

landed

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO OUTDOOR LEARNING: WINTER



little bluestem
landscape architecture

Little studio, deep roots.

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Little Bluestem Landscape Architecture
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
www.littlebluestemla.com

ABOUT landED

As landscape architects, we are responsible for the design of beautiful, livable outdoor spaces. At Little Bluestem Landscape Architecture (LBLA) this responsibility often translates to working with community groups in education, healthcare, and daycares. But we feel that there is potential beyond the construction of landscape designs for programming that establishes a key connection with nature. This belief led to the development of landED, a program through which we reveal the intricacies of landscape systems, and guide our communities to engage with outdoor space to its full potential. We have worked closely with the Manitoba Curriculum and local educators to ensure all our lesson plans and workshops can fit within the framework laid out by our province.

A source of inspiration for our team has come from the Landscape Architecture Foundation's *21st Century Call to Action*. This declaration critically examines the power of landscape architecture to respond to the global experience of climate change, urbanization, management of vital resources like water, and global inequities. Through our work, we join a passionate community working to answer the call to action at this critical time when the talents and services of landscape architects are so vitally needed.

We believe outdoor education is critical, especially in youth. So in 2019 we established landED: a landscape enrichment program by LBLA. landED is committed to helping communities engage with their environment. We offer land-based design and environmental learning through lesson packages, placemaking toolkits, and interactive outdoor workshops. Our focus on nature programming extends to all seasons of the year, adapting to the drastic landscape changes we experience in our northern climate.

landED programming takes into consideration the different scales of landscape availability, from hardtop schoolyards, to forest and field exploration. Our programming offers safe and inclusive lesson plans and activities that promote risky play through nature-based exploration. No matter the outdoor space, age, or skill level, landED offers programming that works to meet your needs. LBLA's design clients also have access to content specifically tailored towards activating the landscape spaces designed by our firm. With our knowledge and passion for landscape architecture and the design of ecological systems, our team is excited and ready to help you enliven and connect with your outdoor spaces.





LANDSCAPE + EDUCATION = landED

INDIGENOUS ALLYSHIP AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

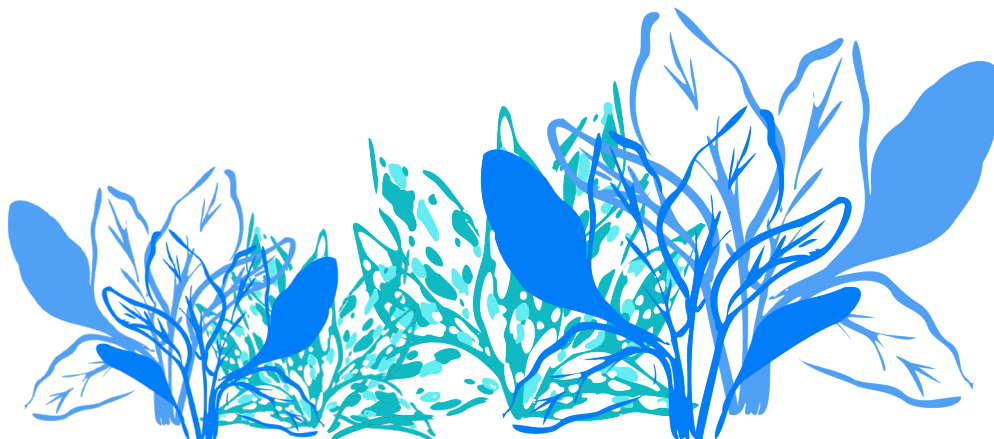
We at LBLA acknowledge that the Indigenous people of Manitoba and North America have been providing land-based education to their children for centuries. We recognize that due to the history of colonialism and residential schools, the tradition of land-based teaching has been systematically disrupted. As signatories of Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord, we are committed to acknowledging the history and impacts of colonization, while consulting and engaging with Indigenous Peoples to address the need for ongoing land reconciliation. We believe in the importance of incorporating Indigenous pedagogy into educational practices, and cultivating places that are reflective of Indigenous worldviews. At landED we are dedicated to creating programming for individuals to engage in design-focused educational practices that reflect a spirit and intent of reconciliation, while advocating for landscapes that acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous teachings and practices.

We are a small business on Treaty One territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba, filled with passionate, professional nature-lovers who are very committed to improving the environment. In order to support our local business so we can keep doing the work we love, please pay and download content for your own classroom use only. Honour system in full effect!

We would love for you to share updates using the hashtag #landEDMB, so we can be a part of your journey to integrate landED in your classroom. Your reviews and feedback help us grow, so please reach out to us on any of our social media platforms:

-  @landED.MB
-  @landEDMB
-  @littlebluestemLA
-  littlebluestemla.com/landED

Thank you for your support!



CHANGING SEASONS

INTRODUCTION

As we shift into a new season, now is the time to assess your outdoor classroom practices, see what is working for you, and plan for the frosty months ahead.

In this seasonal guide we will discuss establishing a daily routine, long-term planning, safety measures as the weather changes, and brainstorm activity ideas.

CLIMATE AS A GUIDE

Manitoba's drastic seasonal changes provide a clear framework for students to conceptualize the passage of time.

Students can create a seasonal notebook, to use at school or home to record the changes of the season. It is particularly important to suggest investigations that can take place whether learning is at school, or remote.



SEASONAL CHANGES STUDENTS CAN ADDRESS MAY INCLUDE:

- What has changed in the landscape since school began?
- How do we mark the end of autumn and the beginning of winter?
- Does your family have winter traditions? What are you most looking forward to doing?
- How do you feel when you are outside in winter, compared to how you felt outside in autumn?

SAFETY MEASURES

Now is the time to work with parents to update outdoor safety kits for each student. During winter months, these kits may include items like sunglasses, mittens, an extra pair of socks, a water bottle, a toque, and hand lotion.



SEASONAL RISK ASSESSMENT

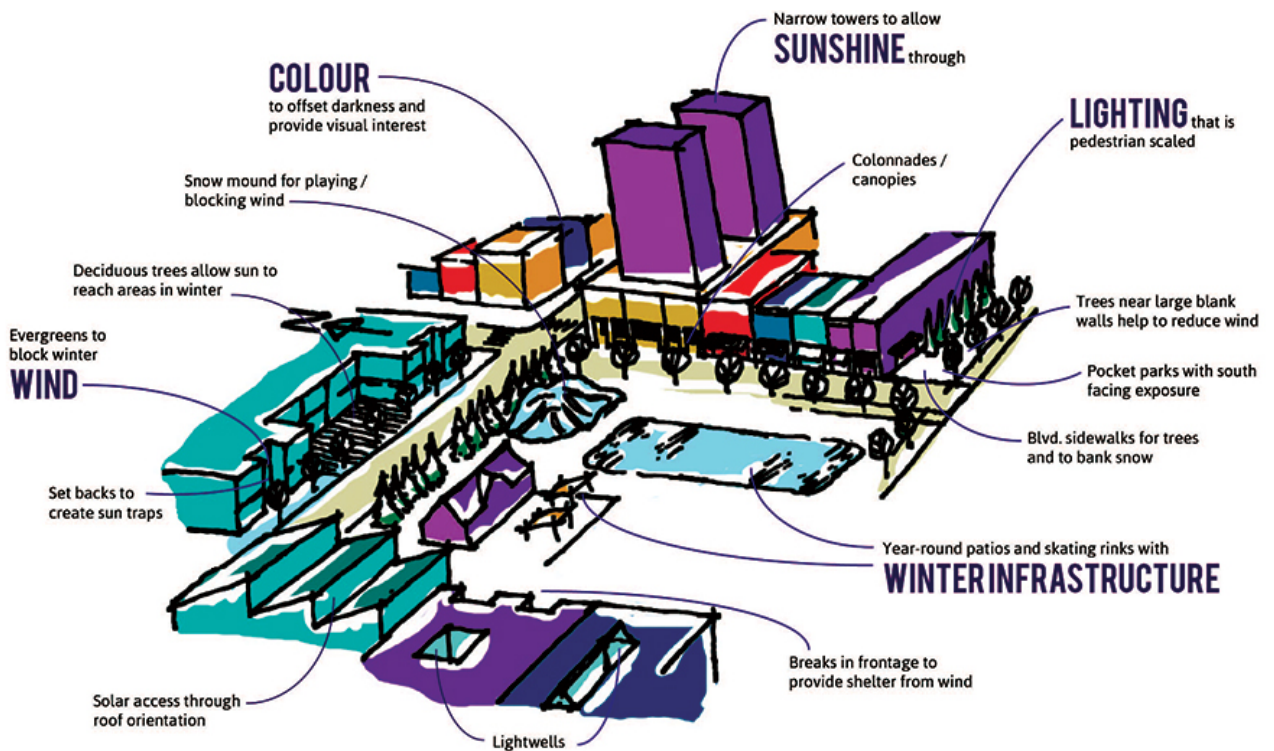
Run a risk-benefit assessment with students, considering seasonal dangers such as icy surfaces, fire safety, and extreme temperatures. Open discussions that prioritize science and ways to mitigate risk (e.g. established warm-up zones) will help students feel safe outside.

Updating this kit can be done in collaboration with the students, as a brainstorming exercise on how to stay safe as the weather gets colder.

SEARCH FOR AND ESTABLISH AN OUTDOOR REFUGE

Investigate school surroundings for a good winter meeting place. Before heading outside, have students brainstorm places they like to visit during the winter, and why. Then, explore the school grounds (or yard, or park if at home). Students can search for solar catches, and areas with shelter from wind and snowfall. Vote as a class on which area will become your official winter meeting place.

LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION



WINTER DESIGNS GUIDELINE & POLICY FROM THE CITY OF EDMONTON, ALBERTA

- Incorporate design strategies to block wind
- Maximize exposure to sunshine through orientation and design
- Use colour to enliven the cityscape
- Create visual interest with strategic use of creative lighting
- Provide infrastructure that supports the desired winter life

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/winter-design-guidelines.aspx



ONLINE EXTENSION

Using Google Maps Street View, have students search their city for examples of public spaces that follow positive design principles for winter (colour, light, shelter).

ROUTINE & MINDSET

SOME IS BETTER THAN NONE

As with any activity, be it brushing teeth or washing the dishes, doing a little is better than doing none at all. Make a promise to yourself and to your students that you will go outside every day.

Students can make weekly predictions by reviewing weather apps; what is the expected temperature and windchill? How long will we be able to stay outside? As the week goes by, have students write observations of the actual temperature and time spent outside. This can be done at home as well, and is a good connection between in person and remote learning. Whether you are at home or at school, nature is waiting just outside your door.

LANGUAGE PRACTICES

Make a list with students of language terms to use when referring to winter weather. Discuss how terminology can affect our perception of circumstance. A positive outlook towards outdoor play can be supported by sharing literature as a group.



RECOMMENDED BOOKS TO READ AS A CLASS:

- "A Stick Is an Excellent Thing: Poems Celebrating Outdoor Play" by Marilyn Singer

- "Mia and the Monsters: Staying Warm in the Winter" by Neil Christopher
- "Fishing with Grandma" by Maren Vsetula and Susan Avingaq
- "What I Wear Outside in the Winter" by Inhabit Education
- "The Mitten" by Jan Brett

EXPANDING CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

How have other societies adapted to extreme climate conditions? Specific to Turtle Island, discuss with students the ways that Indigenous groups survived and thrived in the coldest of winters.

Consider ways to celebrate the earth's path around the sun; count down the days to the Winter Solstice, or make a list with students of activities to do when the sun sets earlier. Plan a celebration with your class on the spring equinox, (March 19*, 2021) when the day and night become equal.



CLASS DISCUSSION

How do shorter days affect the way we live our lives? How does the winter affect our happiness for better or worse? What are some ways as a class we can better understand each other's moods, and help one another stay positive through this season?

WINTER BRAINSTORMING

EXPERIENCE THE CHANGE OF SEASON

Establish a checklist of routines, with individual responsibilities that students can perform either at school or at home. These routines may include:

- Observing new snow fall (yes/no)
- Daily photographing of trees (do any still have their leaves?)
- Tracking height and angle of snow drifts (using green tape as an outline on the window)
- Recording temperature change (charting predicted vs. actual)
- Observing animal tracks, circulation networks, habitat islands (photography study, mapping project)

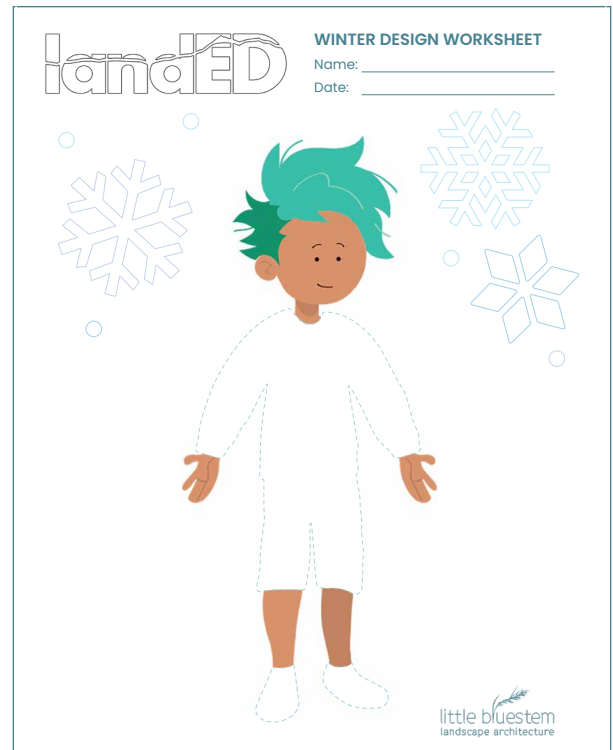
START INSIDE OR BRING THE OUTSIDE IN

Though collecting leaves and flowers are no longer viable activities, there are still ways we can bring elements of the outdoors inside.

For an indoor snow activity, check out [Teaching Tuesday E1 - Snowscape](#)

SNOW AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM

As the physical properties of snow change with environmental conditions, it becomes fluffy, sticky, moldable, and/or icy. It also becomes a useful medium to use for art, science, and social studies investigations. How do temperature, sunlight, and touch/compaction affect the nature of snow?



Drawing Figure and other free worksheets available at: littlebluestemla.com/landED



ACTIVITY IDEA

Since the beginning of time, people have lived in extreme temperature climates. Discuss with students how these people kept themselves warm when they went outside. Consider the science behind material choice such as wool over cotton.

Using the drawing above as a diagram base, ask students to design the ultimate winter outfit! Students can represent their ideas through drawing and labeling, considering materials, layers, colour, reflectivity, and fastenings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Written and Edited by Darcy Granove, Jane Hilder, and Krista Renwick.

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