

Waterloo Park

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Virtual presentation to City of Waterloo Parks Staff, Waterloo, ON

December 10 2021

Term project in partial fulfillment of requirements for Course PSY470F Language Development and Social Inequity
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Eby Farm Playground

At the moment, Eby Farm Playground has room for natural play but not much in terms of a vibrant stimulating and willfully engaging environment for young children.

Farm Theme



Drawing by: Joyce D'Haene

To be cohesive with Eby Farmstead, and to connect with the vast farmland within Waterloo Region surrounding the Kitchener-Waterloo cities, we decided on a farm theme. Animals are universal, they exist cross-culturally. A farm theme would also have lots of room for stimulating and engaging playground features. Some of the features to be introduced can result in role-playing and other play styles which would be rich for language input and output.

Possible Layout

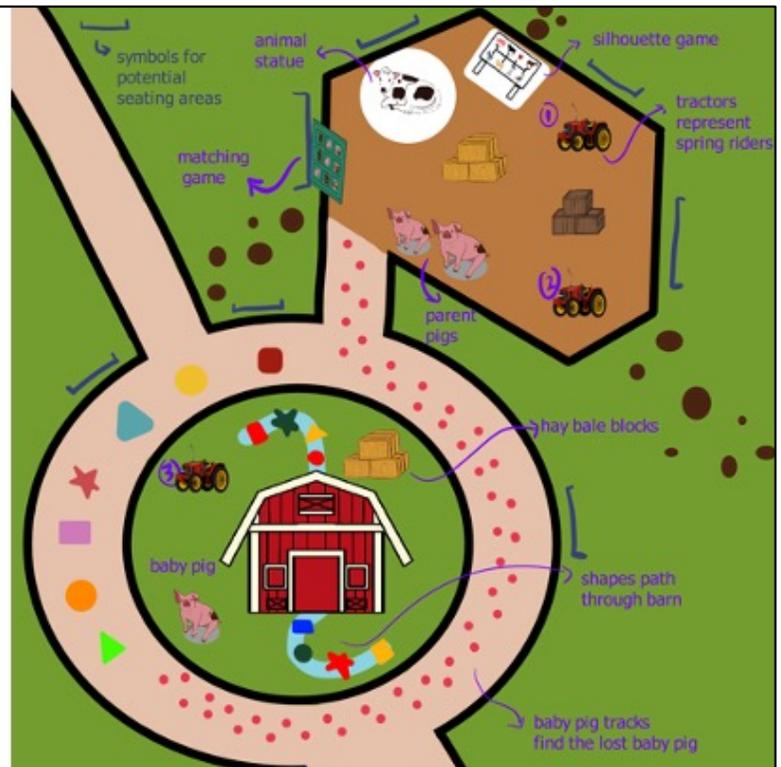


Image Drawn by: Joyce D'Haene

This is merely to show where features could potentially be placed. Each feature will be discussed shortly. As of now, we have decided to keep the wood fibers as the ground in the more hexagonal area. This is a common material that is a more natural form of flooring while providing enough cushioning for children (Shepherd, 2017). All shapes and prints on the walking path would be flat and painted as not to be obstructions for wheelchairs or strollers.

The brown circles represent wooden stepping stones - which will be introduced further on, which could be trails leading to a tree, or other park areas on the grass, off the walking path, again for non-obstructive purposes.

Reference:

Shepherd, C. (2017, July 19). *Top 5 playground surface materials*. Noahs Park and Playgrounds. Retrieved October 10, 2021, from https://noahsplay.com/blog/noahsplaytop-5-playground-surface-materials/?fbclid=IwAR0Djy_xzoSA1jWeeh2AVdkiWoofdyIHto3OziWSW2DXIRBDlgsk0CJ2xoY.

Farm Blocks (Both Areas)



Photo Credit (Left): <https://lirp.cdn-website.com/68b860ea/dms3rep/multi/opt/Hay-2Bsteps-640w.jpg>

Photo Credit (Middle): <https://proplaygrounds.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/farm-cow-themed-playground-climber.jpg>

Photo Credit (Right): <https://lirp.cdn-website.com/68b860ea/dms3rep/multi/opt/Pistachio+Crate+Climber-720w.jpg>

These types of blocks would further emphasize the farm theme, potentially making it easier for children to perceive a farm environment. The children can climb on them and sit on them.

An animal structure can encourage the children to take part in pretend play, or use descriptive language, such as, “The cow is white and black”, or talk about the sounds an animal could make, such as, “The cow goes moo”. Parents and guardians can also encourage language development by asking the child questions, such as, ‘What is this block?’, ‘This is hay, do you know what the horse/cow eats? The horse eats hay’.

Farm Animal Matching And Tic Tac Toe Game (Wood Fiber Area)



Photo Credit Left: <https://www.softplay.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/critters-2.jpg>
Photo Right: Drawing by Joyce D'Haene

This is a more engaging activity where children must match the pictures. Labeling the activity with a title like “Can you find me?” can encourage parents to play this ‘finding game’ with their toddlers.

This activity presents children with many different language development opportunities that they can engage with their parents by asking about the animals. This interaction between parents and children is very important because “positive results are seen when parents communicate with their children at a level that challenges them yet provides support and multiple opportunities to learn” (Rowe, 2012, p.1773).

References:

Rowe, M. L. (2012). A longitudinal investigation of the role of quantity and quality of child-directed speech in vocabulary development. *Child Development*, 83(5), 1762–1774. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01805>

Farm Themed Shape Puzzle (Wood Fiber Area)

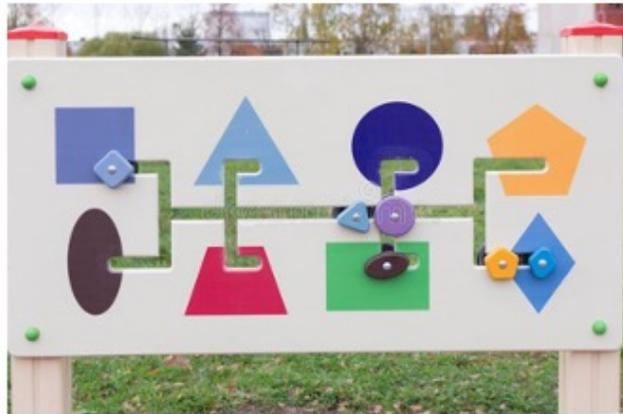
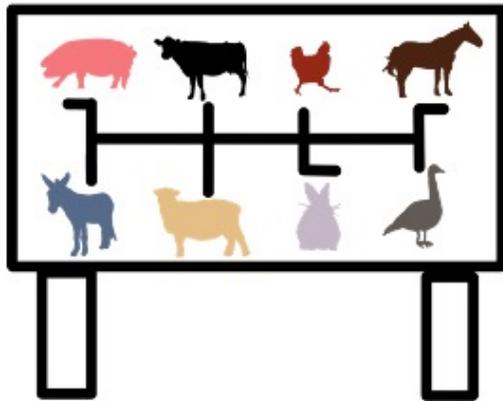


Photo Credit (left): Drawing by Joyce D'Haene

Photo Credit (right): <https://www.dreamstime.com/children-s-business-board-playground-geometric-shapes-find-right-path-puzzle-maze-develops-logical-thinking-attentiveness-image201152137>

An animal silhouette puzzle allows young children to develop logical thinking skills by having them figure out what order to move the various shapes to have them placed in their corresponding spots (Sari et al., 2018). Larger shapes could be a 'parent' animal and the smaller shapes could be a 'baby' animal. Similarly, the shapes could also be farm buildings that particular animals go into, for example, a chicken coop. This allows the child to not only strengthen their logical thinking skills but also teaches the child about various farm animals and where they are housed. With the guidance of a parent or guardian, the child can also learn the new vocabulary. As an example, the parent can say to the child "The chicken sleeps in the coop" or "Where is the baby pig?" There could be silhouettes of the animals within the farm buildings, so the children can match them better or help guardians identify the correct places.

References:

Sari, Y. K., Sukartiningsih, W., & Jannah, M. (2018). The effect of geometric puzzle game towards children's recognition of geometric shapes and fine

motor. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*,
212, 340–342. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icei-18.2018.75>

Spring Riders (Both Areas)



Photo Credit (Left): <https://www.lappset.com/loader.aspx?id=5ad88fc6-1665-457a-a34b-27ab1f38085e&w=1600&crop=left,top,1600,600>

Photo Credit (Middle): <https://playgroundsetc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Horse-Spring-Rider-e1517607179173.jpg>

Photo Credit (Right): <https://www.schoolscapes.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Cow-Spring-Rider-1.jpg>

A child's imagination is unmatched. You see spring riders at almost every playground. Children love them for countless reasons. One important reason is they are great way for them to express their imagination or pretend they're riding a tractor, for example, or riding a horse.

The spring riders don't take lots of space and can be placed in proximity with each other to encourage parallel play between toddlers which they find highly enjoyable (Healthy Families BC, 2013).

References:

Healthy Families BC. (2013, August 11). Different types of play for toddlers 12-36 months. Learn about the five different types of play for toddlers | Healthy Families BC. Retrieved October 3, 2021, from <https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/different-types-play-toddlers-12->

36-months.

Connecting Both Areas

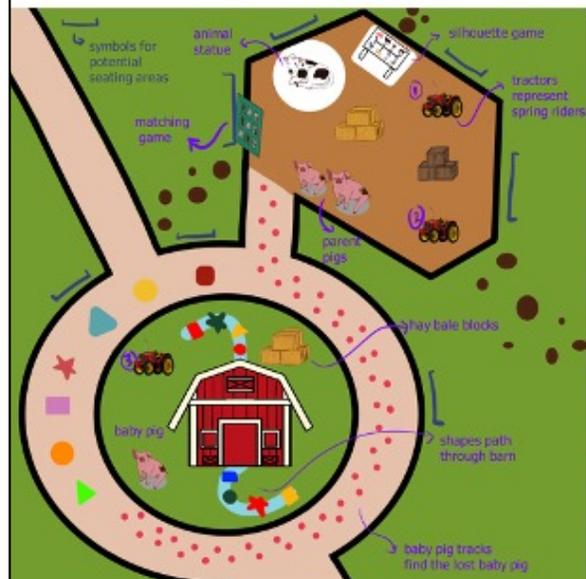


Image sources:

Stepping Stones: <https://unsplash.com/photos/DXRP2PKIsFQ>

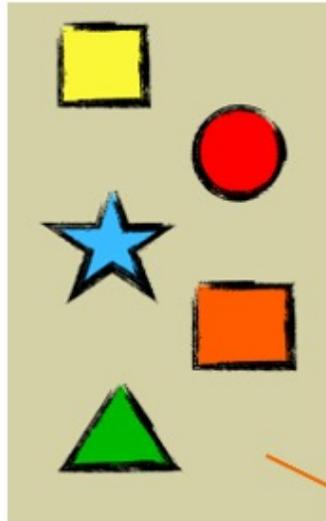
Pig Tracks: https://www.clipartmax.com/middle/m2i8A0i8m2b1Z5K9_pig-tracks-rubber-stamp-animal-track-stamps-stamptopia-pig-tracks/

To allow children to visually connect both spaces, the pig tracks could lead to the grass area, and could be composed of different colours. In addition, the wooden stepping stones could be placed on the grass area around the hexagonal area. These stepping stones could lead to a tree nearby, or to another play space.

On the layout, one can see the footsteps leading between the 'parent pigs' and a 'baby pig', making use of the current pig statues. These small pig tracks can be painted onto the pavement.

Grass Area: Finding Shapes

- Play barn windows to be in the form of different shapes
- Exit point at the back of the barn
- Concrete path with different coloured shapes would go through the barn



Pathway with shapes going through the play barn

Image sources:

Barn: <https://www.imaginethatplayhouses.com/the-barn-playhouse>

A path with different coloured shapes could help children talk about the different shapes and colours they see, while also learning about them through turn taking with their parent or peers. There would also be different coloured painted shapes on the walkway surrounding the grass area. Painting these shapes instead of having them stick out like step stones makes it easy for strollers and wheelchairs to pass through.

Continuing on the idea of shapes, the barn house on the right could be composed of different shapes rather than regular, rectangle window shapes. There would also be another door at the back of the barn- this allows for the children to walk in and out of the barn while potentially talking about the shapes they see within. In addition to the concrete path going through the barn, there would also be pictures of different animals on the walls, making it easy for the children to talk about what they see.



Seating

Image Credits: <https://idskids.com/product/stools-benches/>

Around the perimeter of our playground design will be farm themed seats such as hay bales such as the ones seen in the image on the right. This is mostly for convenience purposes and giving park participants a resting spot.



Forest Area and Swings

The forest area inspired ideas of forest dwellers, such as gnomes, elves, dwarves, and pixies. Knowing that Waterloo Region is home to many cultures and ethnicities, we wanted to extend the cultural reach in the design of the area. There is a call for more information, resources, and educational methods that are culture-based (McKeough et al., 2008). Having done some research, we found some similar beings from different cultures with similar traits to the Westernized gnomes and elves. This would present a great opportunity for the public to learn about different cultures and their mythologies, as well as, acknowledge the diversity of cultures within Waterloo.

References:

McKeough, A., Bird, S., Tourigny, E., Romaine, A., Graham, S., Ottmann, J., & Jeary, J. (2008). Storytelling as a foundation to literacy development for Aboriginal children: Culturally and developmentally appropriate practices. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 49(2), 148–154.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0708-5591.49.2.148>

Forest Entrance Archway



Left and Right Images: Taken and Drawn by Joyce D'Haene

Middle Image: <https://www.kindpng.com/free/path/>

An archway structure could be placed at the entrance or within the forest area. The archway says 'once upon a time', a classic starting phrase to many fairy tales and children's stories. This evokes a story-telling mindset.

Ideally at this entrance there will be a path leading from the current main concrete path already there to the different areas of the forest. We propose a path because it's a helpful guide to the different sections of our area and also increases accessibility to this area, as the current terrain may be more difficult to maneuver.

Locations



Image: <https://www.google.com/maps/search/waterloo+park/@43.4675397,-80.5307728,142m/data=!3m1!1e3>

These three locations are flatter and have more space between trees, allowing for more room for the structures we intend to implement.



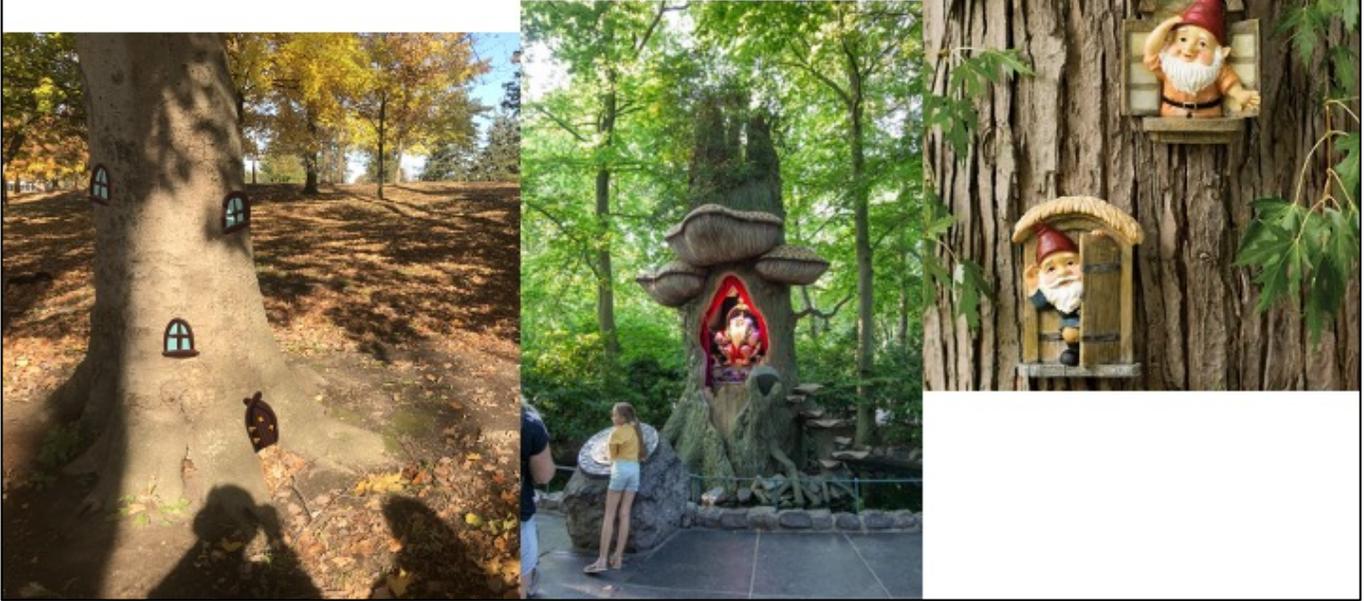
Left Image: <https://www.touropia.com/regions-of-europe-map/>

Right Image: Drawn and Taken by Joyce D'Haene

Mushroom village is an area with mushroom houses and little mushroom statues. These little mushrooms can vary in size and even color, and children can sit and stand on them. These little mushrooms are a fairy tale staple and suit the forest area well. The mushroom houses themselves don't have to be overly large; child-sized is ideal.

Children can interact to roleplay or pretend-play house.

Little People: Tree Gnomes



Left Image: Taken and Drawn by Joyce D'Haene

Right Image:

https://www.zhljrsb.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=697699

Middle Image: <https://aegtte.weebly.com/de-trollenkoning-the-troll-king.html>

All around the area, we plan to have 'tree gnomes' decorating the area that children can look for and create stories with. Depending on the area, these 'gnomes' may look different, for example, these tree gnomes suit the European area well. The middle picture is a famous example from a Dutch theme park that lots of children love and interact with, suggesting that these little decorations can be very successful. These decorations don't have a fixed story, rather children and guardians can interact with them for storytelling. Parents can also tell the story in their own language

References:

Luo, R., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Kuchirko, Y., F. Ng, F., & Liang, E. (2014). Mother-child book-sharing and children's storytelling skills in ethnically diverse, low-income families. *Infant and Child Development*, 23(4), 402–425.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.1841>

North America



Left Image: Taken by Joyce D'Haene

Right Image: <https://hikeitbaby.com/blog/natural-playscapes-and-playgrounds/>

This area is located closer to the bottom of the hill, where lots of logs and picnic tables seem to already be situated. Sticking to the natural theme, these log based or wooden picnic tables would be nice to have more of. These tables can be used for resting and taking a break to eat a meal.

The Apa'inns and Memegwesi translate to small or little people in Native American culture, including Anishinabe culture (Native Languages, n.da; Native Languages, n.db). These will be talked about on the next slide.

References:

Native American Legends: Apci'Inic. Native Languages. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <http://www.native-languages.org/apci-lnic.htm>.

Native American Legends: Memegwesi (Mannegishi). Native Languages. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <http://www.native-languages.org/memegwesi.htm>.

Snow, C. E., & Beals, D. E. (2006). Mealtime talk that supports literacy development. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2006(111), 51–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.155>

Little People: Memegwesi



Wooden sign: <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/775725.htm>

North America map: https://www.pngfind.com/pngs/b/639-6398713_america-map-png.png

QR code: <https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/29449/how-to-create-a-qr-code-in-4-quick-steps.aspx>

Memegwesi (little person): <http://acornpies.blogspot.com/2010/05/memegwesiwag-little-people-of-north.html>

Waterloo Park map:

<https://www.google.com/maps/search/waterloo+park/@43.4675397,-80.5307728,142m/data=!3m1!1e3>

Within the North American section of the forest area, Anishinaabe storytelling would be implemented. Waterloo park is in the territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Having done some research we found similar creatures to gnomes in the Anishinaabe culture. Ideally, we would want to consult and work with local Indigenous communities in order to accurately portray and include little people from their cultures.

These little people are called *Memegwesi*. We thought that implementing Indigenous history and beliefs within this area is important. It is said that “First Nations people

share important knowledge, culture and traditional lessons through the telling of stories. It is through the telling of stories and legends that First Nations people preserve what is most important to them— language, traditions, culture, and identity” (McKeough et al., 2008, p.3).

References:

McKeough, A., Bird, S., Tourigny, E., Romaine, A., Graham, S., Ottmann, J., & Jeary, J. (2008). Storytelling as a foundation to literacy development for Aboriginal children: Culturally and developmentally appropriate practices. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 49(2), 148–154.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0708-5591.49.2.148>

Native American Legends: Memegwesi (Mannegishi). Native Languages. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <http://www.native-languages.org/memegwesi.htm>.

Asia



Left

Image: https://aminoapps.com/c/mythology/page/item/duwende/0YQJ_Y0UZlJvJYnDvrzg2N7nINZWez8enp

Right Image: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duende>

There are a few similar little people in Asian culture that could be implemented. One is the Filipino Duende (Dwende), a dwarf creature that lives in anthills and old houses resembling a small old man with a long beard and often big hats. They're known to often steal but also love children (Dwende, n.d.).

References:

Dwende. Filipino Folklore, Mythology, Creatures & Monsters. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <https://www.mangkukulam.com/folklore/344/Dwende>.

Asia (cont.)



Top Left Image: Taken by Joyce D'Haene

Bottom Left Image: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/247979523208140908/>

Right Image: <https://www.google.com/maps/search/waterloo+park/@43.4675397,-80.5307728,142m/data=!3m1!1e3>

In this area, it may also be helpful to include environmental connections to the statues, for example, the Dwende could be hiding in or by a constructed dirt mound. The image of the dirt mound is just an example of a possible shape, we want the area to stay 'natural' looking so ideally it is made by similar materials to the forest ground.

Signs



Left Image: <https://unsplash.com/photos/rqPSClcr- A>

Right Image: <https://unsplash.com/photos/wNvCDogeir8>

QR Code Image: <https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>

We propose that signs are placed around the forest area next to the statues. These signs could have the name of the type of forest dweller they are next to and perhaps some short description about which culture they come from and their traits. For example, “this dwende is cheeky but loves children!” These wooden signs could be carved into to add to the natural theme, and the children could feel the engravings.

Additionally, there can be a QR code in case parents or guardians want to learn more about the lore behind the forest dwellers. The QR codes are not a main feature but are there in case they want to learn more.

Aside from those types of signs, there could also be signs placed on trees pointing towards the different areas; such as the European themed area, with different countries on them from that continent.

Animal Bins



Image sources:

<https://gil.glasdon.com/images/products/400/TidyBear-8014.jpg>

Using animal-themed garbage bins contributes to the nature style approach we are using. It suits the forest theme and is engaging with children and encourages eco-friendly behaviors to prevent littering.



Victorian Gardens



Connecting Playground to Garden



Image Sources:

Sign board: https://favpng.com/png_view/wood-sign-arrow-clip-art-transparency-arrow-illustration-png/sD7b1pjt

Lady bug: https://www.pclipart.com/pindetail/iTixTm_ladybug-clipart-five-ladybug-five-transparent-free-cartoon/

Dirt path: <https://www.pngegg.com/en/png-bhbig>

Lady bug stepping stones: <https://www.amazon.ca/Lakeside-Collection-Ladybug-Stepping-Gardens/dp/B07PVQ2ML7>

Waterloo Park Image: Taken by Joyce D'Haene

In order to connect the nearby playground to the garden area, the use of a simple dirt path with a signboard could be used. In order to draw more attention to the signboard, a ladybug could be placed on top. There could also be “ladybug” stepping stones on the path to make it more interesting and engaging to children, leading them to the garden area.

Spelling Panels



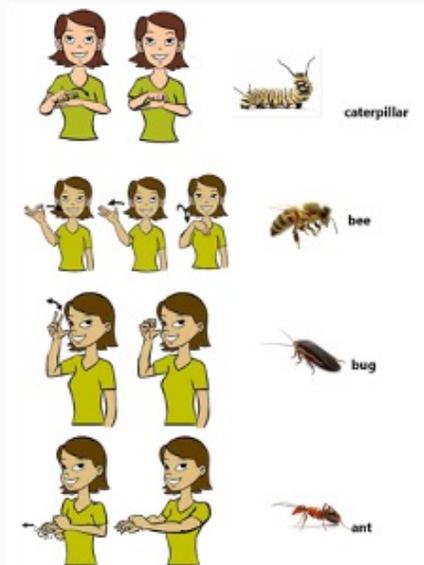
Left Image: <https://www.playgroundequipment.com/freestanding-spelling-panel-with-posts/>

Right Image: https://www.hendersonplay.com/?attachment_id=214791

The first main activity are these spelling panels. Ideally, they are kept simple and short, for example, 3 letter words. Additionally, the words should be themed to fit the park environment. Some examples of the words that can be spelled include sun, red, bug, pig, fun, dog, etc. Simple spelling activities can be used to help children practice language development, spelling skills, and reading skills. The ability to change each individual letter also encourages children to sound out the letters, and eventually, the words.

Keeping the words short and simple are important because we want this activity to be accessible to children that may have weaker or stronger language and reading skills.

ASL



Reverse Side: Ground-Level Panel

Left Image: <https://www.inclusiveplaygrounds.net/sign-language-panel.html>

Middle Image:

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/af/52/53/af525328c6894b5513f3e70d69e9dead.jpg>

Right Image: <https://www.bciburke.com/our-products/product/signing-panel>

It's much easier for children to learn languages at younger ages as their brains are more neuroplastic (Kolb & Gibb, 2011). It would be beneficial to implement ASL panels so that children can learn some basic words, the alphabet, and gain awareness of ASL. We propose one panel with the alphabet, and another (or perhaps on the other side) with some words relating to the park environment. For example, in the middle image there are examples of how to sign the word 'bug', or 'caterpillar'. We suggest not including the images of the words because the child will then have to try to read the words aloud, without simply guessing from the pictures. This is to help children practice decoding using the letters, an essential first step in learning to read (Snow, 2016).

References:

Kolb, B., & Gibb, R. (2011). Brain plasticity and behaviour in the developing brain. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry = Journal de l'Academie canadienne de psychiatrie de l'enfant et de l'adolescent*, 20(4), 265–276.

Snow, P. C. (2016). Elizabeth Usher Memorial Lecture: Language is literacy is language - Positioning speech-language pathology in education policy, practice, paradigms and polemics. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 18(3), 216–228. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17549507.2015.1112837>

Braille Activity



Image Sources:

<https://www.playlsi.com/en/commercial-playground-equipment/playground-components/braille-and-clock-panel1/>

Since an ASL sign board would be implemented within the garden area, we decided to use a Braille sign board to include the visually impaired as well. With this activity, visually impaired children would have a further opportunity to practice the alphabet and numbers. This would also give sighted children the opportunity to learn about and explore this type of communication.

According to the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, "there is a real concern in the blind community that there is less support for teaching, using and investing in Braille, particularly among educators and governments, due to the belief that technologies such as e-books, audiobooks, and screen readers can replace Braille" (The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, 2017).

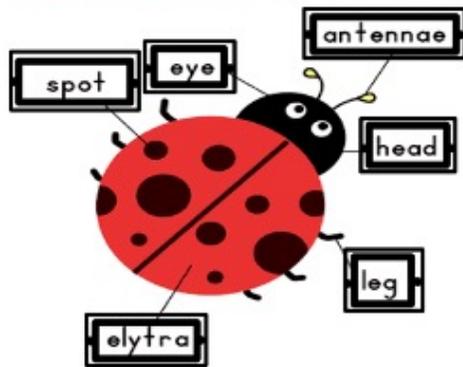
Hopefully, these panels would bring awareness to Braille and generate some questions regarding this form of language.

References:

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness. (2017, January 4). *Press Release: The importance of Braille Literacy*. <https://www.iapb.org/news/press-release-the-importance-of-braille-literacy/>

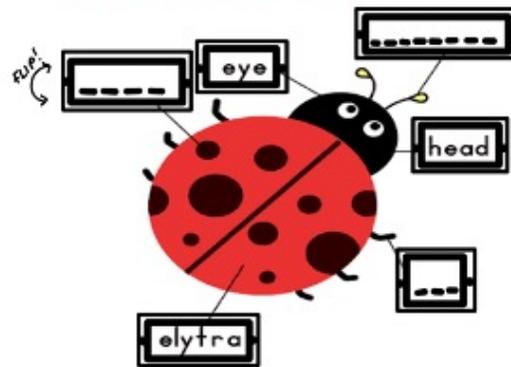
Anatomy Identification Activity

PARTS OF A LADYBUG



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Image: Shutterstock.com

PARTS OF A LADYBUG



© 2020 Primary Learning. All Rights Reserved.
Image: Shutterstock.com

Ladybug diagram (edits made by Joyce D'Haene):

<https://primarylearning.org/worksheet/parts-of-a-ladybug/>

An activity identifying different parts of the body of various animals, bugs, or plants in the surrounding area could benefit children by improving language based on ecological subjects (this is something children in this 3-6 age range will often begin to learn). One potential design for this activity could be to have a ladybug diagram with various parts of the body labelled. For example, the picture of a ladybug displayed could have its labels on turnable panels. One side will be blank, and one side will have the correct label for the corresponding body part. Children can test their knowledge and learn/develop their anatomical language.

Placement



Images Taken by Joyce D'Haene

Ideally the panels would be placed close to the ground, at child height, and by the hedges to avoid covering up any of the beautiful flowers in the garden. Playground panels like the ones we've suggested typically don't take up a lot of space, they could be placed around the gardens for children to go around and find.

References:

Hanford, E. (2020, August 6). *What the Words Say*. APM Reports. Retrieved November 30, 2021, from <https://www.apmreports.org/episode/2020/08/06/what-the-words-say>.

Snow, P. C. (2016). Elizabeth Usher Memorial Lecture: Language is literacy is language - Positioning speech-language pathology in education policy, practice, paradigms and polemics. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 18(3), 216–228. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17549507.2015.1112837>

Seating



Image Sources:

Left: <https://learninginnatureblog.wordpress.com/2014/05/22/the-story-of-an-outdoor-classroom/>

Right Top: <https://www.houzz.ie/photos/alcott-school-outdoor-classroom-phvw-yp~2265466>

Right Bottom: Taken by Joyce D'Haene

Since there is currently limited seating in the garden area, we thought it was important to add this feature. As depicted in the images above, a natural-looking seating arrangement would be placed in the grass area next to the garden. This area would be especially useful for elementary students visiting Waterloo Park.

References

- Dwende. Filipino Folklore, Mythology, Creatures & Monsters. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <https://www.mangkukulam.com/folklore/344/Dwende>.
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- Native American Legends: Memegwesi (Mannegishi)*. Native Languages. (n.d.). Retrieved November 10, 2021, from <http://www.native-languages.org/memegwesi.htm>.
- Rowe, M. L. (2012). A longitudinal investigation of the role of quantity and quality of child-directed speech in vocabulary development. *Child Development*, 83(5), 1762–1774. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01805>
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