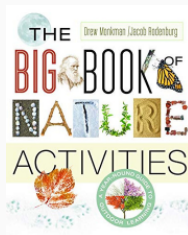


# B OUTSIDE

Newsletter of the Burnaby chapter of EEP  
(Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association)

## Book Clubs: Year in Review

The Big Book of Nature  
Activities: A Year-Round Guide to  
Outdoor Learning



Our cross-district B Outside Community of Practice explored two engaging books this year. One book was The Big Book of Nature Activities: A Year-Round Guide to Outdoor Learning by Canadian authors Drew Monkman and Jacob Rodenburg. A small group of teachers from Westridge, Buckingham, Marlborough, Forest Grove, and Confederation Park gathered four times in keeping with the changing seasons. This schedule also followed the book's structure.

The book is divided into four sections, with each section detailing activities that can be done according to a season. Sections start with a summary of key natural events, then how it relates to the continent, and finally how it relates to specific regions. Big Book encourages using the five senses to connect with place. Activities are accessible for young and older students alike. Suggested activities connect to various animals, plants, or fungi one might observe at that time of year.

*Remember: nature is close at hand. You don't need to travel far to provide your children with rich experiences in nature. Go to nearby municipal park, an abandoned field, an untended fence line or even your own backyard to discover the species that thrive near your home - any public green space can provide rich and repeated interactions with the natural world.  
(Big Book of Nature Activities, p.46)*

## Professional Learning & Events 2023/24

(Registration will  
be available in  
September 2023)

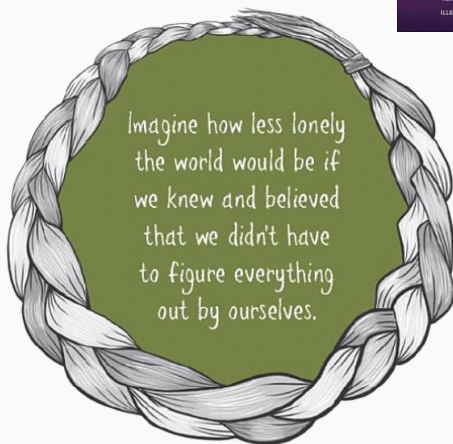
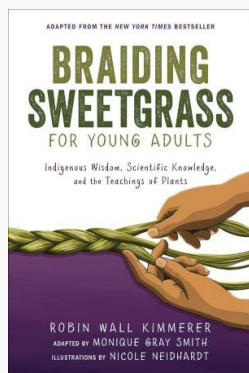
B Outside Launch Party!  
Sept. 19  
4:00-5:30pm

Held By The Land  
A Guide to Indigenous Plants  
for Wellness  
Nov. 7  
Jan. 23  
Feb. 20  
April 9th  
May 28 (& AGM)  
4:00-5:30pm



## Book Clubs: Year in Review

A Reflection by Jenny  
Lee, Stride Elementary



In 2018, Tracy Healy came to Stride and taught us how to make salve from Cottonwood leaf buds. Since then, I have made it every year with StrongStart, Kindergarten classes, Eco-Explorers (a place-based after school program I teach), or, through the pandemic, on my own. After collecting the leaf buds from the forest floor, it takes months for the medicines to emulsify into the added oil. It's a practice of patience, time, and learning. This year, the Eco-Explorer children and I also consciously harvested settler-introduced daisies to make another variety of the salve. In both cases, we thought with Robin Wall Kimmerer and the Honourable Harvest by not taking the first leaf bud to drop, nor the first daisy to bloom. We also gathered with the word "forage" in mind after learning from my teacher at Capilano University and archaeologist Karen Thomas (Tsleil-Waututh) that foraging is a practice of picking and taking "all" of a certain plant from an area. We felt we would rather honourably harvest in a good way and share the salve we make with people in our school community. Cease Wyss (Squamish, Sto:lo, Hawaiian, Swiss) teaches us that "people feel that they are a part of it because when we gather something from the land, it attaches us to that land". Truly, the medicines of cottonwood and daisies are felt beyond the process of making the salve!



# Join our B Outside Community!

Connect to resources, events, and a network of Burnaby educators [here](#).

## Outdoor Learning Projects: Teacher Reflections

### The Heart of the Trees - Dawn Howey, Forest Grove Elementary

*When you think about the tree you should think about the importance of life because trees give us life. Nora, 7 years old*

Every Wednesday, Roz Duchesneau (Strong Start), Kaitlyn Mackie (K/1), and I (Dawn Howey K/1) venture off into the forest that lies behind our school. We spend all morning examining the land and the gifts that it shares with us. We have come to know many places and what is living and not living there.

We want children to develop an understanding of the land that they ground themselves upon. Ultimately, we wish for them to form a relationship with this place we learn on. It has now been four months since we have been getting to know this space.

First, we focused on the “power of trees”. This language came from one of our many discussions about how to care for the place we live. The children have been visiting the forest since September. They wanted to know more about the trees.

We spent time inside and outside reading and learning about the root system of trees and began a discussion about how trees connect like humans. We learned that trees need all their parts for a certain reason just like humans.



*When you ground yourself into the earth, it will protect you. Patrick, 5 years old*

Children examined each root that popped up through the ground, felt the bark with care and attention, and spent endless hours researching using their senses. This was authentic learning in action. Powerful!

All of this newfound knowledge led to further research about the forest. As citizens of this community, we wondered how to care for the trees. We did many activities, such as taking many trips to the forest, consulting with our librarian, using materials to show our learning, or going on root hunts. We took our time learning and understanding our place in this big forest.

We were grateful to draw ideas from The Big Book of Nature Activities by Jacob Rodenburg and Drew Monkman. We began with the activity "Meet a Tree" and then practiced sketching and taking pictures of nature. We followed the seasons' cycle and moved from winter to spring activities in the book.

We learned to slow down and really look and listen closely to the forest and the changes that were happening. We were reminded of the importance of connection, reciprocity, and care.