



Harmony principles in the EYFS

Spring term 1 | The principle of Adaptation



Adaptation

Changing to make everything work better

Nature is in a constant state of flux and this enables natural systems to thrive. The dynamic nature of these systems reminds us that we, too, need to change and to adapt. This learning from Nature is especially relevant at a time when we know that adaptation is going to play a crucial role in helping us regain a more balanced relationship with Nature, both now and in the future.

Adaptation is about contextualising learning. It is about creating a connection with our place of learning and community, allowing children to develop a greater interest in the heritage, the traditions and the culture of the place where they live.

Adaptation is also about the future and the kind of future we want to create. It is important to consider what we can learn from the past and the present, but we can also think about what we might do to create a better future for the community we are part of.

Designing for the future is a key feature of a healthy education.

The table below shows how the principle of Adaptation can be brought into learning in the EYFS and what learning about the principle of Adaptation looks like in Years 1 and 2 when following a Harmony curriculum.

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2
THEMES AND ENQUIRIES	Which stories do we love and why? Links could also be made to themes such as: Traditional tales No place like home The Three Little Pigs Creature features Planes, trains and automobiles	Where do we live and what makes it special?	Why should we change the way we travel?
KEY CONTENT	UTW: The natural world Different environments Seasonal change PSED: Valuable individual Relationships Resilience and perseverance	NC Science: Animals, including humans PSHE: Relationships – respecting self and others Health and wellbeing – keeping safe Living in the wider world – shared responsibilities, communities, economic wellbeing	NC Science: Uses of everyday materials PSHE: Relationships – respecting self and others Health and wellbeing – healthy lifestyles, mental health Living in the wider world – shared responsibilities, economic wellbeing



The printable planning grid below can be used as a framework to establish connections between learning themes, Nature-rich provision and a child’s developing awareness and understanding of Adaptation.

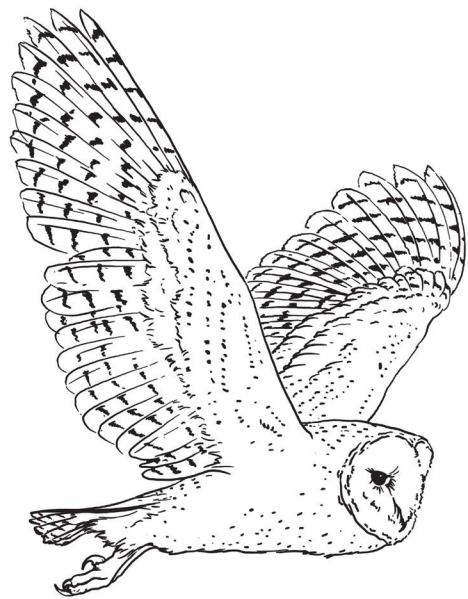
Thinking sustainably	Connecting with Nature and each other	Curating Nature tables and curiosity collections																		
Providing words, images or signs so children can connect with Nature’s awe and wonder, different phenomena, animals and the principle of Adaptation, for example: <table><tr><td>place</td><td>change</td><td>when parents</td></tr><tr><td>local</td><td>camouflage</td><td>were little</td></tr><tr><td>family</td><td>today</td><td>a long time ago</td></tr><tr><td>school</td><td>yesterday</td><td>old/new</td></tr><tr><td>community</td><td>then/now</td><td>future</td></tr><tr><td>world</td><td>before I was born</td><td></td></tr></table>	place	change	when parents	local	camouflage	were little	family	today	a long time ago	school	yesterday	old/new	community	then/now	future	world	before I was born		Designing the indoor and outdoor learning environment to promote Nature connection and connection with others.	Creating intriguing natural collections and spaces to encourage talk, touch and physical exploration of Nature and natural objects.
place	change	when parents																		
local	camouflage	were little																		
family	today	a long time ago																		
school	yesterday	old/new																		
community	then/now	future																		
world	before I was born																			
Celebrating Nature	Learning from Nature about Adaptation	Finding maths in Nature																		
Sharing and exploring books, rhymes, stories and songs so children can engage in the language and joy of Nature.	Providing opportunities to connect with, and be inspired by, Nature will ensure that children will: • Explore the natural world around them • Describe what they see, hear and feel while outside • Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live • Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them	Providing natural objects and opportunities for the practical development and application of mathematical skills in the natural world.																		
Exploring natural creativity	Being out and about in Nature	Facilitating loose parts play																		
Providing opportunities for children to explore beauty, art, geometry and pattern in Nature – and to create using natural resources.	Using welly walks or wonder wanders to spark curiosity and connection with the natural world.	Using open-ended, natural and recycled materials.																		

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Understanding the world: The natural world
Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

We have included examples below that show how Nature connection and a child’s developing understanding of the principle of Adaptation can be nurtured through continuous and enhanced provision.

Thinking sustainably	Connecting with Nature and each other	Curating Nature tables and curiosity collections
Providing simple word collections, symbols or images so that children can engage in the awe and wonder of Nature, different phenomena, animals, materials and the principle of Adaptation. Finding ways in which they can observe, feel and express their thoughts and understanding. In the planning grid on the previous page, we have simply included examples of some of the vocabulary that could form a solid foundation for future learning linked to the principle of Adaptation and connected science/PSHE learning in Year 1. This can be adapted or extended depending on the direction taken by children’s curiosity and interest, individual learning needs and teacher-led provision.	Designing the indoor and outdoor learning environment to promote Nature connection and connection with others. Through the design of our continuous provision and specific elements of the indoor and outdoor learning environments, we can secure a place for Nature-rich provision. We can also create enhanced opportunities for children to make connections in their learning, to connect with each other and to further develop their understanding of Adaptation, for example, by providing: • Opportunities for Nature journalling – observing the areas where we planted a variety of bulbs in the autumn and sketching changes, looking for signs of local wildlife • Areas for pretend play, such as a tree advice and care centre, RSPB office, wildlife rescue centre, where children can explore green careers (National Education Nature Park) and the people who care for the natural world • Sensory play that allows children to explore seasonal change and the wonders of water through opportunities to freeze and observe changing states • Indoor and outdoor tree TV (cardboard viewing screen), exploring: <i>What can you see? Are there any signs of local wildlife?</i> • Connections that draw on the skills and experience of people from our local communities (artists, sculptors, gardeners, farmers, local councillors, historians) • Outdoor performance spaces where links with seasonal celebrations and different cultures and beliefs can be celebrated through music, dance and pretend play • Small world play that allows exploration of seasonal scenes, celebrations, festivals and characters • An outdoor log circle or other places to sit and stare, talk, listen to stories, draw, observe, wonder and to reflect on experiences and people that are familiar to us and how these may have differed in the past • A debate using natural talking tokens • Opportunities for children to plan any changes that they would like to see in their outdoor environment – planning our green future	Creating intriguing natural collections and spaces to encourage talk, touch and physical exploration of Nature and natural objects. Nature tables, curiosity collections and treasure troves filled with objects found in the natural world allow us to blur the lines between the outdoors and indoors, and to further cultivate a deep appreciation of the awe and wonder of Nature. When children are immersed in Nature-rich environments, they are more likely to experience a sense of wonder and curiosity about the beauty and diversity that exists in the world around them. This can enhance their personal, social and emotional development and a growing desire to care for the natural world. Children can be invited to explore the impact that sights, smells and textures have on our wellbeing, to stand, stare and take note of Nature’s wonders or to engage with the questions and observations that these collections can provoke. Examples could include: • Incorporating natural materials such as wood, stones, shells and pine cones into play areas to stimulate sensory exploration and creativity • Providing baskets of sticks, leaves, scavenged materials and twine to create winter wands and stories of winter • Using seasonal observation jars, magnifying glasses, loupe magnifiers and visualisers • Creating a treasure trove of a variety of found evergreens • Exploring winter silhouettes using the light box • Building a curiosity corner focusing, for example, on plants such as goat willow (or pussy willow) from late Feb • Curating images and artefacts from the past • Providing spotter sheets and collector pots so that children can add their own items to collections • Creating seasonal scent jars using festive herbs and spices and exploring how the scents of winter festivals make us feel • Building an awe and wonder wall including images and information books linked with winter, wildlife and scenes from other environments



Celebrating Nature	Finding maths in Nature	Exploring natural creativity
Sharing and exploring books, rhymes and songs so children can engage in the language and joy of Nature.	Providing natural objects and opportunities for the practical development and application of mathematical skills in the natural world.	Providing opportunities for children to explore beauty, art, geometry and pattern in Nature – and creating using natural resources.
Exposing children to a wide range of stories, non-fiction, rhymes, songs and poems can enhance their understanding of the natural world and provide opportunities to explore and develop the language of Adaptation. Examples linked to the principle of Adaptation could include: <i>I Am Cat</i> by Jackie Morris <i>Say Goodbye... Say Hello</i> by Cori Doerrfeld <i>We Build Our Homes</i> by Laura Knowles and Chris Madden <i>Stellaluna</i> by Janell Cannon <i>In Every House On Every Street</i> by Jess Hitchman and Lili la Baleine <i>Otto Blotter, Bird Spotter</i> by Graham Carter <i>The Koala Who Could</i> by Rachel Bright and Jim Field <i>Winter Sleep</i> by Sean Taylor, Alex Morss and Cinyee Chiu Or other examples such as those listed in the National Education Nature Park EYFS Booklist. In addition, this understanding can be supported by sharing texts, images and oral stories that help children begin to develop an understanding of the past and present, and introducing characters from the past using songs, poems, puppets, role play and other storytelling. Festivals and celebrations also play a significant role in supporting children’s understanding of change alongside what remains constant. You may wish to focus on family, love shared through special food and gifts, places of worship, thanksgiving for Nature or other special days and how these celebrations have been adapted over time. Celebrations that take place in Spring 1 and support an exploration of this aspect of the principle of Adaptation, could include: • RSPB Big Schools’ Birdwatch • Lohri (Punjabi folk festival marking end of winter) • Tu Bishvat (Jewish New Year for Trees) • Chinese New Year • Valentine’s (Love of Nature)	Nature provides us with a boundless diversity of natural objects (such as pine cones, leaves, acorns, conkers etc) that can be used when exploring recurring patterns, subitising, counting and number bonds. Examples of continuous and enhanced provision that link mathematical development with the principle of Adaptation could include: • Following recipes linked with seasonal foods and celebrations • Making pattern garlands using found natural objects • Comparing and measuring evergreen collections • Counting buds on goat willow, emerging bulbs, tallies of local birds and wildlife • Ordering the sizes of natural frozen hanging decorations and ornaments • Natural winter counting songs • Finding 2D shapes within 3D winter silhouette play • Using egg box number frames and two natural seasonal objects to create number bonds • Exploring resources on the National Education Nature Park website such as camouflage caterpillars	Creative areas can be enhanced with a range of natural resources that will help children to explore, look for and notice the beauty and patterns that exist within the natural world and the impact that this has on their wellbeing. Examples of continuous and enhanced provision that link creative development with the principle of Adaptation could include: • Collecting seasonal colour palettes • Creating footwear paint prints to compare with animal footprints, exploring: <i>How have humans and animals had to adapt to their environments?</i> • Finding the geometry in the cross-section of seasonal fruit and animal skin patterns • Exploring the music and dance of winter festivals and celebrations • Investigating sounds causing a vibration • Creating Nature valentines – ephemeral hearts made from natural materials (allowing our creations to weather or blow away in the wind) • Creating natural hearts for a ‘Green Heart Day’, when children can make a pledge for the planet that involves adaptation • Taking part in scavenger hunts to make natural art installations linked to the celebration of trees, local birds • Engaging in Nature journalling through the seasons – recording the signs of winter or tree observational drawings (these can be revisited regularly through the year to note the seasonal changes) • Creating songs and rhymes to celebrate trees • Composing rhythms using tree stump snare drums

Being out and about in Nature	Facilitating loose parts play
Using welly walks or wonder wanders to spark curiosity and connection with the natural world.	Using open-ended, natural and recycled materials.
Welly walks or wonder wanders provide a wealth of opportunities to engage with the natural world and to nurture an increasing awareness and love of Nature. Guiding explorations and supporting children’s developing curiosity can also lead to further explorations within the school and home environments. Examples of guidance that could spark curiosity and connection while exploring Adaptation within the local area could include: • Engaging in bird spotting – focusing on how birds behave differently through the seasons • Investigating: <i>Who lives in a home like this?</i> using guides such as animal homes in the winter, poos and other clues, mammal spotter and animal tracks • Looking at how we dress differently when we go outdoors through the seasons • Identifying trees in winter using activities such as finding your tree twin, twig-spotting or The Woodland Trust’s tree iDials • Visiting a local area that has historical importance • Exploring creative responses to a place • Going on a tiny treasure hunt, exploring: <i>How many tiny natural items can you fit inside a matchbox?</i> • Identifying living things around us using the Woodland Trust’s spotter sheets for winter • Building a cosy winter home for woodland elves and fairies • Making a journey stick • Playing colour bingo • Collecting a selection of different bark rubbings	The use of natural, open-ended and recycled materials to support physical development provides a perfect opportunity to introduce the language of sustainability within play. These materials can be used for larger creations, constructions and diagrams, and children can be encouraged to think about and explain where these materials have come from and why they have been chosen. Provision designed to encourage a growing understanding of sustainability and Adaptation could include: • Building a collection of objects and materials such as bricks, logs, rocks, repurposed tyres, pallets, crates, clay and rope ends that can be used by children to create ways to represent local wildlife • Playing insect Olympics • Gathering a store of recycled materials for large art projects, such as creating trees or Nature valentines • A bank of dressing-up clothes that can be reused to create vignettes around seasonal celebrations • Building shelters for the Three Little Pigs and opportunities to transport things up and down on different levels (slopes, hills and steps) • Creating our own dens and allowing times for stillness and quiet • Exploring resources on the National Education Nature Park website such as Nature’s loose parts or a loose parts challenge

