



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

This section provides an essential selection of **Walking Activities** and **Outdoor Challenges** which should be adapted to suit all class groupings. These activities provide excellent opportunities for cross-curricular integration.

Strand Unit: Walking Activities

- In this strand unit the emphasis is on physical activity in the outdoors:
 - providing opportunities for walking;
 - giving walking a purpose.

Strand Unit: Outdoor Challenges

- Outdoor Challenges are aimed at developing trust, cooperation, problem solving and team work in response to physical challenges.

This is a good opportunity to include caring for our environment:

**Take nothing but photographs,
Leave nothing but footprints,
Kill nothing but time.**

Reference

- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 23, 33, 45, 57, 58.
- Physical Education Teacher Guidelines, pages 11, 91-93.



ORGANISATION

Resources: Colour cards, one per child/per pair – cut up some colour charts (available from hardware shops), or pieces of wool and stick about six colour samples on each card.

Allow the children to work in pairs.

Resources: Stick several items on a box lid, e.g. stick, leaf, pebble etc. Choose items which are easily available in your environment.

Allow the children to work in pairs, but give each child their own bag.

Resources: Photocopy some outline drawings of items onto a page and stick this onto the outside of a “scavenger bag”, either items available in your environment such as seeds or leaves, or items which you have “planted” in advance.

Allow the children to work in pairs, but give each child their own bag.

ACTIVITY – TREASURE/SCAVENGER HUNTS

1 Colour Charts

Walk the boundaries of the area before you begin.

It is important to demonstrate this activity before allowing the children to begin, emphasising that they pick only one of each item and stressing the importance of caring for the environment, e.g. choosing items which are already on the ground instead of pulling them off trees.

Give each child/pair a colour card and a small bag.

Children are asked to find an item to match each colour.

On returning to the classroom children may be given a selection of paints and asked to match the colour, or to use the items collected to make a collage.

Variations:

For junior classes use simple colours.

For senior classes try to collect shades of green, yellow, brown etc. Autumn can be a good time for this activity if you have trees close by.

On returning to class children are asked to mix colours to obtain the required shade.

2 Scavenger Hunt

Walk the boundaries of the area before you begin

Remind the children that they pick only one of each item and stress the importance of caring for the environment, e.g. choosing an item which is already on the ground instead of pulling it off a tree.

Give each child a small bag. Show the lid to the children for a short time, then send them off in pairs to find one sample of each (they may come back for a second look if necessary).

If your environment does not provide these items, improvise! plant elastic bands, paper clips, etc. in an enclosed area.

Note: This is a very good activity to help develop visual memory.

3 Scavenger Bags

Walk the boundaries of the area before you begin.

As this activity is particularly suited to younger children, it is essential to demonstrate the activity first, emphasising that they pick only one of each item and stressing the importance of caring for the environment, e.g. choosing an item which is already on the ground instead of pulling them off trees.

When they find the item, they place it inside the bag.

The items collected could be used to make a collage or for sketching.

Variations:

This activity can be adapted for use with older children by giving them a written list – samples of Scavenger Hunts available at the end of this section. The children are asked to list something they see, hear, smell or feel opposite each letter on their list, within a given time.

ORGANISATION

Resources: Space markers or small cones – one per child. Sets of matching cards – see variations below for ideas.

Copy sets of matching cards onto different coloured paper before laminating them for ease of sorting.

Alternatively write Set 1, Set 2, etc. on the back of each card before laminating.

Resources: 20 space markers, 20 adhesive labels, clipboards, pencils and paper.

Write ten pairs of words on the stickers (only one word per sticker!), e.g. **White/Christmas, Blue/Danube, Blue/moon, Blue/bells, Jingle/bells, Sticky/toffee, Toffee/apple**

Place one sticker on the underside of each space marker.

ACTIVITY – TREASURE/SCAVENGER HUNTS

4 Matching Pairs

Give each child a space marker/cone and ask them to spread them out all around the area, and return to you.

Give each child a card and ask them to place it under an empty marker/cone, and return to you.

Now ask the children to walk/jog/skip around the equipment.

On a given signal, each child walks to a marker/cone and takes one card

They must now move around among their classmates to find the child with the card which matches theirs.

They return to you as a matching pair.

Repeat the activity as often as you wish, either using the same set of cards or changing them.

Variations:

Juniors: Match items, colours, shapes:

- Numeral to dots
- Lower to higher case letters
- Rhyming word pictures
- Full and empty pictures
- Adult and young pictures
- Related objects, e.g. cup and saucer
- Picture to initial consonant
- Tens and units with number
- Pictures of facial expressions to emotions
- Animal to home
- 1+1 to 2
- Picture to word
- Opposites

Seniors: Match compound words

- 3D and 2D shapes
- 3D shape and number of corners
- Country name and country shape
- Country and capital
- Country, capital and river
- Country and flag
- Synonyms
- Antonyms
- Tables
- Compound words
- Decimals and fractions
- Decimals, fractions and percentages
- Irish and English words
- Syllables
- Pictures of facial expressions to emotions/Gaeilge
- Map symbols and words

5 Word Hunt:

Give the children the space markers and ask them to spread them out well, all around the area.

Demonstrate the activity before allowing the children to begin.

Working in pairs, with a clipboard and paper per pair, they then move around the area, one child lifting each cone and reading/spelling the word before replacing the marker while their partner records it.

When they have recorded all twenty words they have to make a list of the ten matching pairs.

Variations:

Alternatively have a time limit and see how many words they can collect. Then allow an agreed time to match the words into pairs.

ORGANISATION

Resources: Space markers,
Sets of letters each spelling a four letter word – for ease of sorting try to have each word on different coloured paper, or number the back of each set.

ACTIVITY – TREASURE/SCAVENGER HUNTS

6 Memory hunt

Repeat activity 5 with the following variations.

- Set a time limit, e.g. two minutes.
- Allow the children to walk around in pairs looking under the space markers and trying to memorise as many words as possible.
- When the time is up they take a clipboard and paper and write down their words attempting to make as many matching pairs as they can.
- If you wish you could allow the children a further two minutes to attempt to find the missing words.
- Make sure they leave their clipboards at the start!

7 Hunt Relay

Divide the class into teams of four.

Line each team up behind a start marker.

Place four markers, well spaced out, in a row opposite each team.

Place a letter under each marker.

On a given signal each team member runs up in turn and retrieves one letter.

The team has to decipher what the word is and rearrange themselves in order **spelling** the word.

Variations:

Juniors: Order by size pictures

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Sequence of numbers- numerical and pictorial | • Letters of alphabet |
| • Sequence of event pictures, e.g. day | • Days of the week |
| • Pieces of a jig-saw | • Months of the year |
| • Words from reader | • Seasons |

Seniors: Five/six/eight letter words

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Irish words, phrases, sean fhocail | • Order by size-decimals, fractions. percentages |
| • Syllables | • A map cut into pieces to make a jig-saw |
| • Sentences | • Who/What am I? place a clue under each marker |
| • Lines from a poem | • Map of school made into a jig saw |

ACTIVITY CARD – SCAVENGER HUNT

How good a scavenger are you? Can you find something interesting beginning with each of the following letters?

B**T****A****H****D****I****G****N****E****G****R****S**

ACTIVITY CARD – ADJECTIVE HUNT

Who is the coolest scavenger around? Try to use your senses to discover the treasures. What can you see, hear, smell, feel? Find something that is:

1 Cold**8 Green****15 Rough****2 Warm****9 Brown****16 Hard****3 Fuzzy****10 Shiny****17 Soft****4 Smooth****11 Bright****18 Smelly****5 Prickly****12 Dark****19 Beautiful****6 Big****13 Wet****20 Unusual****7 Small****14 Dry****21 Square**

ORGANISATION**Resources:**

A gym bench for each group.

Divide the children into groups of about six.

Each group stands side by side on a bench all facing the same direction.

Resources: Hoops

Divide the children into groups of about six to eight.

Divide the children into groups of six.

ACTIVITY – OUTDOOR CHALLENGES**1 Shuffle Pack Activity**

The children must rearrange themselves in alphabetical order according to their first names without stepping off the bench. Indicate whether you would like them to work from left to right or vice versa.

Emphasise safety issues, reminding the children that it is not a race.

As this is a co-operative team event it is important that the children are given time to agree on a plan before they begin. Encourage them to consider how they can help each other verbally or physically.

If anyone steps or falls off the team must start again.

Variations:

Re-arrange according to surnames, height, age.

Re-arrange according to the month in which their birthday falls.

To make the task more challenging the group can be asked to communicate only as gaeilge or to complete the task in total silence, or with only one person in each team allowed to speak.

To simplify the task, or if benches are not available draw a rectangle roughly the size of a bench on the ground or mark it out with tape.

Alternatively, place carpet mats end to end on the ground.

To facilitate a child in a wheelchair or using a walking aid, draw a wider rectangle to give them space to move.

2 Pass the Hoop

Give a hoop to one child in each group and ask them to hang it on their shoulder or arm.

Each group makes a circle by holding hands.

The hoop must now be passed all the way around the circle without anyone unclasping their hands.

Variations:

Use two hoops travelling in the same direction.

Use two hoops travelling in opposite directions.

3. Tangle Twister

Each group makes a circle – without holding hands.

Each person in the group places their right hand into the centre of the circle and takes hold of one person's hand, but not the person next to them.

They now place their left hand into centre of the circle and take hold of another person's hand but not the person standing next to them.

The challenge for the group is to untangle and form a ring without letting go of each others hands.

Some may face outward while others face inward.

Clue: Don't forget that the people whose hands you are holding should end up either side of you!!

Challenge: Can any group finish with everyone facing the same way?

ORGANISATION

Resources: four or five carpet mats per group

Two lines or ropes to mark the “riverbanks”.

Divide the children into groups of about six to eight.

Resources: A bed sheet/strong piece of material (preferably a different colour on each side) for each group.

Divide the children into groups of about six to eight.

ACTIVITY – OUTDOOR CHALLENGES**4 Stepping Stones**

Each group stands on one side of an imaginary river with their bundle of stepping stones.

The group must cross the “river” without touching the water. The entire group plus their stepping stones must end up on the opposite bank. If anyone touches the water the group must start again

Variations:

For younger children place the stepping stones across the river in advance. The children line up in teams on one “bank”. Place a bundle of bean bags on the opposite side. The first child from each team crosses using the stepping stones, collects a beanbag and returns with it to the other side. In turn each child repeats until all have been across.

Decrease/increase the width of the river to make the activity easier/harder.

Decrease/increase the number of stepping stones per group to make the activity harder/easier.

Introduce an obstacle to go over/under/through during the crossing.

As this is a co-operative team event it is important to allow the teams time to discuss their team tactics and strategies, and perhaps even to practice before they begin.

Scenario: A boat person needs to transport a fox, a hen and some grain across the river in his boat.

However, s/he can only bring one at a time – but if s/he leaves fox with hen, the fox will eat the hen, and if s/he leaves hen with piece of grain, the hen will eat the grain. How does s/he get them all across the river? (Mathemagic 5).

Divide the children into groups of four. Assign a role to each member of the group and allow them to work out the solution.

5 Turn the Sheet

Place the sheet flat on the ground.

Each group stands on their sheet.

The group must try and turn the sheet over to finish with other side facing up, without stepping off the sheet.

Clue: Start at one corner of the sheet.

Variation:

Turn the sheet without using hands.

6 Suspension Bridge

Divide the children into groups of about six.

Each group forms a line all facing the same way with one person touching a wall.

The challenge is to see how far the group can stretch out from the wall in a chain.

Children can only touch the ground with their feet and must be holding onto the person next to them.

Clue: Both feet do not have to touch the ground. Do you get a better stretch holding a hand or a foot?

ORGANISATION

Resources: A pair of skis per group
Cones or markers to mark a course

Resources: Blindfolds
String- tied between trees or other items to make a simple trail.

Resources: Blindfolds
A safe area with a variety of trees.

ACTIVITY – OUTDOOR CHALLENGES**7. Team Skis**

A group of three to four stand one behind the other with one foot on each ski holding the rope in their hands.
The group must walk the skis between two markers without falling off.

Variations:

Once the group has mastered going in a straight line they can attempt a 90 degree turn, slaloms, etc.

8. Blind Trail

Note: Before attempting any blindfolded activity, it is essential to do some co-operative activities in order to develop a feeling of trust between partners. Allow the children to practice leading/being led around markers, stepping over lines, etc. – at first without blindfolds and perhaps later with one from each pair covering their eyes with their hand. Ensure that the children have the language necessary to guide someone and can understand the directions given to them. Stress the importance of walking slowly and talking continuously to their partner keeping them informed well in advance of what is ahead. Ensure that the terrain is completely safe, with no dangerous obstacles along the way. Under no circumstances should you allow a blindfolded child to work alone.

Children work in pairs. A child should only be asked to work with someone they trust, and could be allowed to cover their eyes with their hands if unsure or nervous.

One of the pair wears a blindfold. Their partner leads them to the start of the trail, placing their hand on the string, and guiding them as they follow it wherever it leads until they reach the end.

The blindfolded child must keep one hand on the string at all times.

The sighted partner plays a safety role, guiding physically by holding an elbow, hand or arm and verbally by warning of anything they may need to step over or under, reassuring and guiding.

The children reverse roles and repeat starting from the other end.

9. Feel a tree:

Note: Before attempting any blindfolded activity, it is essential to do lots of preparatory work, e.g. allow the children to practice leading/being led around markers, stepping over low obstacles etc. at first without blindfolds and perhaps later with one from each pair covering their eyes with their hand. Ensure that the children have the language necessary to guide someone and can understand the directions given to them. Stress the importance of walking slowly and talking continuously to their partner keeping them informed well in advance of what is ahead.

Children work in pairs.

The sighted child leads their blindfolded partner to a tree and lets them feel its shape and the texture of its bark.

They then lead their partner a good distance away from the tree, ensuring not to walk straight back from it, remove the blindfold and challenge them to identify the tree by recognising its texture and shape.

Children reverse roles and repeat.

ACTIVITY CARD – SAMPLE OBSTACLE COURSE

