

### Selecting an outdoor learning space checklist

- ✓ Select a space within walking distance to your classroom
- ✓ Select a space with some or all the following
  - natural learning materials in varying shapes, sizes, colours, textures (leaves, rocks, trees, plants, green space, wood chip area), it doesn't have to have all the elements just reflect the beauty of nature
  - open spaces
  - shelter/shade (trees)
  - green space (grass)
  - bushes
  - examine weather patterns
- ✓ Freedom: Select a space that allows for freedom that allows the child to explore and follow their natural impulses
  - Establish clear boundaries
  - Establish a space where students can work, rest, and interact social
  - Set clear expectations (rules and purpose for learning) and safety guideline
- ✓ Provide Structure and Order: the outdoor prepared environment is a "microcosm of the universe" (para. 5) where the child can internalize and make sense of the world around them. Structure and order can be achieved through the creation of small group extension activities, task cards and command cards which aid guides to using natural materials in learning.
- ✓ Beauty: A Montessori environment should be beautiful the natural landscape of an nature provides a beautiful backdrop for peace and tranquility.
  - Pick a space filled with colours from nature
  - Properly maintain the space through Practical Life exercise
- ✓ Nature and Reality: The outdoor prepared learning environment is nature and reality

- ✓ Social Environment: Allow for interaction with the environment and others while connecting with nature. The space will promote a sense of belonging and place which can lead to compassion and empathy for nature.
- ✓ Intellectual Environment: Using the extension activities, task cards and independent exploration and observation in nature all children can explore all areas of the Montessori curriculum including Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math and Cultural Arts.