



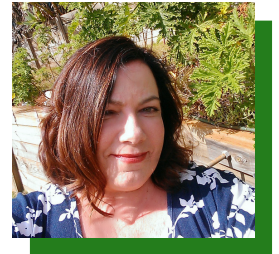
OUTDOOR PLANNING

The Why & How

Jodie Clarke
The Empowered Educator

Hi Empowered Ed!

I truly hope you find this resource helpful.



A little about me...

Hi, I'm Jodie! I am a Mum in Australia to 3 girls - twins Ruby & Tara and my adult daughter Ashleigh. And I love the possibilities of early learning!

I'm passionate about helping educators **simplify** their documentation and planning and also enjoy more time engaging with the children in their care through **simple** play based activities & environments.

I enjoy creating blog posts, free tools and easy to use resources and training for educators, leaders and coordinators by drawing upon my 30 years experience in this profession.

I know what support educators really need because I have walked in your shoes. This profession is challenging enough so I aim to simplify not overcomplicate! My resources walk through the basics so you can take action.

The Facts.....

- I hold an Associate Diploma in Education (Child care)
- I hold an Advanced Certificate in Child Care
- I hold a Bachelor of Human Services Degree
- I have worked as an Assistant, Room Leader, Director, FDC Coordinator, IHC Coordinator, OSHC Coordinator, Occasional Care Coordinator, Project Manager, Service Manager, Family Day Care Educator, Presenter and Speaker in the Early Childhood and Community and Family Services fields.
- I have been writing and editing my blog now for over 6 years.
- I am the author of many E- Book resources for educators, A Postnatal Depression Workbook (& DVD) and a picture book for children.
- I have developed and presented webinars and online courses to support early childhood educators in their role.

Thanks for placing your trust in me....

Jodie Clarke



Planning for Outdoor Learning

The 3rd Teacher Outdoors





What does it mean?

- The Reggio Emilia approach recognises the influence of learning environments as a **third teacher** and **informs current theories**.
- That the environment can influence **how we learn** and what we learn.
- That the environment can have an **impact on how we feel** and send us messages about **how we should act**.
- Thoughtful planning and design by educators can **influence children's learning**.
- The **selection & arrangement** of materials is important.
- It creates a **shared responsibility** for learning.



What does it mean?

- It is believed that the children's interests should guide the adults' decisions surrounding learning, the environment & materials.
- Environments acting as a 3rd teacher require observation, time, reflection and planning.
- It can promote a child's sense of agency and ownership of the space.

Does the space help children to feel...

- They belong?
- They feel safe here?
- They can explore and try out new skills
- They can investigate, access materials and toys to direct their own play?
- Like their interests and culture are welcome here?
- It is a stable, familiar and dependable space?

How does the environment make other adults and educators feel?



When children enter a well designed outdoor learning environment they know ..

- The materials, equipment and areas that they will find in their play space.
- The type of play (loud, quiet, social, solitary) that might happen there.
- The expectations for how to behave there.
- How to explore, learn and have fun there.





Planning for Outdoor Learning

Why plan for outdoors?



Planning for outdoors ?

It is just as important as the planning educators and teachers do for an indoor curriculum!

Aim to include child-led and initiated learning as well as educator-supported and initiated learning opportunities.

Planning allows you to be organised, setup the environment and ensure a balance of incidental and intentional teaching.



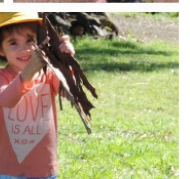
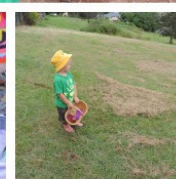
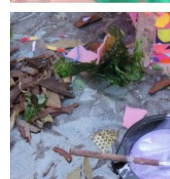
Working on our Balance



RECYCLING FOR CRAFT



We love NATURE WALKS



Pumpkin Hunting



What purpose does it serve?

- Planning ahead for outdoor learning helps educators identify, analyse & extend on the learning taking place.
- Guides environment changes & additional materials needed for planning goals.
- Helps educators get organised & meet outcomes.
- Communicates the curriculum & learning opportunities to families.
- Becomes a record of group and individual learning journey's.
- Highlights individual needs, strengths, and interests.

Who's Playing Today?
Tara, Ruby, Tessa, Alex

Our Day

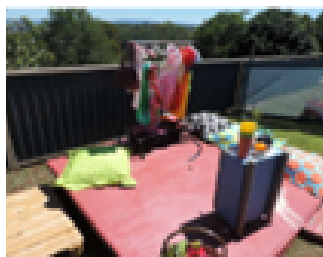
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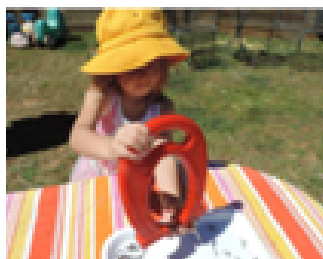
What did you
enjoy most today?



Washing and shampooing the baby dolls



Stage set up for our performing!



Picking up screws with the magnet and
ringing sizes

What learning evolved today through activities & play:

A very girly day today! There was lots of role play, dressing up and performing! Here's a few of the girls favourite activities from today...

- Washing the dolls and shampooing with the large squeeze bottles to work our muscles. It was also lots of fun making the water soapy and drying the dolls off.
- Using the large magnets to pick up bolts and screws and then sort them according to category and size. They were most impressed with how many they could pick up at once!
- Dressing up and performing on the outdoor stage and learning how to introduce acts.
- Using the new sensory hammers with the playdough to make patterns.
- Talking about where eggs and milk come from and using the new puzzles to help us put the sequence together.
- Drawing stars on the chalkboards. Tara showed us how to do it by drawing two triangles together.

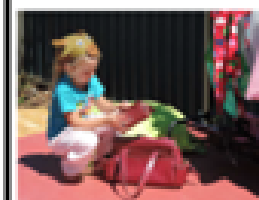
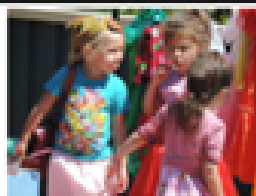
Lots of fun with our indoor/outdoor day today—the girls chose where they wanted to go and how they wanted to play today. We practised remembering our hats outside!



Where this might lead us:

More exploration around the science of magnets

Dressing dolls to practice self help skills such as zipping and buttoning.

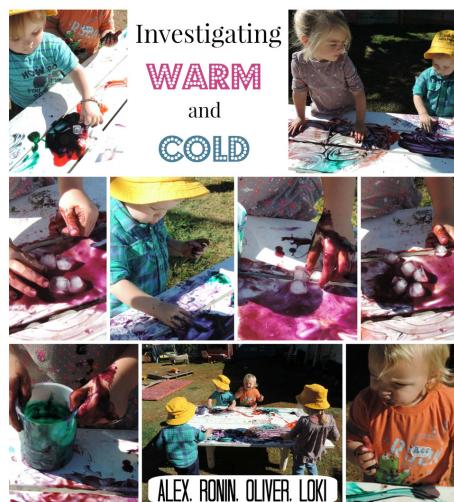


Monthly Curriculum Plan for Week Beginning

2.3.15

Children attending Ruby, Tara, Reuben, Lochlain, Chloe, Oliver, Ronin, Alex, Marley, Ronan

Intentional Teaching Opportunities	Children's Ideas & Interests	Individual Focus Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chalkboard & stones pre writing activities Missing numbers card games Sequencing and size activities with the vegetable/fruit cards Sometimes and everyday food plates Name recognition fun (every week this month) Group activity—making an emotions photo book together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at composting Scissor skill fun with playdough Learning more about the backyard—wrens and their colours Car wheel painting—current interest in all things cars. Water play with squeeze bottles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marley—Gripping and squeezing with tongue/lime motor focus Oliver—Name recognition activities Ronan—Climbing and balance activities to extend upon interest. Lochlain—Sequencing and position concepts
Exploring Our World	Inviting our Imagination In	Let's Get Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coloured sand jar creations Outside nature walk and branch weaving fun Collecting passionfruit vines and making green jers. How do we make compost? Coloured egg shell planters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach themed sensory table Using our imagination play mats and loose parts Coffee and tea shop at the outdoor cafe Chinese restaurant and noodle game Using tools at the construction table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noodle and long group game Coloured ball run and sort game Musical statues 2 feet jumping from the plank Hoops, shapes and longs scavenger hunt



Investigating
WARM
and
COLD



WORKING TOGETHER
with
WOOD AND TOOLS

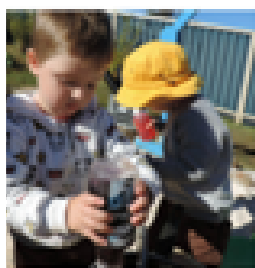


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Little Speckled
Frogs
sat on a
Speckled Log.....

A game initiated by Ruby, Tara, Tessa & Alex

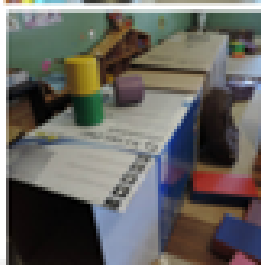
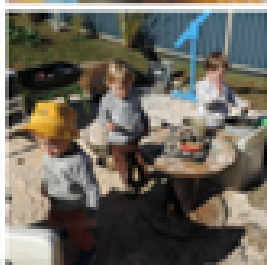
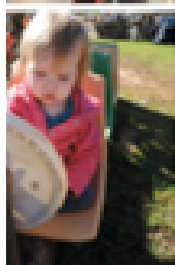
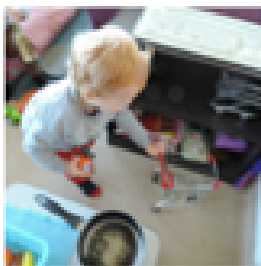
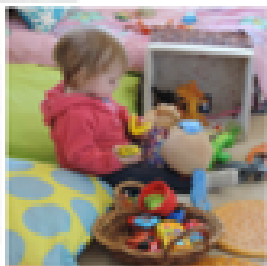
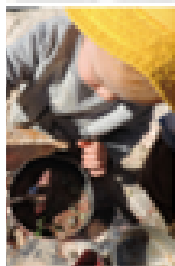
ALEX, RONIN, OLIVER, LOKI

- Planning allows for recording of both planned and spontaneous experiences, events & interactions.
- Show evidence of planning by getting creative with display and communicating the program to families, children and other educators.
- Choose a planning style and system that works with your strengths, helps you organise and plan ahead, extend on learning, reflect, record input from others and become an ongoing record of both intentional and incidental learning.



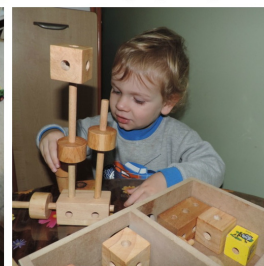
Our Day Tuesday

We used the squeeze bottles filled with water colours to make our sand cooking colourful!
 We took the scraps up the hill to feed the chooks.
 We watched the maggots looking for worms.
 We practised our spatial awareness skills climbing through the big box tunnel.
 We sang Wheels on the Bus and played instruments outside in the sun.



OUR DAY WEDNESDAY

Construction with the blocks and tools - lots of problem solving
 Building roads with the hollow wooden blocks
 Hammering with nails into corkboards
 Exploring fast and slow tempo with the musical instruments
 Singing songs with the hand puppets



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Planning for Outdoor Learning

Incidental & Intentional



Design & Plan Ahead

- Include easily accessible and moveable loose parts & open ended materials.
- Create smaller spaces and areas within the larger environment.
- Provide opportunities to explore and connect with nature.
- Incorporate respectful displays and artwork.
- Use recycled materials and introduce sustainability practices.
- Plan for a range of play based experiences and learning outcomes.
- Incorporate opportunities for risk and challenge.
- Try to ensure a sense of community and culture is reflected throughout.



Intentional Teaching Outdoors

The Australian EYLF defines intentional teaching as 'educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions'.

- Children learn through interactions with more experienced children & adults.
- Educators can challenge & extend learning.
- Moments are informed by educator knowledge, reflection, planning, and experience.



Incidental Teaching Outdoors

The possibilities and advantages of incidental learning in a natural environment are endless!

*Learning will happen as a result of children accessing engaging and challenging outdoor environments without a need for instruction **IF** we first spend time on planning, design, material and resource selection within the outdoor environment.*

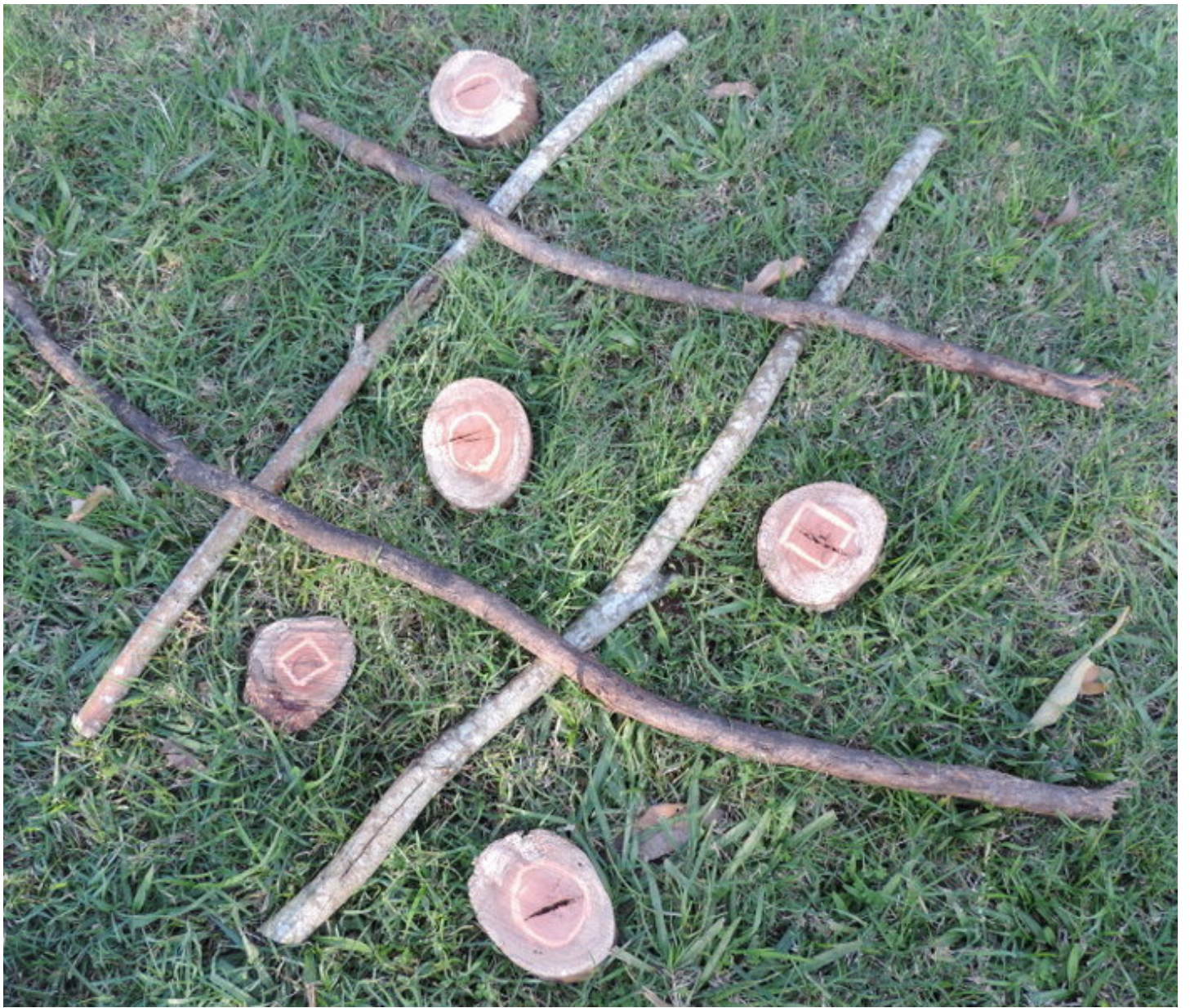


How do we do both?

Try some of the following ideas...

- Keep it simple and a **balance** of both.
- Incorporate playful math, science, and literacy concepts when gardening or using loose parts.
- Work to create opportunities for biodiversity which will increase intentional teaching opportunities - living things.
- Spontaneous learning will occur with changes in weather, interests, materials, group dynamics.
- Use outdoor play as an extension of current indoor learning and concepts.

- Intentionally teach sustainable practices through hands on projects & spaces.
- Challenge and practice skills like tree climbing, building, balance and sensory play.
- Pay attention to children's conversations, play, curiosity and questions.
- Document the play and ask questions about why it might be occurring & how to scaffold.
- Planning & organisation is important but so is flexibility and spontaneity!
- Spend less time buying 'stuff' more time upcycling & recreating!
- Create provocations & invitations to play before children enter the space.





Planning for Outdoor Learning

Invitations & Provocations





Why offer them outdoors?

Think about the following ...

- They allow for opportunities to extend upon children's interests and creativity.
- They offer a way to incorporate natural and recycled materials.
- Prompts children to investigate and explore while also encouraging them to use their imagination and thinking skills.



What should we consider?

Try to be aware of the following....

- The ages and developmental stages.
- Using too many props and resources.
- Supervision and modelling.
- Thinking a little outside the box with the materials you have available.
- Letting the children change the activity if that is how they wish the play to evolve.
- Consider bringing the indoors out sometimes.
- Planning for intentional teaching opportunities with the use of invitations and provocations.



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Jodie Clarke

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