

A Magical Forest



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An idea from:

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Age: 3-5 years

Keywords: #nature #art #movement #immersiveenvironments #blacklight

Key question: *How can we create a (magical) forest inside the classroom?*

General objectives:

- Raising awareness of environmental protection and biodiversity issues.
- Exploring reality and learning to reflect on one's experiences
- Encourage collaboration and cooperation.
- Stimulating and arousing important emotional experiences through awe and wonder.
- Enhancing the child's creative, imaginative and expressive abilities.

Time: 7 activities with the children of about 50 minutes each for a total of about 6 hours.

Materials

At school	At Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Projector● Pc● Audio speaker● Wood's lamp● Colours (pencils, markers, pastels)● Fluorescent Tempers● White & coloured cardboard● Scissors● Glue● Recovery/recycling material● White paper rolls for plotter, big paper sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Smartphone/tablet/digital camera● White A4 sheets● Watercolours/chalks/pastels● recycling materials

Software/ Apps:

<p>Atmosphere</p> <p>Objective: reproduction of natural sounds, creation of sound compositions</p> <p>Media: Smartphone; tablet</p> <p>Link: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pocketstudios.atmosphere&hl=it&gl=US or https://apps.apple.com/it/app/atmosphere-suoni-riassanti/id1259186300 (IOS)</p>	<p>Padlet</p> <p>Objective: Virtual wall where you can share images, videos, texts, drawings</p> <p>Media: Computer; smartphone; tablet</p> <p>Link: www.padlet.com</p> <p>Alternatives Mural</p>	<p>QR Code generator</p> <p>Objective: Linking to a QR Code</p> <p>Media: Computer; smartphone; tablet</p> <p>Link: https://it.qr-code-generator.com/</p> <p>Alternatives Integrated tool in google chrome, bit.ly</p>
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Short Presentation

In this atelier the forest as a natural environment is explored and its magically interpreted. First children are accompanied to an exploration in nature to observe and explore a forest, a park, a garden. Trees, leaves, branches, gathering fruit, leaves or pine cones will ignite curiosity, and become the starting point for a creative experience at home with the family. At school, children create a magical forest through a collaborative immersive set-up. The forest is composed of natural elements, children's drawings that become luminescent in the dark, projections and a personalised forest soundtrack that they create with a composition app.

Step by Step

<p>Step 1 --- At school</p>	<p>The class visits a natural environment near the school (forest, park, garden) where the children explore, collect material and observe. Each child takes home some of the natural materials collected during the walk.</p> <hr/> <p>For distance learning Families are invited to explore a natural environment close to home where children can explore, collect material and observe. The collected material is kept for the next tasks.</p>
<p>Step 2 --- At home</p>	<p>Creation of forests inhabitants In preparation of this task educators create a forest-themed padlet and send an invitation to the families to deepen the experience of the walk in the natural environment by creating together a forest animal (either real or fantastic), either by drawing or assembling the materials that were collected by the child. Families are then invited to enrich the (padlet)forest with new elements by adding photos of the creations made at home. The creations should then be brought to school.</p>
<p>Step 3 --- At school</p>	<p>The animals brought from home are collected and the task repeated at school, using the materials collected in step 1, for the creation of other inhabitants they would like to have in their forest. Subsequently the children start to create the "forest environment" by preparing the forest floor in various spots: In one educators attach on the floor long white paper sheets (using for example white paper rolls for plotters rolls); then they construct together with the children some "colouring machines" using coloured markers</p>

that they attach to tools they can easily handle and move within the big white surfaces: vehicles, brooms, long sticks, etc.



On the borders of the white surface other drawing materials can be displayed with the colours of the forest: sponges, natural materials, pads, etc.



In others also using the collected materials:



For distance learning

Families are instructed in the creation of "colouring machines" using materials they have at home and to create a forest floor with which to play using the animals they have created in step 2. Here some examples:



Step 4

*At
home*

Children are introduced to the app Atmosphere:
Parents are invited to download the app atmosphere and to experiment and play with the children. After a first exploration parents and children play a sound guessing game, guessing the sounds with their eyes closed.

Step 5

At
school

Educators play and explore further with the app Atmosphere, linking it to the projector:

Children lay down with their eyes closed, and after a short repetition of the guessing game, are invited to think of a magical forest while listening to the sounds. Afterwards, inspired by what they imagined, the children paint trees and animals, using fluorescent tempera.

The children's paintings are set up in the magic forest classroom, together with the forest "floors" and the created animals..

The light is turned off, turning the classroom to a dark room lit exclusively with Wood's lamp.

**For distance learning**

Go to step 6.

Step 6

At
home

Families are sent on a photo safari at home and away. Children, together with their parents choose a 'friend tree', i.e. a tree that they often encounter or that has some special role (it provides shade in the garden, is the spot where the family has a snack in the park, etc.), children are instructed to take a photo of the tree. Then they are also asked to photograph an animal either real, stuffed, or illustrated in a book that they would like to find in their imaginary forest.

The photos are sent to the educators and collected in a slide show.

Step 7

At
school

Each child chooses a sound from the Atmosphere app, in order to compose a soundtrack for their magic forest. After that the classroom is darkened, with the wood's lamp on, and the educators project the photos sent in by the families onto the wall of the magic forest, at child's height.

The children can move freely through the magical forest, letting

themselves be carried away by the soundtrack they have created.

For distance learning

Families upload photos of the trees and animals to the padlet and experiment with the Atmosphere app to create their own virtual magic forest soundtrack.

Conclusion

Presence	Virtual
Parents are invited to visit the magic forest where they will find documentation and creations made by the family transformed into QR codes to be scanned and viewed.	Educators add documentation to the virtual magic forest of the classroom experiences to the padlet. The virtual magic forest can be shared on the website and social media of the school.

