



Outdoor Learning Lesson Series for Teachers : Bushcraft Basics

Warm, adventure-based outdoor learning guide designed for teachers and camp leaders working with pupils in P4–P7 and S1–S3. Each lesson connects practical bushcraft with teamwork, confidence building, and wellbeing.

Welcome to the Wild Outdoors

This Bushcraft Basics pack brings together hands-on, story-driven lessons that reconnect pupils with the wild world around them. Each session is a journey — a chance to explore, make, create, and reflect. These lessons encourage teamwork, curiosity, and a sense of adventure.

Lesson 1 – Fire Craft and Safety

Pupils learn the principles of fire making, safety, and teamwork while practising basic survival skills.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the fire triangle and safe fire-lighting techniques.
- Develop teamwork and responsibility around controlled risk.
- Connect with the ancient tradition of creating fire for warmth and community.

Equipment

- Fire steels or matches
- Cotton wool / tinder
- Fire bowl or safe fire pit
- Bucket of water
- Fire blanket

Steps

1. Gather the group and introduce the fire triangle (heat, fuel, oxygen).

2. Demonstrate fire lighting safely – show how to prepare tinder and kindling.
3. Let small groups practise under supervision, lighting and extinguishing safely.
4. Discuss respect for fire, environmental impact, and leave-no-trace ethics.

Reflection / Extension

- What emotions come up when you create fire for the first time?
 - How did your group communicate and work together?
 - How can fire connect us as humans – past and present?

Lesson 2 – Shelter Building Challenge

Teams construct natural shelters using woodland materials, developing problem-solving and resilience.

Learning Objectives

- Understand key principles of shelter design – insulation, waterproofing, and stability.
 - Practise leadership and teamwork through group challenges.
- Reflect on the relationship between humans and their environment.

Equipment

- Tarpaulins or rope
- Natural materials (sticks, leaves, ferns)
- Groundsheet
- Weather-appropriate clothing

Steps

5. Divide pupils into teams and explain the scenario – a night in the woods!
6. Discuss what makes a good shelter (angle, wind direction, stability).
7. Give 30 minutes for teams to design and build.
8. Tour each shelter together, discuss strengths and improvements.
9. Link back to problem-solving and creative thinking.

Reflection / Extension

- What did you learn about communication under time pressure?
- If you had to sleep here tonight, what would you change?
- How do natural materials inspire creativity and resilience?

Lesson 3 – Natural Navigation

Explore how to find direction using the sun, stars, and nature's clues. Pupils learn to read the landscape through observation and awareness.

Learning Objectives

- Recognise natural navigation cues such as moss growth, tree shape, and the sun's movement.
- Enhance observation and patience skills through mindful exploration.
- Link nature literacy with real-world navigation skills.

Equipment

- Compass (for comparison)
- Sticks and string
- Sunlight / clear sky
- Notebook and pencil

Steps

10. Begin with discussion: how do animals and ancient peoples find their way?
11. Demonstrate how to track the sun's position and cast a shadow stick compass.
12. Explore woodland signs – moss, prevailing wind direction, tree lean.
13. Compare natural cues with a modern compass to test accuracy.

Reflection / Extension

- How does it feel to trust your senses over technology?
- Which natural clues were most reliable today?
- How might this skill help in survival or adventure situations?

