

LEAF Land Art

**Stages: All (EY-S6)****Time: 1-2 hours**

Purpose: Pupils will use natural materials to create art, connecting them to the natural landscape. Finished creations are left to nature, connecting pupils to natural cycles. This activity has been adapted from a resource created by the Foundation for Environmental Education.

Curricular links

EXA 0-4-02a-05a, 1-4-07a
MTH 0-4-19a

Introduction

Land art is making patterns, sculptures or drawings in the landscape using the elements of nature. Leaves, flowers, pinecones, twigs, pebbles, shells, anything from nature may be used. The artworks are created outside, in natural environments and can be integrated into the landscape or made to stand out. When finished, they can be preserved by taking photographs. Thereafter your creations are left to the elements of nature, teaching pupils about natural decay and recycling of materials.

Equipment

You do not really need any specific equipment, apart from the materials in nature. But it could be handy to take a basket to collect items, and scissors (either normal ones or secateurs). It is also a good idea to bring a camera, so that you can save your work.

It is important that no man-made materials are used in your creations, as these will either persist as pollution in the environment or end up as waste, which we want to minimise.

Preparation

1. Decide on where you will go to create your Land Art. This could be inside or outside your grounds. You will need a location where you can find enough natural materials to create your artworks. You will also need enough space for the number of artworks you wish to create.
2. Decide on how you will create your artworks. Will you work as individuals, small groups, or create one big artwork as a whole class?
3. Get inspired. Find some examples of land art to give pupils a better idea of what they are expected to do, and for inspiration. It is easy to find online by typing "land art (for children)" into Google Images. Do any of the pictures catch their interest? Ask them what they think it is made of. Would they like to make something similar?

Activity

1. Go to your chosen location.
2. To get started, give everyone the task of collecting your art materials: leaves, twigs, seeds, flowers, feathers, pebbles, shells, etc.
3. Next choose a location for each of your artworks.
4. Now it's time to create your amazing artworks. These can be as big or small as you want.
5. Once you have finished your artworks, review them and discuss what you think of each one.
6. If possible, let pupils take photos of their work.
7. You can revisit your artworks at regular time intervals to see how natural processes break down and recycle the materials you have used. Which materials disappear first, and which take longer to decompose? This can be a good opportunity to discuss how some man-made materials, such as plastic, take a very long time to break down and end up as pollution in the environment.

Extension: Land Art exhibition

Hold a Land Art exhibition and invite others to view your creations in situ.

This can be done immediately after your have created your artworks to ensure they are not damaged by the weather, or later if this is not a concern.

Invite people from your school or local community to view your artwork exhibition.

You could have a theme for your artworks to create cohesion between them, for example, native plants or the importance of protecting nature.

Take photos of the exhibition and share them at an assembly or on social media.