



A GUMBOOT KIDS CURRICULUM

AS SEEN ON



CBC Kids



GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EDUCATORS

GUMBOOTKIDS.COM



- AGES 4-8
- EXPLORE OUTSIDE
- SOLVE NATURE MYSTERIES
- MINDFULNESS
- PLACE-BASED LEARNING

THE GUMBOOT KIDS SERIES IS INTENDED TO EXPOSE CHILDREN TO THE WONDER OF NATURE WHILE INCORPORATING COMPONENTS OF MINDFULNESS. THE BIG IDEAS EXPLORED IN THE SERIES ALIGN CLOSELY WITH EMERGING THEMES IN CURRICULUM ACROSS CANADA. AS YOU PLAN FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM AND CURRICULAR CONTEXT, HERE ARE SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND IDEAS TO HELP YOU SUCCESSFULLY EXPLORE THE WORLD OF *THE GUMBOOT KIDS*.



HOW TO USE THE VIDEOS

Always view videos prior to showing them to your students. *Scout & The Gumboot Kids* is meant to be used as the foundational resource and should be viewed first. Each episode is a mystery that guides children through three clues to learn about something in nature. In general, the *Scout & The Gumboot Kids* episodes do not require any pre-teaching, however if you work with a large population of students whose first language is not English you may wish to pre-teach some of the vocabulary highlighted in the teacher guide.

Episodes of *Daisy & The Gumboot Kids* or *Jessie & The Gumboot Kids* are best used as a

followup activity. Episodes of *Daisy* could be used as inspiration for art projects, as a hook for a reluctant young artist or even as a short stand-alone art lesson. Episodes of *Jessie & The Gumboot Kids* could be used to reinforce the main concept covered in an episode of *Scout & The Gumboot Kids*, as a singalong or even as inspiration for a movement and action break.

ADAPTING THE LESSONS TO YOUR CONTEXT AND GRADE LEVEL

In any learning environment there will be children working at all different levels with different strengths and areas for improvement. The lessons in this teacher guide are meant for children from pre-school to grade 2. However, you will notice that rather than a prescribed lesson the guides provide a variety of activities to try. This is meant to help you, the educational professional, to adapt the ideas and activities into lessons that work for the grade level and context of your classroom. Feel free to adapt the activities in whatever way works best for your learners to be successful.

For each Scout video there is a set of suggested post-viewing prompts/questions. For younger students you may wish to select just one prompt and have a class discussion with the teacher scribing children's ideas. With older children you may wish to have the children select a few questions that they wish to answer and have them complete these more independently. Further, as suggested in the guide, some children may be capable of writing their answers to the prompts



whereas others may use visual tools such as loose parts or still others may wish to draw a picture and describe it.

In terms of adapting the broader activities in the guide an important consideration is the background knowledge of your students. Children who have not been exposed to nature fairly regularly may need a lot more support, especially in terms of vocabulary, than children who frequently explore outdoors. For a younger audience you may want to pre-load vocabulary and themes prior to starting the activities. You could do this by reading a picture book, creating a word wall, or bringing in tactile objects for the students to explore. You could also provide more teacher modelling and a slower gradual release of responsibility to the children. For older children you could extend the learning in the activities by asking more complex questions that require them to synthesize what they have learned. Reflection is also a great way to extend learning for older children. After completing the activities have older children reflect on what they have learned both about the content area and about themselves as a learner.

PLACE BASED LEARNING

Place based learning is a pedagogical approach that is becoming increasingly popular as it becomes embedded more significantly in curricula across Canada. Place based learning encourages learning experiences that connect to the physical environment, local culture, history and people. A place based approach means being aware of and attuned to where you live and learn.

Place based does not necessarily mean you need to have a rich landscape with lots of plants and animals to be successful. Even an outdoor basketball court or the boulevard beside the school can provide a rich learning environment. Use your local environment to encourage children to look closely and observe, to think about how the land has impacted the people who live on it and to stop, look and listen more attentively to what is around them. Try to visit the same places often and in different types of weather, seasons or times of day to observe how the place changes over time and throughout the year.

Many of the activities in *The Gumboot Kids* Teacher Guides were created from a place based

learning approach. However, as your individual context should impact the learning opportunities of the children you work with, it is impossible to design universal activities that are truly place based. Use the activities and ideas in this guide and *The Gumboot Kids* videos as a template from which to design further rich learning tasks that speak to the unique place in which you live and learn.

GETTING OUTDOORS

A key component of exploring the world of the Gumboot Kids is getting outdoors regularly to experience nature. A wide body of research, not just in the field of education, but across numerous disciplines supports the value of spending time in nature. However, today many children are not used to being outside for extended periods of time, especially during inclement weather. There are many reasons why some children do not spend a lot of time outdoors. In planning for regular outdoor learning opportunities it is important to consider the cultural, social and economic reasons children are not active outdoors so that you can create a safe and supportive learning environment and set up the children for success. Some tips and tricks

“ CHILDREN TODAY SPEND LESS TIME OUTDOORS THAN ANY GENERATION IN HUMAN HISTORY. YET WE KNOW THAT A DAILY DOSE OF NATURE MAKES KIDS SMARTER, MORE CURIOUS AND CREATIVE. IT’S SIMPLE: KIDS NEED MORE NATURE! WE THINK THE SHOW SCOUT & THE GUMBOOT KIDS IS AN EXCELLENT TEACHING TOOL FOR FAMILIES, ENCOURAGING THEM TO SPEND MORE TIME OUTDOORS CONNECTING WITH NATURE.”

—IAN HANINGTON, SENIOR EDITOR. DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION.



for creating a safe and supportive outdoor learning experience for young children:

- Communicate early and often with parents about the value of outdoor learning. If you have a class website or blog you might consider sharing relevant articles, TED talks or websites. In particular, here is a video of an outdoor daycare in Thompson, Manitoba: curio.ca/en/video/outdoor-daycare-in-thompson-17533.
- Make getting outdoors a regular part of your teaching and learning rather than a one-off experience. Specifically schedule outdoor time each day/week and plan to be outside in all types of weather.
- Ask parents to donate used clothes/jackets/boots/hats/gloves that no longer fit their child so you can have a bin of extra dry and clean clothes for children who need them (whether they forget or do not have the capacity to provide them)
- Document the learning that happens outside. Where possible collect short videos and pictures of the children engaging in outdoor learning opportunities. Try to capture the learning in the children's own voice. Regularly share the documentation you collect with parents through whatever means speaks to your context. For example, you might communicate through email, a class website or blog, student ePortfolios or a bulletin board in a visible location for parents.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Gumboot Kids: Mindful of the World

At the core of every Gumboot Kid is a warm, compassionate heart, a gentle curiosity about the natural world, and eagerness to share it with others. Gumboot Kids, the educational program, seeks to promote this curiosity, care and compassion in young viewers via mindfulness in nature.



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a way of directing attention to what is occurring in the here and now, the present moment. It is considered to be a state of consciousness that incorporates self-awareness and attention with a core characteristic of being open, receptive and non-judgemental. Each episode of *Scout & The Gumboot Kids* incorporates a mindful moment which encourages children to be aware of their actions and surroundings. The concept of mindfulness is beginning to be incorporated into classrooms and curriculum across Canada in a variety of ways. While mindfulness can mean different things depending on your context, in general it is encouraging children to be more fully aware of their present thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and environment. Mindfulness encourages children to slow down and be present in the moment. Many of the activities in *The Gumboot Kids* teacher guides touch on mindfulness. However, there are a lot of other ways to purposefully incorporate mindful practices into your classroom on a regular basis. Here are a few ideas:

- Set a time (or several times) each day to stop what you are doing and have the whole class participate in a mindful breathing exercise. You may wish to read a relaxation script during these exercises to help students tune into their

breathing and learn to calm themselves. A variety of relaxation scripts for children can be found online or you could make your own that fits your classroom context.

- Before beginning lessons outside have children sit for 2–5 minutes silently on their own and actively listen to their surroundings. Five minutes of silence is very hard for most children so you will likely need to work your way up to that length of time.
- Incorporate physical movement activities that support mindfulness and body awareness into your daily routine.
- Create learning opportunities for children to develop the language to talk about their emotions, bodily sensations and interaction with the physical environment. It is far easier for children to develop their skills to participate in mindfulness when they have the vocabulary to describe their actions and talk about what they want to work on developing individually.
- Participate in a social emotional learning program created by your school or district or check out a pre-made curriculum such as MindUp (mindup.org).

Mindfulness, Self-regulation, and Childhood

Mindfulness can play an important role in childhood by fostering self-awareness and self-regulation. Mindfulness is an active process that requires the ability to control attention and exercise executive function (EF)—that is, the set of mental skills that help us respond to new situations, prioritize, plan and achieve goals. This includes inhibiting impulses that may derail us from accomplishing goals. For example, mindfulness may help us resist a tempting donut and meet the goal of healthy eating; or it may help a child overcome the urge to grab or monopolize a toy and allow them to connect better with peers. What is the importance of executive function in childhood? Research suggests that self-

regulatory skills are related to a myriad of positive outcomes including school readiness, academic achievement and mental and physical health. In fact, EF has been shown to be a better predictor of school readiness than IQ scores.

How to Practice Mindfulness

When thinking about how to practice mindfulness. It is, helpful to think of ways to “anchor” your attention to the present moment. All this requires is paying attention with an open state of awareness, or a gentle curiosity. Common ways to practice mindfulness include paying attention to the five senses (sight, sound, taste, touch and smell). Another common way to cultivate mindfulness is through deep breathing exercises. Gumboot Kids will model and engage young viewers in these simple practices, along with other activities that help hone executive functioning. Nature is an ideal context to promote mindfulness. Drawing from the natural environment, Gumboot Kids will focus on sight and sound to engage viewers at home and in the classroom in mindfulness.



“ THE GUMBOOT KIDS IS CREATING A ‘NEW NORMAL’ FOR AN ENTIRE GENERATION. THIS PIONEERING SERIES TRANSPORTS YOUNG CHILDREN INTO THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS AND THE MAGIC OF NATURE. THE VALUES OF GRATITUDE, APPRECIATION AND RESPECT WILL STAY WITH YOUNG VIEWERS THROUGHOUT A LIFETIME, CREATING A WORLD WE ALL WANT TO LIVE IN.”

—SANDRA DE CASTRO BUFFINGTON, FOUNDING DIRECTOR GLOBAL MEDIA CENTER FOR SOCIAL IMPACT, UCLA



Mindful Breathing Script

Invite children to practice slow, mindful breathing with the following script. Ensure that the breath practice is presented as an invitation for children, never mandatory.

Before you begin, model slow, deep breathing for your students. You might find it useful to use a visual tool such as a Hoberman Sphere model to demonstrate the pace of breathing for children to follow.

First, invite children to sit in a circle, seated cross legged on the floor (or lying down).



- Begin seated on the floor (or lying comfortably on the ground)
- Imagine you are a little flower sprout and that you could grow just a little bit taller
- Stretch very gently so that you are seated with a tall, strong back (or lying comfortably on the ground, like a strong tree root in winter)
- If you like, you can close your eyes
- Now, let's take a few deep breaths together
- Try to breathe in through your nose....
- And slowly breathe out through your mouth...
- Let's try that again
- Breath in...
- And out...
- As you breathe, try to notice how your body feels
- Feel the air lift your belly...
- Then feel your belly soften as you breathe out
- Let's breathe for one or two more breaths
- Slowly open your eyes



Allow children a few moments to come back to the room. Check in and ask children what they noticed.

What did you notice in your body? What did you notice in your mind?

Meet the Cast and Creators

MEET, SCOUT!

Scout is a country mouse who lives in a cozy burrow in the town of Dandelion. He enjoys mindfully exploring nature and discovering the wonders that each season brings with The Gumboot Kids. He is most happy when he's solving nature mysteries and spending time with his best friend, Daisy.



MEET, DAISY!

Daisy is a mindful, crafty town mouse. She lives on the outskirts of the town of Dandelion. She is very resourceful and loves making eco-friendly gifts out of things she finds in nature with The Gumboot Kids. Daisy loves spending time with her best friend, Scout.

MEET, JESSIE!

Jessie Farrell is a singer songwriter with five successful albums to her name. She is a Juno Award Winner and multiple CCMA winner. She is equally comfortable and engaging when playing a stadium as she is an intimate acoustic performance. She has two young children—the inspiration for her collection of family-friendly music, and she lives in North Saanich, Vancouver Island.





TARA HUNGERFORD & ERIC HOGAN

Imagine Create Media's Tara Hungerford & Eric Hogan are the creators of *The Gumboot Kids*. They are driven by a passion to create meaningful and artistic family content that educates, entertains and inspires.

Their work has earned a two Canadian Screen Award nominations, 15 Leo Awards, over 25 Leo Award Nominations and has aired on networks including CBC, Slice, YTV, CMT, CNN, City TV, W Network, TV5, Knowledge and Bravo. The show is a finalist for the PRIX JEUNESSE International awards for Childrens & Youth production (Munich). Their award-winning short films have screened at over forty international film festivals and their music videos have reached various Top Ten Countdowns in Canada.

Scout & The Gumboot Kids was inspired by their two young children and their family adventures in the great outdoors around Vancouver.

MOLLY STEWART LAWLOR

Molly Stewart Lawlor has expertise in social and emotional development throughout childhood and adolescence. She is the primary author of Goldie Hawn's Foundation, MindUP program, a research-based training program for children designed to develop mindful awareness.

Molly holds a Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Psychology from the University of Victoria, and a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology from The University of British Columbia. She is currently completing her Ph.D in Developmental and Educational Psychology at the University of British Columbia.



SARAH BEIRSTO

Sarah Beirsto is an elementary school teacher with a Masters in Education from Simon Fraser University. She has been teaching in the Richmond School District since 2006 and is particularly passionate about the value of experiential learning (especially when it is done outdoors) and finding ways to empower children to be active participants in their learning journey. Sarah is a mother to two children under 5 who are huge fans of Scout, Daisy and all the Gumboot kids! Sarah has previously consulted on the Echos Core French series by Pearson Education and Nelson Science (BC Edition).

For your General Consideration

Take a look at some of the interesting resources that inspire us:

1. Susan Kaiser Greenland, *The Mindful Child*. Simon and Schuster, 2013.
2. Susan Kaiser Greenland & Annaka Harris, *Mindful Games Activity Cards*. Shambhala Publications, 2017.
3. Jennifer Ward, *I Love Dirt*. Shambhala Publications, 2008
4. James Baraz & Michele Lilyanna, *Awakening Joy*. Parallax Press, 2016.
5. Clare Walker Leslie, *The Nature Connection*. Storey Publishing, 2014.
6. Fiona Cohen, *Curious Kids Nature Guide*. Little Sasquatch, 2017.
7. Tristan Gooley, *The Lost Art of Reading Nature Signs*. Thomas Allen & Sons, 2014
8. Julia Rothman, *Nature Anatomy*. Storey Publishing, 2015

SEASON GUIDE



SPRING



SUMMER



FALL



WINTER

The above icons on our guide covers let you know which seasons best suit the guide content

THE GUMBOOT KID CODE:

- Be curious and ask questions
- Be kind to your friends
- Help and encourage one another
- Get your hands dirty!
- Respect the environment
- Be gentle with all living things
- More imagination and fewer plastic toys
- Be still and observe with all your senses
- Breathe deeply
- It's okay to be goofy

We would love to hear from you! Let us know if you have any feedback. We hope you stay connected as we continue to add new curriculums to the Gumboot Kids collection.



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Share the joy and wonder [#gumbootkids](https://www.pinterest.com/gumbootkids)

[gumbootkids.com](https://www.gumbootkids.com)