THE WOODCHIPS HANDBOOK

STARTING PROGRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL GROUPS FOR UNDER 6'S

The Woodcraft Folk
WHAT IS THE WOODCRAFT FOLK?

The Woodcraft Folk is a progressive, cooperative, educational movement for children and young people, established in 1925. Groups exist throughout Great Britain, mostly in larger towns and cities, and are run by volunteers, often parents and young adults. The Woodcraft Folk aims to build self-confidence and activity in society through its values of co-operation, peace, equality and friendship.

Age groups are as follows:

- Under 6's: Woodchips
- 6-9's: Elfins
- 10-12's: Pioneers
- 13-15's: Venturers
- 16-20's: DFs (District Fellows)

What do we do?

The programme at weekly group nights usually revolves around co-operative games, music and singing, art/craft work, discussions and projects. Groups also have regular walks, picnics, residencials and camps where the programme is enjoyed in the outdoors. International exchanges are popular with the older age groups.

How are we organised?

The Woodcraft Folk is a member-led organisation; our philosophy holds democracy and participation at its heart. Wherever possible young people take part in planning and organising their groups - this starts with the youngest members in group circles. Groups in a geographical cluster are known as Districts.

We are a democratic organisation. Our conference, the Annual Gathering, is held each summer and attended by delegates from our groups and local districts and is the ultimate decision-making body. Between annual conferences, responsibility for running the organisation falls on the elected members of the General Council. We are proud of the fact that about half of our current General Council are young people under 25 years of age.

The Woodcraft Folk in Scotland and Wales (where it is known as Gwerin-y-Coed) have their own Councils, and there are also six English regional Councils. Each autumn the nations and regions hold their own Gatherings, at which members make decisions that can be fed into the following summer’s gathering of the whole movement. The organisation’s head office is based in South London, where the administration of the organisation takes place and where the small team of paid staff, headed by our General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary, is based. Here is also the Folk Supply department stocking educational resources, shirts and other merchandise.

Residential Outdoor Education Centres

The Woodcraft Folk has five outdoor centres at which much of our educational work is done: Cudham Activities Centre in Kent, Darsham Centre, a refurbished railway station in East Anglia, Hamsterley Forest Centre, in a beautiful woodland area of County Durham, Height Gate, located high on the Pennine moors above Hebden Bridge and Lockerbrook Outdoor Centre in the Peak District. Lurgashall Park Farm Campsite is in Sussex.
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This handbook was commissioned by the Woodcraft Folk Northern Regional Council and written by Marie Waugh © The Woodcraft Folk - 2001.
INTRODUCTION

This is a handbook for those wanting to start an under 6’s educational Woodcraft Folk group in their area, either as a lone group or as part of an existing WF district. It is also a valuable resource of ideas and advice for existing Woodchips groups. The handbook can also be used as a tool for community groups who are thinking of setting up an under 6’s group in their area: why not think about a partnership with the Woodcraft Folk?

The pack contains background information about how under 6’s educational work began informally and formally within the Woodcraft Folk from the 1980’s onwards. The aims and objectives of Woodchips groups in the context of the wider Woodcraft Folk aims and principles are compiled. There are practical sections on the mechanics of starting a group in your area; ideas for organising your collective; some thoughts on your first residential trip; and photocopiable programme ideas including theme ideas, songs, role plays and games for easy use. There are resource lists of books, organisations and websites for further reading and research. There are specimen forms that can be adjusted to local needs or photocopied directly. There are head office admin forms that can be photocopied, filled in and sent direct to them. Those who have started a group will find ideas on how to develop and strengthen their groups and begin to think about the transition from Woodchips to Elfins.

The programme ideas and experiences in this handbook are based mainly on material and research carried out at the Keighley Woodchips group from 1997-2001 with additional material kindly provided by subsequent pilot groups in Cambridge, Chorlton (Manchester), Wirkenhead and Diss (Norfolk). These pilots were developed as part of the Woodcraft Folk’s ‘Dancing to A Stronger Beat’ strategic review, which aimed to explore innovative ways of delivering the Woodcraft Folk curriculum to a wider audience.

WHAT MAKES WOODCHIPS DIFFERENT TO OTHER TODDLER GROUPS?

- It’s a more structured learning environment with more educational input than general toddler groups
- Children are encouraged to play and learn collectively
- There may be a more adult-gender balanced environment (compared to some ‘mother and toddler’ groups)
- There is greater opportunity for input by parents in a collective, shared environment
- It is a foundation for children joining the older age groups
THE BIRTH OF THE WOODCHIPS........

The Woodpigeons

There have been under 6’s involved in the Woodcraft Folk for many years; younger siblings have long since followed their brothers and sisters along the trail. Children have even been born at our camps! More structured, functional groups appeared in the 1980’s, for example in Manchester where creche provision was made to allow young children to be looked after whilst Elfins met or training courses took place. Younger children were sometimes called ‘woodpigeons’.

In the mid-1990s the movement began to discuss setting up experimental projects to investigate new ways of delivering our curriculum. It was agreed that each region should attempt to run one such project, the exact nature of which would depend upon the interests of the region and ideas which were generated locally. Ideas from around the country were diverse and included under 5’s groups, after school clubs, monthly rural groups, cyber-groups, summer camp programmes and so on.

The Northern Development Committee and Northern Officer began to devise a plan to look into under 6’s groups as a means of generating more adult support and of bringing our programme to more children.

The West Yorkshire Experiment

An experimental pilot Parent and Toddler style group, based in Keighley, West Yorkshire got the ball rolling in September 1997. Marie Waugh (the then Northern Officer) and Julie Thorpe (Northern Development Council and National Council member) knew of a number of people in the area with children in the under-five age group who had already expressed interest in the Folk during the setting up of an Elfin group in the nearby village of Haworth. They could be involved on a regular basis with their own children, giving a dual perspective on the development of the group as both Woodcraft Folk ‘activists’ and as parent-members of the group.

The reasons for interest in this type of group expressed by the parents are informative. They included: a) identification with the core values and philosophy of the Woodcraft Folk; b) a desire for more structured environment with more educational input than general parent &toddler groups; c) a desire for better gender balance between adults in the group (other groups tend to be predominantly ‘mother’ and toddler groups);
d) a desire for greater opportunity for input by parents into the group’s activities. The aims of the group, then, became apparent after a number of months and have remained at the core of the group ever since (see the section on Aims). The chosen name, ‘woodchips’, has also stuck.

The organisation, the programme, the number of children, the time and length of the sessions, the age groups and so on were all subject to experimentation, though eventually settled into an agreed pattern. The ways in which the adults have organised themselves as a collective has varied with time.

As this was a pilot project, the adults were challenged not only with delivering a programme, but also with trying out and testing games, activities, songs and so on. Over time these were collected, devised and adapted from existing Woodcraft Folk and other resources. Programme ideas and resources lists were recorded in order to share with future groups.

Initially, the programme was designed to draw out the skills of the parents in areas which they felt confident to volunteer for. A little later, themes were developed for activities to be based around. With more understanding and familiarity of the Woodcraft Folk and its aims and principles came more obviously Woodcraft Folk-type activities.

The programme materials developed over time have had varied results from the children and the adults. On the whole most things attempted have worked very well. Occasionally, some ideas didn’t work so well or failed abysmally. Some things worked well sometimes and flopped at others – e.g. the news circle (when 15 young children are sharing their news, listening to each other and being patient) has seen extremities of perfection to disaster!

Once the group became established the numbers of children at each session remained at a steady 15-20. The group was open to all under 6’s, but essentially the group consisted of under 4’s since children began to drift off to nursery schools. Some children left at 3½ as parents chose to take them to school nursery when they reached that age; however, others arranged nursery places to complement the Woodchips social group and so continued until they started school full time at 4. The Keighley experience suggests a lack of Woodcraft Folk provision between 4 years and 6 years when the children can officially join an Elfin group. (See section on transition to Elfins).
Woodchips groups like that in Keighley can bring in a vast amount of new energy, skills and commitment from a large number of adult leaders. They can come to know the Woodcraft Folk as something they do with their children rather than a place where they send them off to on their own. Experience suggests that adults enjoy coming to the group as much as the children - this bodes well for their future involvement with the organisation.

Other pilot groups

As well as the innovative woodchips development in Keighley, others in the Woodcraft Folk have also seen work with under 6s as an opportunity to expand their programme and recruit new adults. Cambridge set sail with an exciting Saturday morning Playgroup style group for 3-5's to complement their growing district. A Saturday morning parent and toddler style group called Merseybank Woodchips was developed in Chorlton, Manchester (who became the first district to have all the age groups up to DF's). Birkenhead, too, wanted to expand their educational programme from birth to adulthood and developed not just one Woodchips group but two, due to the amount of interest in their area.

Unfortunately, the pilot Woodchips group in Cambridge closed after a successful 1½ yrs due to a lack of new adults and children getting involved once the initial children reached Elfin age. If Woodchips groups are to flourish, new children and adults are needed on a continuing basis to replenish those leaving.

After the fantastic and successful results of these pilot projects the Woodcraft Folk’s Annual Gathering of 2001 formally recognised Woodchips groups, for 5’s and under, in the constitution. It is anticipated many more groups will now be set up - hence this handbook.
WOODCHIPS AIMS AND PRINCIPLES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WOODCRAFT FOLK

All Woodcraft Folk groups and adults agree to accept the aims of principles of the Woodcraft Folk [See Appendix 1], and the Woodchips are no exception.

The Woodchips groups are part of the Woodcraft Folk’s educational movement for social change. They are foundation groups for the later age groups who aim to build a world based on equality, friendship, peace and co-operation. Through appropriate activities and through the organisation of the Woodchips groups, the beliefs of equality, friendship, peace and cooperation are also at the heart of the ‘Woodchips’.

Based on the pilot projects the following aims for groups have been developed:

AIMS OF WOODCHIPS GROUPS

1. Becoming familiar with the basic principles of the Woodcraft Folk: Co-operation, Equality, Friendship and Peace (Both in the programme and the organisation)
2. Developing sharing and co-operation skills
3. Developing respect for and a caring attitude towards others
4. Developing confidence in collective activities
5. Developing self expression and creative skills
6. Enjoying the outdoor environment and developing respect for the natural world
7. Appreciating each other’s efforts and the achievements of the group

Co-operation  Equality  Friendship  Peace
STARTING A NEW GROUP

If you are thinking about starting a new Woodchips group either in a new area where there are no Woodcraft Folk groups at all or within an existing district, you will be given advice, support and help from experienced local volunteers and, where possible, staff. This section includes commonly asked questions about starting a new group and a checklist of things to do before a new group opens and in the early days.

1. How do we go about starting a group in our area?
If you are part of an existing district, you can speak to the district contact person who will either help you in this process or find someone from the regional committee to help. If you're not part of an existing district, you can contact Head Office who will put you in contact with regional council members.

2. How many adults do we need to start a group?
For a parent and toddler style group 6-8 children and adults would be a good number to start with. This can be built on through word of mouth and local networks. If you are starting a playgroup style group we recommend 4 or 5 adults initially, again building up the adult numbers as time goes by. For this type of group you will probably need 4 adults each session (this may be 2 core adults and 2 from a parents' rota). If there is just one or two of you interested, take a look at Q3 for ideas on where to find more interested adults.

3. Where can we advertise for children and adult leaders?
Ideas include:
- Telling your friends and acquaintances
- Local library
- Local shops and post offices
- Supermarket info boards
- Through health visitor networks
- Parent and toddler groups
- Local schools newsletters
- National Childbirth Trust (NCT)
- Family centres
- Gingerbread
- Labour groups and unions
- Community centres
- Colleges
- Green groups e.g. Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace,
- Local authority info shops
- Volunteer bureaux
- Commission for racial equality
- Childminders association
4. Do we have to have qualifications in childcare or youth work?
No, all our volunteers participate because they like children. You don’t need special skills although most adults quickly find that they have interests and talents to offer. If you have patience, a sense of humour and enthusiasm for cooperative education you’re in the right place. All sorts of people get involved: parents, grandparents, childminders, young people. Training sessions with local volunteers will allow you to become more familiar with the WF and to have time to talk about ways of working with small children, programme planning and basic finances.

5. How are groups organised?
As in all Woodcraft Folk groups there are jobs that need to be shared out between the adult leaders/helpers. A list is shown here, this isn’t exclusive and will vary depending on individual circumstances:
   a. Subs collector/treasurer. This may/may not be the same person. The tasks include collecting the subs each week and keeping basic accounts for the group
   b. Key holder/s. This person may also liaise with the venue owner.
   c. Contact person. S/He will be the communication link between group, district, region and nation and receive mailings and enquiry calls.
   d. Publicity person. S/he may contact the local press as appropriate and coordinate materials to be used when publicising the group for recruitment purposes as the group gets established.
   e. Fundraising person. S/He may apply to local funders for small grants as and when appropriate. Some groups may be financed entirely by the subs.

Others may include: Materials/equipment person.
The major tasks involved are organising and delivering the educational activities, singing, games and snacks. There are a variety of ways in which the adults organise themselves – see the section below on collective variations. Planning meetings are usually held every half-term or termly and sometimes are combined with a social event for adults.

6. How many children are there in Woodchips groups?
We recommend that groups start with lower numbers until adults become more confident and settled. Since groups are educational and developmental we advise on a maximum of 15 and a minimum number of 6-8 depending on the size of the venue and the number of adult leaders. Obviously, large numbers make it difficult to cooperate as a group and participate in collective activities. Equally, low numbers make it difficult for group games.
7. What happens during each session?
You may choose a standard format for each session. The advantages are that the children and the adults alike grow to know what to expect each week which can make life easier all round. Obviously, this doesn’t have to be too rigid and can be shuffled around accordingly. The Session may include:

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<td>Music/singing</td>
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See the Programme Ideas section for a flavour of what groups get up to.

8. Where and when do groups meet?
Most groups meet once a week at a local Hall, Community centre, Church hall, Friends Meeting House, etc. It usually depends on what is available in your area. Look for somewhere preferably that is carpeted, is on the ground floor, has space for prams and has a kitchen. You may choose to meet during the day if the age group is under 4, after school if you want to be open to all 3-5 year olds or at the weekend as a Saturday/Sunday club. Some groups meet only during term time, others organise family activities for school holidays (this enables older siblings, partners or grandparents) to join in the fun.

9. How much do groups charge?
Like all Woodcraft Folk groups a small charge to attend sessions is made; you will decide what amount is suitable to the needs of your community. A small amount will bring in funds to pay for expenses such as materials, hall hire and snacks. However, you may decide that fundraising would allow you to keep subs low to ensure that the cost isn’t a factor in excluding anyone. You may decide that second/third children come at a reduced rate and other concessions.

10. Will we be insured and police checked?
   i) All Woodcraft folk groups are required to register with the central organisation. The groups will then receive mailings about events, training and news. Adults working with children should also become individual members of the organisation, and go through the
Woodcraft Folk’s simple child protection procedure. This among other things ensures that groups are insured for public liability and accident claims at group sessions, events or camps. You may decide, if you are following the playgroup approach, that the group will pay for/subsidise regular core leaders’ membership fees. However, in the parent and toddler approach the numbers of adults is likely to be too high to allow this. You may consider supporting adults who have difficulties paying adult membership fees. There are concessionary rates available.

ii) For the insurance to be viable, there must be 2 adult members at each session. All adults who participate in residentials must be adult members and have signed the child protection forms. As a sensible safeguard, the Woodcraft Folk like other children’s organisations will make use of the new Criminal Records Bureau to ensure that adult members do not have convictions for offences which would make it inappropriate for them to work with children.

iii) Each district association is required to have their own child protection policy (a standard one is available for adaptation).

11. Where does the money come from to run groups?
New groups receive a start up pack from head office; this includes some resources needed to open a group. Many Co-op societies are prepared to help new Woodcraft Folk groups, and an experienced member either from your district or regional council will help you make an application for a start-up grant. This can pay for initial materials such as pens, paints, paper, books, toys and balls.

You may want to apply annually to your local authority community fund or to organise fundraising events for specific things e.g. a parachute, a training residential, a summer camp.

12. Do you have an equal opportunities policy?
The Woodcraft Folk has an anti-discrimination philosophy in all its work; there are other policies and procedures which have been devised by members to ensure safety and well being at group night and camps e.g. camp guidelines, child protection policy/guidelines, drugs education policy, insurance info. All of these are available from Head office and can be downloaded from the website, www.woodcraft.org.uk.
Once the group is established some of these questions and the specific answers that you have developed locally can be made up into a leaflet for your group. This will enable new members to know what to expect from the group and how they can contribute.

HOW GROUPS CAN BE ORGANISED: COLLECTIVE VARIABLES

The great thing about working in a collective is that these tasks can be shared according to the skills, interests and time people have available. So whilst it may seem like there’s a lot to do - ‘many hands make light work’. There are so many ways in which the adults in Woodchips groups could organise themselves. Some are listed below to give you ideas of how your group may work well given all your circumstances. A summary of tried and tested styles is to be found in Appendix 4.

THE PLAYGROUP APPROACH
This is where a few adults run the sessions and children are left, as at playgroups. The same 3 or 4 may run the group each week. The adults may vary according to a rota of parents/carers involved. The number of adults will need to be appropriate to the ages of the children. The Children Act (1989) suggests the following ratios of adults : children.

- 0-2’s  1:3 children
- 2-3’s  1:4 children
- 3-5’s  1: 5 children

Planning sessions may either include only the core adults or be open to all parents. The latter will increase the ideas base and be valuable to the group’s long-term success.

THE PARENT AND TODDLER APPROACH
This is when an adult (perhaps a parent, grandparent, carer or child-minder) accompanies each child.

The educational programme can be delivered in a number of ways.

i) One adult organises all: a rota is established at a planning session with individual names attached to one week only where they bring/organise all the activities/snack. Themes can be either decided collectively at the planning session or left up to the individual to work with a theme heading i.e. Autumn

ii) Many adults organise the session: the whole session is broken down into headings (as in the example given in the box above) and responsibility for that section is shared by different adults. Activities can either be decided by the individual adult responsible or collectively decided at the planning meeting.
iii) Rota changes: Each week adults put their names to different parts of the session (as in the example above)

iv) Rota stays the same: Each session the same person is responsible for only one of the above things, eg. Sandra brings snack and Abdul does main activity

THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH
You may consider working in partnership with another organisation in your community to achieve your aims. There are many community initiatives being set up by central Government which are designed to develop and improve the under 5's educational and play provision eg Surestart. There are also 29 early excellence centres around the country that provide high quality early years (under 5's) education, alongside childcare, family support and learning, adult education, childminder support and parenting education. [See Resources section for more information on these] There are advantages in working together – there may be more resources available i.e. Worker support, venue, training, financial support and so on. Other partners may help you find interested members such as environmental groups who have similar aims and objectives to us with no provision for the under 6's. Examples may include WATCH, Friends of the Earth, CND [see Resources section for more information].

COMMUNICATION – A 'PHONE TREE'
It may be that there are 15-20 adults connected to a collective. Communication is very important and effective ways of communication will be needed if information is to be shared easily and effectively. Many groups use a 'phone tree' idea. This is when all the telephone numbers are arranged in a pattern such as that below. The person with the message puts themselves at the top of the tree and telephones down the branches, not forgetting to remind whoever was planned to ring them to ring the person at the top of the tree instead. So if E has a message, E will phone B and C and remind B to phone A. Everyone involved needs to have a copy of this with current telephone numbers for it to work!

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CHECKLIST

Before the groups starts you should have:

- Found a suitable place to meet
- Been given a ‘Start Up Pack’ of educational resources from Head Office includes programme ideas, health and safety issues, games, books etc.
- Had some induction training (this may include Woodcraft Folk aims and principles, putting these aims into practice, group work with young children, planning your educational programme)
- Acquired a start up grant from your local Co-op society or local council. More information from Head Office.
- A minimum of two adults registered with the national organisation as paid up members: the Woodchips group also registered with the organisation (this is currently free for Woodchips group) This will provide insurance cover for the group.
- Organised children’s consent/health forms if they are being left in the group (see Appendix 5 for an example of this)
- Planned the first 6 week programme

And decided on:

- How much the subs will be (perhaps 50p-£1, depending on your community’s needs, or could be free if you finds the funds)
- Which day and time suits everyone concerned
- How the group will be organised (see the section on How the group will be organised)
- Which adult will be the ‘contact person’ with the central organisation. They will be the communication link between group, district, region and Head Office.

Other things, which can come later:

- A name for the group (existing groups have chosen names which connect them to their location, historical roots, nature - or are just for fun)
- Basic materials such as pens, paper may be bought before the group starts with the start up grant, or collectively pooled until such a time when funds are available after the group has started
- Open a bank account – preferably with the Coop Bank (see section on Links with the Co-op)
- Divide off the adult roles within the group (see previous section)
- You may want to visit your nearest group to get more of a feel about what groups do. If there isn’t a Woodchips group near you, an Elfin group will still give you a taster.
- Order some Woodcraft Folk Supply items such as T-Shirts, Song Books

Examples of administrative forms are available from head office and on the website
# Programme Ideas

## 1. Sessional Themes

### Woodcraft Folk Values
- Friendship
- Peace
- Co-operation
- Children's rights

### Winter Activities
- Drum making
- Bulb planting
- Bird feeding
- Swimming
- Snow people puppets
- Bread making
- National Trust Hall trip

### Spring Activities
- Introduction to Spring
- Spring streamers
- T-shirt printing
- Butterflies/insects
  - Flowers
  - Seeds
  - Birds
  - Eggs
- Clay pot making and decorating
- Bulb and seed planting activities
- Gardening
- Babies
- A Trip to the seaside

### Our Senses
- Introduction
- Seeing
- Smelling
- Hearing
- Feeling
- Tasting

### Community
- My family
- Other families
- Animal families
- My home and other homes
- Homes around the world
- A barge trip

### People Around the World
- Asia: China
- Africa
- Europe: France
- Arctic

### Earth, Wind Fire
- Lantern making
- A play
- Planting seeds
- Windmills
- Snaky spirally wind mobiles
- Wind chimes
- Making a river
### ANIMALS
- Cow
- Chicken
- Sheep
- Visit to local museum
- Visit to local educational farm

### ART
- Group collage
- Visit art exhibition
- Music and movement
- Baking
- Environmental art
- Mask making
- Water
- Dressing up and drama
- Preparing for a walk
- Going on a walk

### WOOD
- Wooden bead counters
- Woodland walk
- Banner making
- Picture frames
- Origami - boxes, aeroplanes
- Family tree mobiles
- Making musical instruments
- Walk and pooh sticks game

### PLACES
- Arctic
- China
- Space
- The farm
- The moon
- The jungle
- The seaside
- Bottom of the sea
- Allotments and gardens
- The city

### ALL ABOUT ME
- Life size me
- Self-expression - making musical instruments
- Self-expression - music and movement
- Who Am I? - salt dough
- Paper puppets
- Self-adornment - Dressing up/face painting

### OTHER IDEAS
- Environmental art
- Bonfire night celebrations
- Night walk
- Music making
- Self-expression
- Body printing
- Dough making
- Yuletide party
- Lantern making
- Chocolate
- Music and movement
- Visit museum
- Swimming
- Drumming
- Dressing up and Mid Winter party

### COLOURS
- Yellow
- Red
- Blue
- Green
OTHER
Papier maché—musical instruments
Music games
T Shirt decorating
Bird feeding activities

2. A MODEL RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND PROGRAMME

THEME: Native Americans
(but be careful to avoid stereotypes - a good resource is
“More than Moccasins” by Laurie Carlson, ISBN 1-5565-2213-4)

FRIDAY EVENING
❖ Supper, singing, stories

SATURDAY
❖ a.m: drum making, pasta jewellery
❖ Midday: walk and picnic
❖ p.m: shelter and tee-pee making, totems,
  stone painting, hair braiding, face painting, masks
❖ Evening: wide game, camp fire with singing and storytelling

SUNDAY
❖ a.m: trail laying, making ‘special objects’
  (other crafts from Sat)
❖ p.m: clean up
3. IDEAS FOR FULL MOON WALKS

After a very successful evening walk in autumn the day before a November full moon, the Keighley group decided to arrange a series of dark walks on the full moon (alongside the daytime sessions). If you’re lucky you may even get to see a full moon behind the clouds! Below are ideas for night walks in and around your local area. Just being out at night is educational and fun!

1. A WOODLAND WALK
A walk in a local woodland – you may even get to see some animals if you’re really quiet!

2. A PARK WALK
Getting to go on the swings at night is really exciting.

3. A TOWN WALK
A different perspective!

4. A MOORS WALK
Really getting away from it all

5. A DUCK WALK
A walk to a nature reserve or river to feed the ducks - don’t forget the bread

6. A RAILWAY WALK
A walk along the side of a railway and maybe a train ride back!

7. A CASTLE WALK
A walk including a castle at night can be fun – imaginations will go wild!

8. A FIELD WALK
Across a series of fields into the countryside, hopefully where there are no streetlights so the sky can be seen better

Don’t forget: Warm clothes, hot drinks, wellies and torches
The whole family can get involved.
4. ACTIVITIES USING SONGS AND MUSIC

THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN WHO SWALLOWED A FLY
One child is chosen to be the old woman; s/he sits on a chair wearing a parachute or large blanket/sheet as a cloak. Children are chosen to be a fly, a spider, a bird, a cat, a dog, a goat, a cow and a horse. [They could dress up with masks as an optional extra]. Everyone in the group sings the song ‘There was an old woman who swallowed a fly…..’ and each time she swallows a creature the child goes under the parachute/blanket until all are swallowed,’of course’.

I AM THE MUSIC MAKER
All the children have different musical instruments (homemade or otherwise); wind (recorders, hooters), percussion (tambourine, bells, drums, maracas, shakers, rain sticks, triangles, xylophones), string (guitar). Everyone sings:

I am the music maker
And I come from far away
And I can play -y,
What can you play -y?
I play the............
(choose an instrument one child or a group has)

Continue until everyone has had a turn.

IF YOU’RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT
This well known song is sung using musical instruments you have. For example, if you're happy and you know it ‘bang your drum’, ‘jingle your bells’, ‘blow your horn’. Until everyone has had a turn.

MUSICAL GAMES
Co-operative musical statues, hugs, chairs, mats, bumps all go down very well with Woodchips all year round or for party occasions. This can be adapted to fit many session e.g. Musical flowers can be the children are bees looking for pollen, jumping onto newspaper flowers when the music stops. E.g. Musical lillypads can be children as frogs leaping onto lillypads

NAME RHYTHMS
Using your musical instruments in rhythm introduce yourself e.g. “My name is Sanjit” or “My name is Gloria”
WHAT'S MAKING THAT NOISE?
Someone records some household noises e.g. Toilet flushing, tap running, running up and down the stairs, telephone ringing, door bell and so on. These are played back to the children to guess what they are.

BOUNCING UP AND DOWN ON A BIG RED TRACTOR
Everyone stands in the middle of the room and jumps up and down to the song:

Bouncing up and down on a big red tractor,
Bouncing up and down on a big red tractor
Bouncing up and down on a big red tractor
Bringing in the hay

Red is substituted in turn by the children with other colours or appropriate themes.

10 CURRENT BUNS
A good name game activity
All the children stand in a circle, the title depends on how many children there are! Everyone sings this variation of 10 green bottles:-

10 current buns in a baker's shop
Big and round with a cherry on the top
Along comes..........(child's name) with a penny one day
Bought a current bun and took it right away

CAMPFIRE ACTIVITIES
Indoor campfire songs around a fire made from withy sticks and tissue paper lit by a nightlight

EXPRESS YOURSELF
Different types of music are recorded for the children to 'move to'. Examples could be the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies, La Fille de la Mer. This may be different music styles e.g. Rock, pop, classical, punk, folk. Choose a variety of sounds that will encourage them to move and dance in different ways. The children could be different animals, feelings, actions and so on.
**FROGGIE IN THE MIDDLE**

A name and chasing game to the froggy song:-

Froggie in the middle
And s/he can’t get out,
s/he can’t get out,
s/he can’t get out.
Froggie in the middle
And s/he can’t get out.
Here’s a fly to lure her/him out!

One child is chosen as the Froggie, and another as the fly. The Froggie squats and jumps in the middle of the ring, with the other children, including the fly, in a hand-joined circle around him/her moving around and singing. At the last line, the fly steps into the centre of the ring, at which point the Froggie has to catch him/her. (They can go outside of the circle for the chase.) A new Froggie is then chosen, and the game repeated. You may want to use props such as a Frog mask and Fly wings for added fun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. OTHER GAMES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most of the group games can be made up using songs and stories you have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storybooks can lead to copying, action or guessing games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Catch the spotlight</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>With the lights off an adult shines the torch around the floor, the children try to jump on the light before it moves again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Touch something blue</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult shouts out ‘touch something blue’; everyone does and continues with other colours/objects/textures. The children can take it in turns to call out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Feely boxes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guessing game. Each child has a turn at guessing what’s hidden in a cardboard box by feeling through a small hole in the front. Adults behind the boxes rotate household objects. Good fun!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Fuzzy Felt faces</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each takes a turn at putting pieces of felt onto a face background to make up silly faces. Continue until fed up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Parachute games</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See the Woodcraft Folk ‘Games, Games, Games’ Book for ideas – many of the games are suitable or can be adapted for this age group. Small parachutes are available for Woodchips groups at under £100.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EARTH, AIR OR WATER GAME

With the group standing in a circle, the first person throws the ball to someone and calls out either earth, air or water. The person catching the ball has to name an animal that lives in the earth (e.g. Worm), the air (e.g. Owl) or water (e.g. crocodile). One adult could call out either earth, air or water if the children are very young.

6. ACTIVITIES USING STORIES

HANDA’S SURPRISE – Eileen Browne
Read the story about little girl in African village who takes a basket of fruit to her friend in another village. Fruit get stolen by animals on route but is replaced by a surprise by the time she arrives. Have a basket of the same fruits - orange, mango, guava, passion fruit, banana, avocado, pineapple. Hand each round to feel and smell and talk about. Why does Handa carry the basket on her head? Each has a go at carrying something on head. Choose two children to be Handa and Akeyo. Rest choose an animal. Face paint as animals (or make masks if time).

Dress up Handa and Akeyo. Act out the story and eat the fruit!

GOING ON A BEAR HUNT – Michael Rosen & Helen Oxenbury
This could be either an indoor or outdoor activity. As you tell the story of the bear hunt everyone acts out going through the various environments described in this story book i.e. Long wavy grass, deep cold river, thick oozy mud. A more adventurous (definitely outdoor) alternative is to create the different environments using paddling pool for river, cornflour for oozy mud and tepee for cave!

For a storybook list see the following section on Resources.

7. NAME SONGS AND GAMES

WILL YOU MEET A FRIEND OF MINE
Will you meet a friend of mine?
Friend of mine
Friend of mine,
Will you meet a friend of mine?
This friend of mine is ________ (name of person sitting on your left)
[To the tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb]

BALL ROLLING
Sitting down with legs open, each person calls out their name and rolls the ball into the legs of someone else, who calls out their name. Progressing onto calling out the name of the person you have rolled the ball to in a group where the children know each other

WILLOUGHBY WALLOUGHBY
Name song. Start the activity singing:

Willoughby Walloughby **Wee**
An elephant sat on **me**
Willoughby Walloughby **Woo**
An elephant sat on **you**

Each person’s name is sung after Walloughby changing the first letter of the name to W:

Willoughby Walloughby **Warah**
An elephant sat on **Sarah**,
Willoughby Walloughby **Wariq**
An elephant sat on **Tariq**

Finishing with
Willoughby Walloughby **Wus**
An elephant sat on **Us**

In a large group you may choose to sing the children’s names first and then the adults for some cohesion and order!

PARACHUTE NAME GAME

Taking in turns to lie in the middle of the parachute, the others carefully pull the chute tightly and lift the child up and twirl him/her around to the song of jelly on a plate:

Freya’s on the chute; Freya’s on the chute; Wibble wobble; Wibble wobble; Freya’s on the chute OR Sausage in a pan:
Rupert’s in the pan; Rupert’s in the pan; sizzle, sozzle; sizzle sozzle; Rupert’s in the pan

8. PHOTO-COPIABLE PROGRAMME SCHEDULES

Pages 25 – 33 contain photo-copiable sample programme schedules. Each has ideas for between 4 and 8 sessions though most fit in with the length of a typical school half-term. By all means mix and match them, adapt ideas and devise your own programmes. If you do then let Folk House have a copy so they can be circulated around groups or posted to the website.
## WOODCRAFT FOLK PRINCIPLES
This could be used as an introductory theme

### SESSION 1: FRIENDSHIP
**MUSIC NAME GAME:** In a circle someone stands in the middle. Everyone sings: Will you meet a friend of mine...each time the person in the middle chooses someone to stand in the middle and they sit down. Alternative - introduce the person next to you

**DANCE:** The more we get together

**SONG:** Link your hands together, If you're friendly and you know it clap your hands

### SESSION 2: PEACE
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** Drawing around our hands and cutting out the shape, we can then decorate them and finally stick them together in a circle

**SONG:** Mighty song of peace, other friendship songs, Wondrous thing

**STORY:** Tusk, Tusk

### SESSION 3: CO-OPERATION
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** Making chocolate crispy buns together! In a circle the bowl is passed around to take turns mixing in the rice crispies and the chocolate

**Co-operative games**

**SONG:** Pop goes the weasel

### SESSION 4: EQUALITY
**GAMES:** Giant Jigsaws: in small groups each has a piece of the jigsaw to complete

**SNACK:** Cutting up a cake to share equally

### SESSION 5: CHILDREN’S RIGHTS
**The right to a name:**

**MAIN ACTIVITY:** Painting posters of our names and decorating

**SONGS AND GAMES:** relating to our names

**STORY:** Something Else

### SESSION 6: CAMPING
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** tent and lantern making (card, tissue paper and tea-lights)

**GAME:** dressing up for a hot and cold day's walking (using a bag of various clothing)

**CAMPFIRE SONGS:** around an indoor camp fire (made earlier from withie sticks and tissue paper - lit by candles)

E.g. Lazy camper, Dorcas, Are you Mr. Riley?, Camp fire’s burning, Blue lake and rocky shore, A camping we will go, I met a bear along the trail, I’m going camping
MY COMMUNITY

SESSION 1: MY FAMILY
MAIN ACTIVITY: choose paper cut out people to represent members of family. Decorate them using felt tips/paints/collage and stick them all on large paper.

SESSION 2: OTHER FAMILIES
SONG/GAME: How many people live at your house?
Each taking turns to count and say who lives at their house
MAIN ACTIVITY: flash cards with different family portraits:
each chooses a family and gives them names/titles and says something about what’s happening in the family picture
STORY: ‘Jenny lives with Eric and Martin’

SESSION 3: ANIMAL FAMILIES
GAME: Who lives here? Using a story book with flaps about animal homes
MAIN ACTIVITY: make an animal house
STORY: there are endless animal stories to choose from!

SESSION 4: MY HOME AND HOMES AROUND THE WORLD
MAIN ACTIVITY: making our home from card board box and painting/decorating them
SONG: Little boxes

SESSION 5: HOMES AROUND THE WORLD
INTRO: Looking at books with pictures of houses from around the world - asking questions and talking about similarities and differences. Then choosing our favourite house
MAIN ACTIVITY: modelling clay: building a clay house and decorating it
STORY: Charlie
SONG: ‘Puff the magic dragon’

SESSION 6: A BARGE TRIP
TRIP OUT to visit where others live i.e. Boat trip, local peace camp, park with different houses around, local tepee
Activities to include: making drawings, songs, stories, food
SESSION 1: PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

INTRO: Using mats as magic carpets you can travel around the world to see how others live, differences between races and cultures (and similarities), what they eat, songs they sing - you could use a globe or map as you go.

GAME: Sitting in a circle everyone puts their hand in the middle. Everyone is a different colour, what colours are there, who is the lightest/darkest, biggest/smallest, and so on.

ACTIVITY: draw round hands and decorate to make a ring of friendship around a world.

SONG: Wondrous thing.

SESSION 2: ASIA - CHINA

ACTIVITIES: Flag making, fan making.

SONGS:

FOOD: eating snacks with chopsticks.

SESSION 3: AFRICA

STORY: Handa’s Surprise.

DISCUSSION: about the different fruit.

DRAMA: dressing up and face-painting to act out the story of Handa’s Surprise.

(see section 5 in this chapter on activities using stories)

MUSIC: Dancing and drumming to African music tape.

SESSION 4: EUROPE - FRANCE

INTRODUCTIONS: saying hello and introducing yourself in French.

SONGS: Frere Jacques - and others using the tune.

ACTIVITY: Group building of Eiffel tower from cardboard boxes and decorating.

FOOD: croissants.

SESSION 5: ARCTIC


SPRING

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO SPRING
CHANGE AND GROWTH
Introduce the spring topic: very short discussion about spring; nature brings life again and about change
MAIN ACTIVITY: making ‘popcorn’
SONGS: Pop goes the weasel, 123 open your eyes
STORIES: The Tree in the Wood, The bully
POEMS: spring

SESSION 2: SPRING STREAMERS
MAIN ACTIVITY: spring streamers made from wither-wood and tissue paper
SONGS:
STORIES: The Lamb

SESSION 3: T-SHIRT PRINTING
MAIN ACTIVITY: T-shirt painting/printing (using baking shapes and brushes, paints and glitter paints)
SONGS: 123, Red Tractor, Put your finger...
STORY: Owl babies
GAMES: pretending to grow from a seed into a plant like a guided fantasy

SESSION 4: BUTTERFLIES/INSECTS
MAIN ACTIVITY: painting card butterflies (paint half and fold over) - on sticks with pipe cleaner antennae
FACE PAINTING: butterflies, spider, centipede, ladybird, dragonfly
STORY/VIDEO: The very hungry caterpillar and The very quiet cricket
SONG: Creepy crawly caterpillar
### SESSION 5: FLOWERS
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** making tissue paper flowers  
(using pipe cleaners, assorted tissue paper and small green bottles)  
**GAME:** Musical flowers (children are bees looking for pollen jumping onto newspaper flowers when music stops)  
**STORY:** The Mixed Up Chameleon

### SESSION 6: SEEDS
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** seed sprouting in jars  
**GAME:** guess what’s inside the fruit (selection of fruits with/without seeds – to eat for snack  
**STORY:** The Oak Tree, Who am I?  
**SONGS:** 123, Oats and Beans and Barley grows, The green grass grows all around

### SESSION 7: BIRDS
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** making nests  
(with coloured feathers and aluminium pie cases)  
**ACTION SONGS:** see previous week  
**STORY:** 'Chicks' – its life story

### SESSION 8: EGGS
**Treasure hunt – finding eggs with rhyming clues scattered around a park**  
During Easter or Ostara holidays from school older children could make clues or hide eggs for the younger children  
Eggs could be chocolate (fair trade of course) or paper
## THEME: COLOURS

### SESSION 1: YELLOW - Sunshine
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** stained glass sunshines
(acetate and permanent paints - very messy!)
**SONGS:** ‘We’re climbing up sunshine mountain’,
‘The sun has got its hat on’
**GAME:** ‘8 fluffy teddies’ (tune of 10 green bottles)
**STORY:** ‘The Sun Song’

### SESSION 2: RED - Fire
**MAIN ACTIVITY:** lantern making
(card, tissue paper and nightlights)
and ‘8 shiny lanterns’ song blowing out the candles
**CAMPFIRE SONGS:** around an indoor camp fire
(made earlier from withy sticks and tissue paper - lit by candles)
E.g. Lazy camper, Dorcas, Are you Mr. Riley? Camp fire’s burning, Blue lake and rocky shore
**STORY:** ‘Francis the Firefly’

### SESSION 3: BLUE - Water and Sky
**Making fishing nets at a local stream**
(using canes, tights and staples)
Stream dipping - identifying water creatures
with the nets made

### SESSION 4: GREEN - Trees and grass
**Environmental art**
**Making pictures with leaves/grass**
**SONGS:** ‘10 green bottles’
### OUR SENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO OUR SENSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCE</strong> the subject with a large drawing of a head. The group decorate/colour in the giant head. They can then guess where the senses are.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GAME:</strong> using fuzzy felt, the children can collectively make up silly faces</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION 2: SEEING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAIN ACTIVITY:</strong> making binoculars from card and decorating them</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GAME:</strong> with lights off, spotting the torch light around the room using binoculars and jumping on the lights</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STORY:</strong> Brown bear, brown bear</td>
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<tr>
<th>SESSION 3: SMELLING</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAIN ACTIVITY:</strong> Smelling some real flowers and drawing pictures of them; using perfume to bring them to life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GAME:</strong> guessing the smells in the jars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STORY:</strong> Who's making that smell?</td>
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<tr>
<th>SESSION 4: HEARING</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAIN ACTIVITY:</strong> Listening to a pre-recorded tape/CD of household noises the children guess what they are.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MUSIC:</strong> a compilation tape/CD is made of different types of music which the children move around the room to - they could be different animals or feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STORY:</strong> Who's making that noise</td>
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<tr>
<th>SESSION 5: FEELING</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAIN ACTIVITY:</strong> Guessing what's inside feely boxes (cotton wool, a brush, a shell, a cuddly toy etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GAMES:</strong> Touch something.....(all touch blue/soft/cold etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SONG:</strong> Head and shoulders knees and toes (slow and fast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STORY:</strong> a feely book with different textures</td>
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<tr>
<th>SESSION 6: TASTING</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAIN ACTIVITY:</strong> barbeque with different foods to taste/guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parachute games</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ALL ABOUT ME

SESSION 1: LIFE SIZE ME
MAIN ACTIVITY: draw around the children's body onto some large paper/lining paper. Older children may be able to help each other. The children can then decorate their life size selves. Everyone can guess whose is who at the end of the session.

SESSION 2: SELF-EXPRESSON (I)
MAIN ACTIVITY: making musical instruments from recycled materials - drums, maracas, flappers
SONGS: I am the music man; Skip to my Lou (animal actions); Clap, clap partner
GAME: growing into a tree from a seed

SESSION 3: SELF EXPRESSION (II)
MUSIC AND MOVEMENT
MAIN ACTIVITY: Pieces of music to express yourself to:  dance of the sugar plum fairies (scarves); musical statues (in pairs); (fish on parachute); La fille de la mer
SONGS: Dingle dangle scarecrow, Jack in the box, If you're happy and you know it clap your hands

SESSION 4: WHO AM I?
MAIN ACTIVITY: making a salt dough self
SONGS for very young children/babies: round and round the garden, this little piggy
ACTION SONGS: The bear went up the mountain, Peter rabbit
GAME: fussy felt face: all having one piece each to put on face outline

SESSION 5: PUPPETS
MAIN ACTIVITY: Card puppets of self using metal pins for moveable limb joints
SONGS: Dingle, dangle scarecrow

SESSION 6: SELF-ADORNMENT!
MAIN ACTIVITY: dressing up, face painting and body art
Children can decorate themselves and others - have lots of mirrors around
ANIMALS

The list of animal ideas is endless – here are a few farmyard sessions

SESSION 1: COWS
SONG AND DRAMA ACTIVITY: There was an old woman who swallowed a fly (group enacting the story)
CRAFT: cow masks
ACTION SONG: ‘when all the cows are sleeping’

SESSION 2: CHICKENS
MAIN ACTIVITY: Making hats using chicken feathers
STORY: Chicken Lickin’

SESSION 3: SHEEP
CRAFT ACTIVITY: making sheep badges from real sheep’s wool collected earlier
ART ACTIVITIES: Colouring in picture and wool collage
STORY: ‘The naughty sheep’
GAMES: PARACHUTE games

SESSION 4: VISIT
VISIT to a local museum and its animal collection
animal face painting
CRAFT/STORY: animal finger puppets become characters for story

SESSION 5: VISIT TO EDUCATIONAL FARM
Animals to see and feed, pictures to do, barn adventure play area and picnic

REMEMBER:
THIS AGE GROUP LOVE TO DO THINGS OVER AND OVER AGAIN – THEY NEVER TIRE OF THEM. SO REPEAT ACTIVITIES, SONGS AND GAMES AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE – IT’S EDUCATIONAL AND FUN!
RESOURCES

WOODCRAFT FOLK RESOURCES: FROM FOLK SUPPLY

c/o Folk House, 13 Ritherdon Rd, London SW17 8QE
See the website for more information: www.woodcraft.org.uk

- Cooperative Games Books
- Song Books (inc. guitar chords)
- History of WF books
- T-shirts
- Resource packs
- Health and Safety manual
- Training Packs
- Merchandise (badges, pens, tattoos)
- Publicity materials: leaflets

STORY BOOKS: The list is endless - here are a few

Action Rhymes: J. Foster & C. Thompson

Finger Rhymes: J. Foster & C. Thompson
ISBN: 0-19-276142-0

Tusk Tusk: David McKee
ISBN: 0-09-930650-6

The Sun Song: J. Marzollo
ISBN: 0-06-020787-6

Francis the Firefly: Home Office A4 publication 1996

The Owl & the Pussycat: Ian Beck
ISBN: 0-552-52819-6

The Tree in The Wood: Chris Manson

Who am I?: Judith Nicholls
ISBN: 0-7214-9654-7

The Wild: Bob Graham
ISBN: 0-7214-9654-7

Handa’s Surprise: Eileen Brown
ISBN: 0-7445-3634-0

Owl Babies: Martin Waddell

The Very Hungry Caterpillar: Eric Carle
ISBN: 0-241-00300-8

The very Quiet Cricket: Eric Carle
ISBN: 0-241-13785-3

Rosie’s Walk: Pat Hutchins
ISBN: 0-370-32446-3

Scarlette Beane: Karen Wallace
ISBN: 0-192-72362-6

Going On a bear hunt: M. Rosen & H. Oxenbury

Who’s making that smell?: Stephen Cartwright
ISBN: 0-7445-5572-8

Whose Nose: Jeanette Rowe

The Smelly Book: Babette Cole
ISBN: 0-00-663330-7

Something Else: Kathryn Cave
ISBN: 0-7460-1681-6

The Very Hungry Caterpillar: Eric Carle
ISBN: 0-241-00300-8

Handa’s Surprise: Eileen Brown
ISBN: 0-7445-3634-0

Nothing: Mick Inkpen
ISBN: 0-340-64650-0
**ACTIVITY IDEAS BOOKS:**

- Ecoart! Earth Friendly Art and Craft Experiences for 3-9's: Laurie Carlson  
  ISBN: 0913589683
- Kids Camp: activities for backyard & wilderness: Laurie Carlson  
- Wacky Guide to Outdoor Fun: A. Snow  
  ISBN: 0744530121
- Celebrating the great Mother - earth honouring activities for parents and children: C Johnson & M Shaw  
  ISBN: 0-89281-550-7
- Strawberry drums: Adrian Mitchell  

**WOODCHIP SONG IDEAS:**

- Wondrous thing
- Skip to my Lou
- Sunshine Mountain
- Wind the bobbin up
- Creepy crawly caterpillar
- 123 open your eyes and see
- Peter Rabbit
- Row row row your boat
- I hear thunder
- The bear climbed over the mountain
- One finger one thumb keep moving
- Bouncing on a big red tractor
- We all clap hands together
- Horsey, horsey
- Twinkle twinkle little star
- The rabbit and the hunter
- Copy copy copy me do
- I can sing a rainbow
- Head and shoulders, knees and toes  
  (Parts of plants)
- Baa baa black (white) sheep
- Oats and beans and barley grows
- Over in the meadow
- The animal fair
- Sing a song of snowflakes
- The muffin man
- The ants go marching
- Here we go round the mulberry bush
- I'm a little teapot
- Dusty Bluebells
- There was an old woman who swallowed a fly
- 10 current buns
- I am the music maker
- If you're happy and you know it
- Will you meet a friend of mine?
- Old Macdonald had a farm
- Campfire's burning
- Incy wincy spider
- The wheels on the bus
BOOK CLUBS:

Letterbox Library: mail order specialists in anti-racist/sexist books
71-3 Allen Rd, London N16 8RY Tel: 020 7503 4801
info@letterboxlibrary.com

SOME WEBSITES:
Activities - general:
www.keighley.woodchips.care4free.net www.personal.engin.umich.edu
www.kkafe.net www.theideabox.com
www.pagan.parenting.com www.about.com
www.candlelightstories.com www.bbc.co.uk/education/tweenies
www.2-life.com www.geocities.com
www.childfun.com www.preschooleducation.com
www.underfives.co.uk
music ideas:
www.kididdles.com www.hummingbirded.com
www.mabels.com www.folkineducation.co.uk
Other:
www.early-education.org.uk www.dfee.org.uk

ORGANISATIONS:

1. PRESCHOOL LEARNING ALLIANCE
A national educational charity and umbrella body linking 17,000
communities based pre-school groups. Services are on a membership basis
offering publications, training courses, info and advice
Contact: 69 Kings Cross Rd, London. WC1X 9LL; Tel: 020 7833 0991
pla@preschool.org.uk www.pre-school.org.uk

2. SURE START PROJECTS
Sure Start is a cornerstone of the Government’s drive to tackle child
poverty and social exclusion. By 2004, there will be at least 500 Sure
Start local programmes. They will be concentrated in neighbourhoods
where a high proportion of children are living in poverty and where Sure
Start can help them to succeed by pioneering new ways of working to
improve services. Local programmes will work with parents to improve
children’s lives through various early learning initiatives amongst others.
Tel: 020 7273 4830 email: surestart@dfee.gov.uk www.surestart.gov.uk
3. **EARLY EXCELLENCE CENTRES**: provide high quality early years education, alongside childcare, family support and learning, adult education, childminder support and parenting education. They provide integrated services via a range of statutory and voluntary agencies, for children aged 0 - 5 years, open all day and throughout the year. There are a total of 29 designated Early Excellence Centres. These are situated in Yorkshire (three), Somerset, Oxfordshire, The Wirral, Cheshire, Coventry, Northumberland, London (six), Northamptonshire, South Tyneside, Cumbria, Hampshire (two), Sheffield (two), Derbyshire, Hertfordshire, North East Lincolnshire, Bristol, Gateshead, Manchester and St Helens. If you live in one of these areas you may consider approaching them to develop your Woodchips group within their centre www.earlyexcellence.org

4. **EDUCATION OTHERWISE**
Self help organisation offering support, advice, information, and resources to those teaching children at home.
PO Box 7420 London N9 9SG email: enquiries@education-otherwise.org

5. **CND**
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
Tel: 020 7700 2393 Email: enquiries@cnduk.org www.cnduk.org

6. **Wildlife WATCH**
Groups for young environmentalists meet for activities
Tel: 01536 677711
Email: watch@wildlife-trusts.cix.co.uk www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

7. **FRIENDS OF THE EARTH**
Tel: 020 7490 1555 www.foe.co.uk

8. **GREENPEACE**
Campaigning for environmental awareness and protection
Tel: 020 7865 8100 Email: info@uk.greenpeace.org
www.greenpeace.org.uk

**OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**
- LIBRARIES
- PLAY ASSOCIATIONS
- TOY LIBRARIES
After a few months, your group will feel more stable and you will want to develop the programme and strengthen your group both within the Woodcraft Folk and externally. Here are a few ideas.

1. **Within the Woodcraft Folk**
   - Visit another Woodchips or Elfin group
   - Organise a joint activity with another Woodchips group e.g. A fun day, picnic, walk
   - Participate in district activities e.g. Ceilidh, Parade
   - Attend the autumn regional Gathering
   - Attend the summer annual conference and Gathering
   - Organise a training day locally or between groups
   - Organise a residential for your Woodchips group either alone or with others in the district (ask for help from those who may be more experienced)
   - Produce a ‘resource’ for Woodchips groups e.g. A songbook, a song tape, a games book, web lists to share with the national organisation (depending on interests in your group)
   - Think of setting up an Elfin group (if there isn’t one); this will attract new families and ensure a longer life for Woodcraft in your area

2. **Outside of the Woodcraft Folk**
   - Publicising and promoting your group
     - Local press coverage
     - Leafleting key areas
   - Participating in a local festival, carnival, fair by having a stall, providing children’s activities, maybe partnering another organisation e.g. CND, Friends Of the Earth, the Coop
   - Develop a website (see national WebPages for details of how you might do this)
   - Organise a fun day in your community to attract new families and promote the Woodcraft Folk
   - Organise a fundraising event – this will raise money and your profile locally

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**DON’T REINVENT THE WHEEL..........**

If you’re in need of some inspirational programme ideas take a look at the section dedicated to Programme Ideas - page 17: you’ll find sessional themes, a residential idea at one of our beautiful outdoor centres, ideas for full moon walks, activities using songs and stories, games and photocopiable programme schedules.
The existing pilot Woodchips groups were asked what they thought they needed to become stronger. Suggestions included:
- More programme ideas sharing between groups
- More active adult leaders
- More input initially from experienced Woodcraft leaders
- Being more structured
- A Handbook with photocopiable pages of activities and games
- Songs with tunes attached
- More training about the Woodcraft Folk

All groups can participate in this process through the education committee by sending in their programmes and volunteering for a project i.e. a songbook, a song tape, and a games pamphlet. All our resources come from within the movement

THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

You may consider working in partnership with another organisation in your community to achieve your aims, especially if you are having membership, venue or financial difficulties. There are many community initiatives being set up by central Government which are designed to develop and improve the under 5’s educational and play provision eg Surestart. There are also 29 early excellence centres around the country that provide high quality early years (under 5’s) education, alongside childcare, family support and learning, adult education, childminder support and parenting education. [See Resources section for more information on these] There are advantages in working together - there may be more resources available i.e. Worker support, venue, training, financial support and so on. Other partners may help you to reach interested members such as environmental groups who have similar aims and objectives, but have no provision for the under 5’s. Examples may include Wildlife WATCH, Friends of the Earth, CND [see Resources section for more information].

OTHER LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

There will be other local organisations that will be able to help you strengthen and develop your group. There are many local resources that are underused, forgotten about or unknown. These could include:
- LIBRARIES - Don’t forget to use the library for books, videos and music. Also for advertising and networking. Most have free
internet access; you could develop a website, use it for research or communication

- **PLAY ASSOCIATIONS** - There may be a play association near you that lends equipment, provides training and information on play issues.

- **TOY LIBRARIES** - These may be local authority or voluntary run - they loan toys, books and play equipment on a membership basis and charge small amounts.

**WHY DO GROUPS CLOSE?**

Woodcraft Folk groups are being opened every month. Unfortunately, from time to time groups close. There are often many factors involved, here are some reasons people give.

- Lack of adult support or commitment
- Lack of children
- Financial difficulties
- Adults have all moved to older age group with their children

Leader shortage is the most common reason for group closure. We recommend when starting a group that a constant recruitment campaign is undertaken. This doesn’t have to be too heavy and may include: telling new friends/acquaintances regularly; making sure leaflets and posters are located in libraries, schools or community centres; keeping a steady stream of articles in the local press, so that people know that the Woodcraft Folk exists in their area.

Long may your group prosper!
THE TRANSITION TO ELFINS.....

Once your group is well established it won't be long before you'll be thinking about an Elfin group for those approaching 6 years old. It may be that when the children become 4 and start full time school that talks of starting an Elfin group begin.

Pilot projects experiences

As mentioned above, the Keighley Woodchips group found that essentially the group consisted of under 4's. Keighley families decided that their new Elfin group should be a 5-8 year olds group to bridge the gap. (This sort of arrangement can still leave a gap in provision for 4 year olds.)

The Merseybank and Cambridge Woodchips groups overcame this problem by meeting on a Saturday morning. Another alternative which has been suggested to people considering starting a 3-5 year group is a teatime after school club e.g. 3.30pm-5pm.

Joining an existing Elfin group

If you are part of an existing Woodcraft Folk district you will probably have Elfin group(s) in your area that your Woodchips can move on to. You may find, however, that there are gap years between the Woodchips and the existing Elfin groups. Your district may want to consider readjusting the age groups to ensure continuity for the children.

It may be that due to large number of Woodchips the Elfin group is flooded and a waiting list is established. Consequently, a second (or third) Elfin group may be the best solution. This is a great strengthening tool for any district.

Starting an Elfin group from scratch

If you are starting an Elfin group from scratch there are more resources and experience available than for the Woodchips age group. Here are some things you may want to consider:

1. Age group
   From the points made earlier - will the group be for 5-8’s or 6-9’s
2. Adult leaders?
The great thing about Woodchips groups is that there could be a large number of parents who are willing and able to help run the Elfin group.

You will need to think about how to keep all of them involved without the group having too many adults around (4 at the most each week). There must be at least 2 adults who are members available for the insurance to be valid. See the section on starting a group where collective ways of working are discussed

3. Resources
There are resource packs, activity books and training courses especially designed for working with Elfins, available from Folk Supply.

4. Training
Training can be organised locally for your group or within an area network. The regional and national annual gatherings include training workshops on practical ideas for groups. Sometimes specific courses are available at our residential centres.

5. Venue
Most Elfin groups meet in school, church, Co-op halls etc where run-around space is available.

6. Administration
As with all groups, the group needs to fill in a new group form and send to the head office. Core adults need to be adult members. Whilst parents who help on a very occasional basis don’t need to register as full members they are encouraged at least to consider becoming supporter members and to receive mailings.
THE WOODCRAFT FOLK'S EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The Woodcraft Folk is an educational movement for children and young people, designed to develop self confidence and activity in society, with the aim of building a world based on equality, friendship, peace and co-operation.

Education for Social Change

We seek to develop in our members a critical awareness of the world. We will work to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values and skills necessary for them to act to secure their equal participation in the democratic process that will enable them to bring about the changes that they feel are necessary to create a more equal and caring world.

As an educational movement, we believe that equal opportunities should extend to all aspects of activity and participation in the Woodcraft Folk. We will combat oppression or discrimination in our movement, whether on grounds of age, class, gender, race, sexual orientation or for reasons of disability. We will educate our members so that they may take these issues into the wider community.

A Co-operative and Sharing Attitude to Life

We believe that to further our aims it is vital to approach our educational work through the principles of co-operation. To achieve this we will provide a programme that ensures that our members practice co-operation through all the activities in which they participate.

International Understanding

Our motto is 'Span the world with friendship'. We will therefore encourage and develop international understanding and friendship through our educational work and by our exchanges between children and young people of different lands. We will promote a greater understanding of the world amongst our members so that they are aware of the inequalities that exist in it.
Religion

The Woodcraft Folk welcomes all children, young people and adults, who wish to become members of the movement, and it asserts the right of all its members to practice the faith of their choice providing it does not contravene the aims and principles of the movement.

One World

The Woodcraft Folk will encourage an understanding of the need to protect our environment and the use of the world's resources. With this aim we will seek to encourage our members to protect our urban and rural environment in the interests of all.

A world at Peace

Because of our international outlook and concern that all shall enjoy the right to freedom from the immorality of war and want, the Woodcraft Folk is dedicated to the cause of peace.

Accordingly we associate with the movement for world disarmament and for the transfer of those resources directed to the destruction of life into channels, which will be used for the fulfillment of humanity's needs.

Affirmation

The task of the Woodcraft Folk is the cultivation of a world outlook. Because the Woodcraft Folk is concerned with educational activities, it is accordingly precluded from being involved in activities and policy making of political parties. The Woodcraft Folk expects its members to abide by its Constitution and to participate actively in a movement that is dedicated to all people for all time.
THE WOODCRAFT FOLK
Registered Charity No. 1073665

NEW GROUP REGISTRATION FORM

We, the undersigned Leaders of the New Group, to be known as the __________________ declare, on behalf of the Group, our acceptance of the Constitution and aims and principles of the Woodcraft Folk and our commitment to abide by it in all our work

CONTACT PERSON

NAME ___________________ (BLOCK CAPITALS)
Membership Number _________
Signed ___________________
Address _____________________
________________________________
________________________________
DISTRICT TO WHICH GROUP BELONGS (if any) __________________________
DATE OF GROUP OPENING _____________________________

ACCEPTED AND REGISTERED AS A WOODCRAFT FOLK GROUP

Signed ________________________________ Regional/ National Office
Date ____________________________________

Countersigned by ________________________ Chairperson of the Woodcraft Folk

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

GROUP REGISTRATION FEE:
Date and Amount Due___________
Date and Amount Paid __________

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:
The Woodcraft Folk, 13 Ritherdon Road, London SW17 8QE
CHILD HEALTH AND CONSENT FORM

CHILD’S NAME_____________________________

DATE OF BIRTH____________________________

ADDRESS_______________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

HOME TELEPHONE_______________________________________

MOBILE TEL__________________________________________

EMAIL_______________________________________________

OTHER EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER_______________________

HEALTH INFO
DOCTORS NAME__________________________________________

ADDRESS_______________________________________________

SPECIAL NEEDS__________________________________________

OTHER RELEVANT INFO____________________________________

IF IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY WE ARE UNABLE TO CONTACT YOU
DO YOU CONSENT TO US SEEKING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE?
YES/NO (please delete)

I AGREE TO ______________ JOINING IN THE ___________ WOODCRAFT
FOLK GROUP ACTIVITIES IN AND OUT OF THE MEETING PLACE.

SIGNED______________________  DATE    _______________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woodchips Project</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Time Details</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Woodchips</td>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>Saturday morning 10.30-11.45am</td>
<td>Community Centre</td>
<td>3-5's</td>
<td>Playgroup with 2 adults leading each session on a rota system</td>
<td>Claire Cameron: <a href="mailto:cameron_claire@hotmail.com">cameron_claire@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keighley Woodchips (West Yorkshire)</td>
<td>1997-</td>
<td>Thursdays 10-12am</td>
<td>Friends Meeting House</td>
<td>0-5's</td>
<td>Parent and Toddler 0-5's collective</td>
<td>Zena Davis: 01535 606353 <a href="mailto:keighley.woodchips@care4free.net">keighley.woodchips@care4free.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birkenhead Woodchips (Wirral)</td>
<td>2000-</td>
<td>2 daily sessions a week</td>
<td>Community Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent and Toddler</td>
<td>Jo Stakes: 0151 6700042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merseybank Woodchips (Manchester)</td>
<td>1999-</td>
<td>Alternate Saturday mornings</td>
<td>Co-op Hall</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent and Toddler</td>
<td>Pam Stother: 0161 8820742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coming soon: Diss Woodchips in Norfolk
Contact: Faye Jackson diggyram@cwcom.net
HERE AND WHEN DO WE MEET?
We meet every week at The Quaker meeting House on Strawberry Street, off Skipton Rd (we aren’t ourselves Quakers but we hire their very comfortable building) on Thursdays 10am-12pm. We often arrange trips out in the school holidays – other members of your family are welcome.

HOW MUCH IS IT?
Your first session is free. Then £1 for your first child and 50p for your other children – this includes a drink and a snack.

WHO COMES TO THE GROUP?
Everyone is welcome who looks after under 5’s – parents, grandparents, childminders. Everyone agrees to the aims and principles of the Woodcraft Folk – see separate leaflet. Our group’s aims are opposite.

HOW DOES THE GROUP RUN?
The group runs as a collective – there is no leader. All the adults share the responsibility of organising the sessions at a previously held planning meeting – with different people being responsible for different parts of the session – songs, main activity, snack, tidying up. Everyone is expected to help in whatever way they can. We are a mixture of experienced and less experienced people; people aren’t pressured into running sessions on their own!!

The Woodcraft Folk is a non-religious or Political organisation but one which encourages children to think for themselves and question the world in which we live.

WHAT HAPPENS AT EACH SESSION?
Each week we start with a news circle where the children can bring news or anything they want to share with the group. Each session usually includes a main activity, a game, songs and stories. There is a small snack and drinks half way through. The adults in the group meet every half term to plan the sessions. We share out the responsibility of running the activities and snack – each taking one part of the session. Children bring along ideas too!

WHAT ARE WE ALL ABOUT?
- Developing sharing and co-operation skills
- Developing respect for and a caring attitude towards others
- Developing confidence in collective activities
- Developing self expression and creative skills
- Enjoying the outdoor environment and developing respect for the natural world
- Appreciating each other’s efforts and the achievements of the group
- Becoming familiar with the basic principles of the Woodcraft Folk:
  Co-operation, Equality, Friendship and Peace

☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺
KEIGHLEY WOODCHIPS

WOODCRAFT FOLK GROUP

An educational group for under 5’s and their parents and carers

Co-operation
Equality
Friendship
Peace

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO FIND OUT IF THERE ARE ANY PLACES FREE AT PRESENT PLEASE CONTACT
Xxxxxx: xxxxxx

IF YOU WANT A DIFFERENT KIND OF PLAYGROUP FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN – COME AND JOIN THE WOODCRAFT FOLK
This is a handbook for those wanting to start an under 6’s Woodcraft Folk group in their area, as a lone group, as part of an existing Woodcraft Folk district or as a community partnership. It is also a valuable resource of ideas and advice for existing Woodchips groups.

The pack contains information, ideas and advice on:

- The origins of progressive groups for under 6’s within the Woodcraft Folk
- Aims and objectives of Woodchips groups
- Practical, photocopiable sections on the mechanics of starting a group for easy use (organising your collective; programme ideas, songs, role plays and games)
- Resource lists of books, organisations and websites
- Ideas on how to develop and strengthen existing groups
- Woodchips to Elfins

The programme ideas and experiences are based mainly on material and research carried out at Keighley Woodchips group from 1997-2001 with additional material kindly provided by Cambridge Woodcraft Folk members plus Chorlton, Birkenhead and Diss Woodchips groups.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE WOODCRAFT FOLK:
13 Ritherdon Road, London
SW17 8QE
Tel: 0845 458 9535
Email: info@woodcraft.org.uk
Website: www.woodcraft.org.uk

Registered charity no: 1073665