



Games, ideas
and activities for

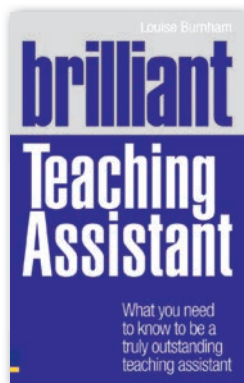
**Primary
Outdoor
Learning**

Paul Barron

Second Edition

the brilliant series

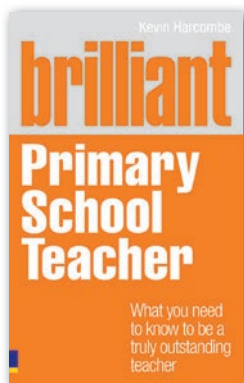
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to the next one.**

Outdoor Chair



Designing an outdoor chair or bench can be an exciting challenge, especially when the project is set in a real life context. The children will design an outdoor chair for the school grounds based upon a real need. The best design/s can be built and installed, with help from the children.

Suitable for

KS1, KS2

Aims

- To design an object using drawings and labels.
- To generate ideas for products after thinking about who will use them and what they will be used for.



Resources

- Design sheets
- Pencils
- Rulers
- Real examples and photographs of outdoor chairs and benches
- Digital camera and printer (optional)

What to do

1. Explain to the children that they are going to be designing a new outdoor chair or bench for the school grounds, and the best design/s will actually be built and installed at school (optional).
2. Invite the children to decide upon appropriate locations for the new chair/bench to be positioned. At this point they could take photographs of their chosen spot to include in their design work later on.



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- 3.** Examine existing chairs and benches by looking at ones in or near to the school grounds. Discuss the features of some of the chairs/benches studied such as legs, seat, back, patterns, finish, materials used etc. Also discuss the children's opinions, likes and dislikes of the examples studied. As further research, the children could search for images on the internet using search terms such as: 'oak bench', 'garden seat', 'wooden outdoor chair'.
- 4.** The children can then work individually or in pairs to design their own outdoor chair. The details of the design process will depend upon the age and ability of your class. A design sheet for younger children may just include a sketch and some labels. Here are some suggestions of things to include on a design sheet which older children could complete:
- a. Brief** – a short description of the task
 - b. Notes** – details of research findings from examining existing chairs
 - c. Location** – a photograph and description of the spot where the new chair will be positioned
 - d. Purpose** – is the chair going to be used for storytelling/eating/looking at a view/sketching etc.?
 - e. Drawings** – rough sketches of ideas for the new outdoor chair
 - f. Final design** – detailed drawing with labels to explain key features, materials and construction thoughts
 - g. Views** – a bird's-eye and side elevation of the chair
 - h. Dimensions** – the size of the proposed bench including height, depth, width and seat height
- 5.** Once the children are happy with their design, you could invite them to share and pitch their designs to the rest of the class, and optionally, also to the headteacher or a governor.
- 6.** The next stage is to choose the winning design/s. This could be done by the class teacher, headteacher or governors. Alternatively, ask the children to vote for their favourite design/s.
- 7.** Once the winning design/s are chosen, then you have several options on how to get the chair/bench made:
- Invite any parents who have carpentry skills to make the design.
 - Commission a local carpenter to make the design.
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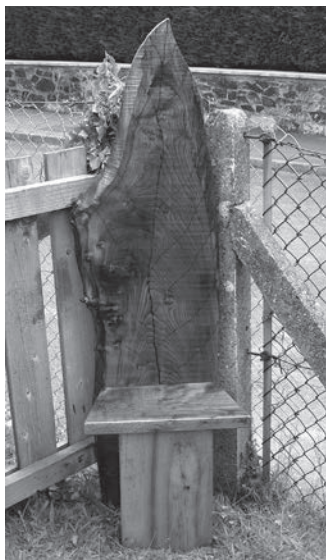
- Commission a specialist outdoor chairmaker such as www.oldforgewoodcraft.com to make the design/s. Here the children can have regular email/video-conferencing contact with the carpenter before, during and after; and they can be involved in the design and manufacturing process as much as possible.

8. Once the new chair/s are complete, they can be installed in their new location and the children can evaluate the results.



Variations

- Why not take the design process further and ask older children to specify the kind of joints they would use to make the chair?
- You could allow the children to make scale models of their proposed design.
- How about having a plaque made which details the children's/designer's names and the date of construction?
- Invite the local press along to report on the project and take photos of the new chair/s being unveiled.



Seasons Pictures



Seasons Pictures are a useful way to help younger children recognise the effects which different seasons have upon the landscape/surrounding area/environment. For older children, Seasons Pictures can be a great way to experiment with different art tools and techniques or provide an excellent opportunity to develop photography skills.

Suitable for

KS1, KS2

Aims

- To combine and organise a variety of materials to make artefacts.
- To make observations about seasonal changes in the weather.

Resources

- Paper (good quality, thick art paper)
- Paints/crayons/felt tips/pastels/collage material/magazine cuttings/picture printouts from the internet
- Computers and art software (optional)
- Digital cameras (optional)

What to do

In its simplest form a Seasons Picture can be made as follows:

1. Divide a piece of paper into 4 sections, by folding in half and folding in half again.
2. Use a ruler and a black felt tip to mark out the 4 windows along the folds in the paper.
3. Label each window with one of the headings: *Spring*, *Summer*, *Autumn* and *Winter*.





4. Invite the children to create a picture which represents each season which includes the weather, the clothes you might wear, any festivals/celebrations that take place and activities that you might do in that particular season.

The following are variations on the simple activity:

- **Season by season** – complete one window of the picture in the actual season, rather than completing them all in one session.
- **Changing media** – complete each season window using a different medium, e.g. spring using paint/summer using collage/autumn using crayon/winter using pastel.
- **Computer art** – make a seasons picture using computer art software by mouse drawing, importing pictures or building up images with shapes and filling with colour. Combine the 4 completed images into one document, add labels and print.
- **Seasons photography** – make a seasons picture by printing and mounting, or pasting into a computer document, four photographic images which represent the seasons. They could be 4 photos taken of the same view at times during the different seasons. Alternatively, ask the children to take a photo in each season which represents the season well, e.g. a close-up shot of a daffodil to represent spring or a collection of colourful fallen leaves to represent autumn. (See Nature Photography for some tips on improving photography skills.)



Variations

- Display the pictures with key vocabulary associated with the seasons to help with writing activities.
- Once a seasons window has been completed, write a poem or piece of descriptive writing to accompany each picture.

Shelter Making



Shelter Making is an activity which children always enjoy. Shelters can provide feelings of security and safety from the outside world; they are a great tool to stimulate creative play and can be made using almost any materials! Shelters can range from a playground structure made with boxes and a sheet, to a woodland hideaway made from logs, sticks and covered with foliage.

Suitable for

KS1, KS2

Aims

- To combine and organise a variety of materials to make artefacts.
- To listen to other people and play/work collaboratively.

Resources

- Scissors
- String/rope
- Parcel tape
- Pegs
- Objects to weigh corners down

Depending upon the type of shelter being made:

- Large cardboard boxes, bed-sheets
- Ground sheets/plastic sheeting, pegs
- Trees, long fallen sticks/branches, foliage