it is ready to cut, enjoy an egg and cress sandwich.

“Spring is nature’s way of saying,
‘Let’s Party!’” — Robin Williams

