

VCCA 2019 Fall Conference

Starting an Outdoor Classroom



Outdoor Classrooms



- Research based:
 - Stress and pace of daily life
 - Childhood obesity, Type II diabetes, fitness levels
 - Develops lungs and eyesight
 - Screen time and blue lights
 - Nature and the natural world are soothing and interesting
 - Integrates with STEM/STEAM



5 Key Factors

...to consider when developing
your Outdoor Classroom



- Core Values
- Reflecting School, Staff and Family Culture
- Engagement and Intentional Planning
- Career Ladders
- Health and Wellness

Making Joyful Memories:

Powerful exercise to present to staff: Sharing first outdoor memory.



Benefits

- Integrates well with most curriculum.
- Fewer behavior issues. (National trend- preschool to prison research)
- Fewer stressed out teachers.
- Anything we do indoors, we can do outdoors.
- No bad weather, only bad clothing.
- Play oriented, wholesome.
- Nap time is better!



Risk versus Hazard:



Trust

WOODLAND CLASSROOM



How to Start

Educate yourself- certification and conferences: Outdoor Classroom Project and Nature Explore

Go International- Look at Scotland, Finland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada

Research and plan: address storage issues

Get buy in: Staff first then parents

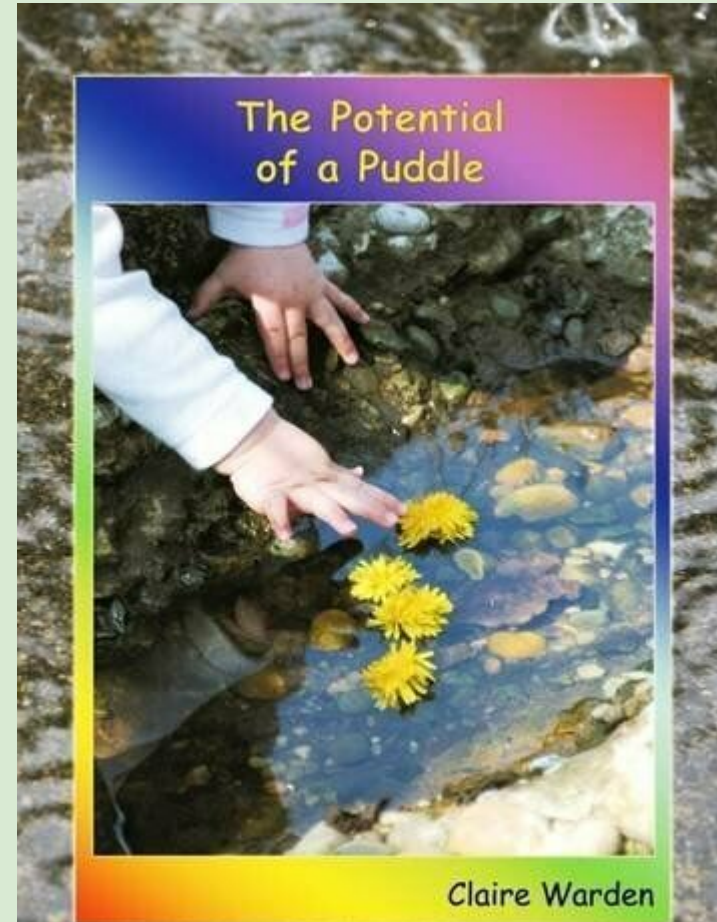
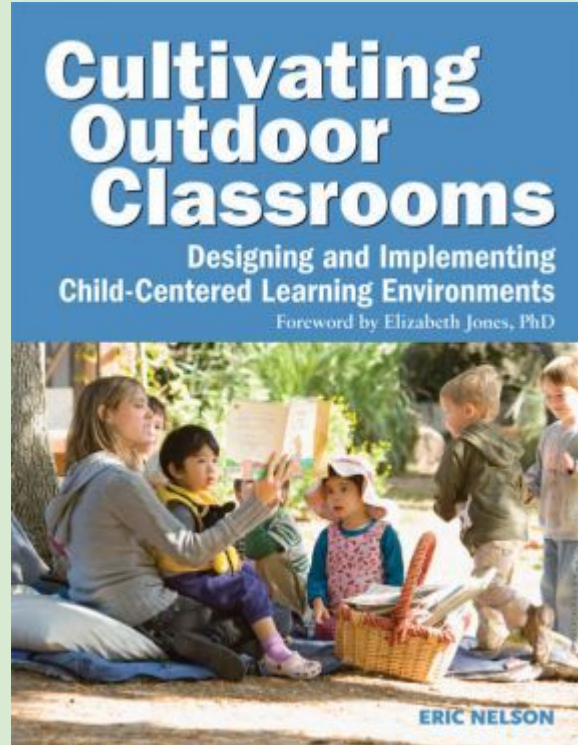
Double outdoor time

Start with gardening: pots or raised beds

Start to bring the indoors outside: reading, art, cooking, snacks, even nap!



Resources:



“There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”







QUESTIONS?