Welcome to Park Explorations

This is an activity book for you to enjoy on your own or with friends or family.

The artist Kieren Reed designed this book after spending time in Shoebury Park. You could try the activities out in the park or in any other outdoor spaces – other parks, beaches, woods, gardens, playgrounds or even a balcony!

Kieren worked with pupils from Hinguar Primary School and St Georges Catholic Primary School in Shoeburyness.

There are no rules on how to use or explore the activities in the book, so you can try things out however you want to and you can add lots of ideas of your own. Just have fun enjoying the outside!
If you have one, use a piece of chalk or a stone to draw on the pathway the outline of your own shadow or the shadows of things or people in the park.

Try again a short time later and see how the shadows have changed as the sun moves across the sky.

Can you use your drawings to tell the time? If you don’t have any chalk how else could you mark a line on the ground? Try using lines of twigs or stones to ‘draw’ with.

### Colour

- How many yellow things can you see in the park today?
- How many different shades and tones of yellow have you found?
- Are they all exactly the same colour?
- Try matching other things you find to the colour swatches in this book.
Collections

How many different versions of the same object can you find?

Pebbles, dandelions, sticks...

Display your finds in an interesting way. You could make them into patterns on the pathway or leave lines of them on a bench.

Scavenger Hunt

Challenge each other to find a collection of different things. Race to see who can find them first.

A few ideas:

A stick the same length as your hand, something orange, eight different leaves, a piece of bark, a shiny pebble, a yellow flower, a knot of grass.

Think about how to display your collections.
Cloud

Lie on the floor and look at the sky.

What pictures and shapes can you see in the clouds?

Share stories about the things you see...

Stick

Collect a handful of natural bits and pieces – sticks, pebbles, fallen leaves etc. Use them to make patterns and pictures on the ground.

Leave them for other people to enjoy after you have gone.

Take a photo so you can remember the pictures yourself.
Animation

Use the park as a setting to create your own film or animation that you can playback or share with your friends. You could try animating objects that you find in the park – leaves, pebbles, sticks etc.

Use pens or stickers to turn them into characters. Or find bigger props and use yourselves as actors to re-create scenes from your favourite films.

Plan ahead – create a storyboard of the scenes you want to make and take as much footage as you can so you can edit it down later.

Impression

Create a collection of park textures. If you have paper and a wax crayon, you can make rubbings of different surfaces.

Try tree bark, leaves, pathways, manhole covers.
Shape Search

Look around you to see how many different shapes you can see in the things around you. How many different sizes of circle can you see. Challenge each other to look for as many as possible.

Fake Facts

Try and trick your friends and family into learning unusual facts about the things in the park around you.

Did you know for example: Butterflies taste through their knees and a beetle was the inspiration that led to the invention of the fire extinguisher?

Come up with ideas as crazy as you can and see who can work out the fact from the fiction.
Cache

Look for a stick which is about the length of your forearm. This will become the base of your memory collection.

During your visit to the park, collect and attach different things to your stick – your packet from a snack, a leaf you like, a flower from near where you sat down. Take this memory stick home as a memento of your day out.

Rules

Can you come up with a brand new game to play in the park?

Think about the best bits of other games and try putting them together – a chasing, finding, jumping challenge that only your family knows how to play.

Decide on the rules together and change things as you start to play if certain bits don’t work.
Looking At You

Look out for faces hidden in the bark of trees or faces in the shape of a litter bin or a pile of old leaves. Once you start to look, you will see eyes all over the place.

Name It

Look around you for letter shapes hidden in the environment. Perhaps a stick shaped like a letter ‘T’ or a ‘O’ hidden in the wood of a tree. Take pictures of all the letters you find. Perhaps you will be able to spell out your name or look to see what anagrams you can come up with using the letters you find.
Season Change

What time of year is it today? How would the park look different in a different season? What colours are around you that would change at a different time of year?

Even the time of day affects how the park looks. Think about and appreciate these changes in the nature around you.

Don’t Belong

What can you see in the park that is not natural? Do you think the park is a natural place? Look out for railings, benches, play equipment, litter bins.

Try to make 2 lists: 1 of the natural things you can see and 1 of the man-made things you can see. Which list is longer?
Listen Carefully

Listen to all the different sounds you can hear.

Try and count how many different noises you can hear in the park.

Closing you eyes might help you concentrate.

Make It Big

If you have access to a mobile phone or a camera, take some photographs of some tiny things in the park – leaves, stones, small creatures.

Try enlarging the images as much as you can – it's amazing how much you can alter how something looks by exploring the detail within it.
Bug Hunt

It's important to respect and care for insects no matter how small they are. See how many bugs and creatures you can find on your visit to the park. Look under fallen branches and under piles of leaves.

Have a good look at what you find and use a magnifying glass if you have one. But always let them crawl away afterwards. If you find anything you don’t recognise, try drawing a picture or taking a photo so you can look up on the internet or in a book.
Park Explorations by Kieren Reed is part of a public art programme in Shoeburyness run by Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea, 2016-18.

This project has been curated by Rose Lejeune with Focal Point Gallery.

for more information visit:
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