

## **GEAR (Global and Environmental Awareness and Responsibility) – a Toolkit for Inclusive Environmental Education**

**Project Element: Earth**

**Age: 4 and 5 year-olds**

### **BRINGING THE OUTSIDE , INSIDE**

We aim to provide students with opportunities to work with natural materials in the classroom, bringing the outdoors in with materials found in nature.

Nature has a calming effect on children, improves sensory skills and can increase attention spans.

Items from nature make perfect materials for hands-on learning, helping support science achievement and engagement, as well as developing a connection to the environment and encouraging positive environmental attitudes within students; Bringing nature into the classroom gives children opportunities to value animals and plants treating them with care and respect.

### **AUTUMN FRUITS**

As we cannot go outside of the schoolyard we encouraged our pupils to go for a walk to the forests around and look for acorns, chestnuts, corn, pinecones, leaves, nuts, mushrooms, nuts .... and bring them back into the classroom.

Once they brought the materials we arranged them on the activity tables to facilitate the exploration of textures, colours, sizes, shapes ..... and students used the natural elements to make arts and crafts.

Children asked about the names of the new things so in order to enhance students' language development they did a sort of exhibition with the products and their names.



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**USING NATURAL ELEMENTS TO MAKE CRAFTS**



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**LEAF PRINTING WITH MUD OUTSIDE**



**PLAYING AND LEARNING WITH NATURAL ELEMENTS**



**(SAND)**

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(CORN)



(STONES AND STICKS)

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(Students construct buildings and trails. They used the materials to start reading and writing)

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**WILD CREATURES IN THE GARDEN:** Research about the little creatures found in the garden. Talking with the pupils about the importance of returning animals to their natural habitats after we have studied them.



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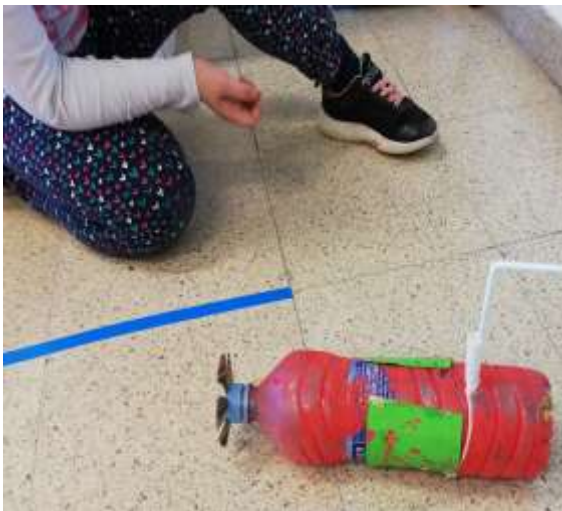
## REUSING MATERIALS TO PLAY AND LEARN

In their classroom there is a space for arts and crafts. In this space they've got different reusable materials they bring from home. They can use these materials to play or to make crafts.



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