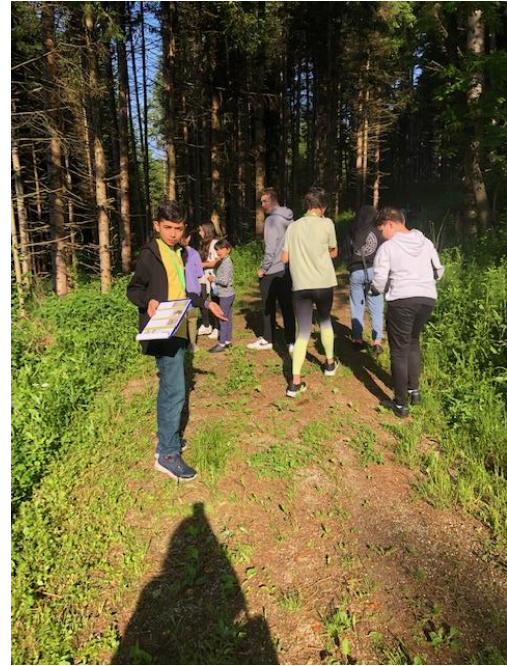


## SOIL AND NATURE THERAPY

Soil therapy, also known as horticultural therapy or nature therapy, is a therapeutic approach that involves working with plants and the natural environment to improve physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This therapy can be practiced in many different ways, from gardening and farming, walking in the woods to hiking.



Various researches, our observations and surveys have shown that spending time in nature can have numerous health benefits, including reducing stress and anxiety, improving mood, boosting the immune system, and even reducing symptoms of depression. Working with plants and soil can also be a rewarding and calming experience, providing a sense of purpose and accomplishment.

Soil therapy can be especially beneficial for individuals who are dealing with mental health issues or physical disabilities. It can also be helpful for those who are experiencing stress.

Overall, soil therapy can be a powerful tool for promoting physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Whether you are working in a garden, taking a hike in the woods, or simply enjoying the beauty of nature, spending time outside can be a rejuvenating and healing experience.

## **1. THERAPY GARDEN**

Due to all the beneficial impacts of soil therapy, we decided to make a garden in our schoolyard.

First, the pupils researched how to make a garden and then which plants and flowers to plant or sow. Their task was to find the plants that would thrive best given the location, climate and season, and the flowers that would attract bees and butterflies.





In addition, we discussed the following topics

- Which plants can be planted in high / raised garden bed according to the season?
- How will we water and take care of our garden beds?
- Who will be the garden beds administrator in the future?





### How to make a high / raised garden?

After the discussion, pupils go into a nearby forest and collect branches and leaves. They find the right place for a high garden bed and two raised garden beds. They construct raised garden beds with the help of a teacher and a janitor. They cut the metal mesh, place them on the bottom of the beds, and put soil into them.

Pupils prepare the garden beds with the help of the school janitor. Then they put different natural material into the high garden bed:

- SOIL
- ONE LAYER of sheep wool
- DRAINAGE LAYERS - branches that are folded in a zigzag pattern, the corners between the branches are filled with leaves
- WATER RETENTION LAYERS - straw, leaves
- A LAYER of fertile garden or arable soil
- LAST LAYER: compost







**How to make a low bed garden?**

The same process was followed to create the low beds where they planted flowers that attract bees and butterflies.

First, the pupils investigated bees and observed which flowers are honeybees.



Then they made a low bed and planted flowers.



## **2. PLANTING**

We have tried to introduce planting and gardening into as many lessons as possible, and we have also set up a gardening club to look after our garden and create different products made from recycled material.

### **MY HARRY PLANT**







## MY PLANT IN A BOTTEL





**DECORATIVE POTS MADE FROM RECYCLED MATERIAL**







## WATCHING HOW MY PLANT GROWS

As it is difficult to imagine what a plant looks like underground, the pupils sowed different plants in a clear plastic bag and then kept them well watered and in the light and watched them grow.



### 3. IN THE FOREST



The forest or nature is a place of unlimited possibilities for gaining experience and imparting knowledge in an interesting and playful way. In nature, children test the limits of their skills and build their self-confidence.

- Improved agility (hard work, diligence)
- a healthy and active lifestyle
- development of motor skills
- a lot of free play, stimulating creativity, imagination, ingenuity, perseverance and problem-solving skills.

The area around the primary school offers many natural treasures, interesting forest paths, meadows and green areas, so that the children are never bored, both during school hours and during their extended stay. They spend most of their time in the school park, in the school garden or on short hikes in the surrounding forests. They love to collect natural materials to play and create with, observe animals and nature, take care of the school garden, eat the fruit and vegetables they have grown in the school garden as part of the activities and clubs in the OPB, run, jump and the list goes on. They therefore use the surroundings for learning and outdoor activities, developing their relationship with nature, gaining new experiences, developing their ability to cooperate, curiosity and imagination, as well as for fun, developing healthy habits and their well-being.



# CREATING IN THE FOREST

We can be creative in the forest too. We can make mandalas, design animals, write our name, use fruits, objects, leaves, branches...



## **MEDITATION - FEELING THE FOREST**

Forest meditation is a healing experience. It is a search for the power of nature, the compassion of trees, the wisdom of water ... It is a journey into ourselves and into nature, where we can finally feel peace and serenity.

Students should find a place in the forest and follow the following instructions given by the teacher in a calm voice.

1. Sit comfortably and close your eyes. What do you hear? Write it down.
2. Does the sun warm you? If so, where do you feel the heat? Write it down.
3. Does the wind blow? Write it down.
4. What are you sitting/standing on? Write down the type of surface.
5. Feel the floor. Is it damp? Write it down.
6. Put your finger in your hand and smell it. What does it smell like? Write it down.
7. Look around. Do you see any animals? Which one? Write it down.
8. Look around. Which type of forest dominates? Write it down.
9. Choose a tree near you and estimate its height. Use the palm of your hand to help you (how many palms does the tree cover). Write it down.
10. Write down what you would take home with you from the forest.
11. Write down 2 verses (a short poem) about the forest.





### Feeling the forest

1.	7.
2.	8.
3.	9.
4.	10.
5.	11.
6.	

EXPLORING THE FOREST

# ETIQUETTE IN NATURE AND IN THE FOREST

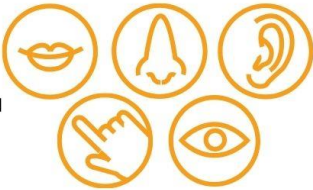


In the woods, meadows, mountains and hills, we are just guests, so let's behave accordingly.  
Draw 5 pictograms what not to do in the forest.





# YOU WILL GET TO KNOW THE FOREST WITH ALL SENSES



Pay attention and write what you see, hear, touch, smell and taste.



# ART IN THE FOREST



1. Find different materials (leaves, branches, stones, etc.) and create a masterpiece. Take a photo.

Example:



2. Make your favourite forest animal out of leaves. Take a photo.

Example:



3. Write your name from the branches. Take a photo.

Example:

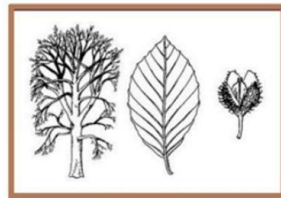




# TREE EXPERT



Use the sketches below to find the trees and write the names of the trees in your own language.



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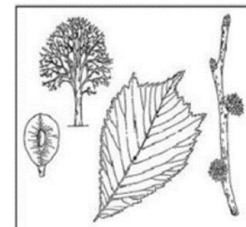
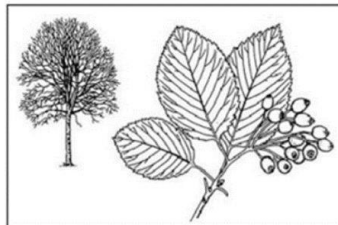
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## **SPORT IN THE FOREST**

Our lives today are noisy, with all the electronic devices and loud talking around us, but in the forest, we can find peace and relaxation. We try to replace the gym whenever we can with the forest.

We start our exercise with a hike along a forest path. We observe the forest, touching the bark and trying to identify the different tree species.

We need to walk quietly through the forest so as not to disturb its inhabitants and keep our eyes and ears open to better perceive our surroundings.



Once we find a suitable place, we start doing various stretching exercises.



Find a thicker branch or trunk and hop left and right.





Running over obstacles - place logs one metre apart and jump over them as you run.

OR

Slalom run between logs.



Balance exercise - walking on a log.





Jumping over obstacles.







Throwing the stick - find a smaller stick and try to throw it as far as possible.

## **GAMES TO PLAY IN THE FOREST**

- **TREE DETECTIVE**



Try to identify as many tree species as possible using simple plant identification keys on the forest path. For each tree species you identify, write down the name and determine whether it is a conifer or not or deciduous.

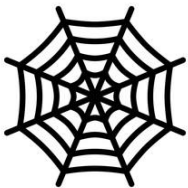
	TYPE OF TREE	CONIFER 	DECIDUOUS 
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

▪ **DO YOU KNOW?**



Observe the forest well along the path and try to find an object, plant, animal, concept, association for each letter of the alphabet in the forest. E.g. letter S = spruce, letter D = deer ... Write down all the concepts, the more you find the better your result will be.

▪ **SPIDER WEB**



Form a circle. Take a ball of wool and tie it with one end to the leg of the chosen student. The one who has the wool passes/throws it to one of his/her classmates, who also wraps it around his/her leg. In doing so, he/she tells the pupil which of his/her qualities he/she likes the most (why he/she likes his/her friend). Continue until all members of the group have the wool wrapped around their leg. A "friendship network" is formed.

▪ **RECOGNITION (GAME IN PAIRS)**



One pupil/child blindfolds himself/herself and the other places five forest objects on his/her outstretched hand, one after the other (examples: a cone, a blade of grass, a stone,...). The blindfolded pupil/child has to find out what is on his palm, but in order to make the task not too easy, he must not help himself by the other hand, or even move the palm of the hand.

- **MEMORY**

How many objects can you guess? The facilitator will arrange the objects on the floor (at least 10 objects). You have one minute to look at them, then you have to draw a small sketch to show how the objects are arranged on the surface.