



CASE STUDY

THE GROWING SCHOOLS GARDEN

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Creativity Courtyard

West Hill Primary School,
Ottery St Mary, Devon

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Why we got involved

Following our second place success in 2006 in the national Wallace & Gromit Great Vegetable Challenge at Kew Gardens, we wanted to offer our increasing knowledge and skills to the Growing Schools Garden at Hampton Court. West Hill Primary School has a very successful Gardening Club involving all 30 children in Year 2 and five children from Year 5 as 'supervisors', meeting every week.

What we made for the Creativity Courtyard

A gabion basket full of local Jurassic pebbles and, as its centrepiece, a polished stone map of Devon showing the location of our school. This was sculpted by a local craftsman from a proforma made by a pupil.

For other areas of the garden we made a three-bay composter (see the Make It in the Food and Farming Zone) and plant labels from recycled materials.

What we learned

Learning experiences have been in design, artwork and understanding the geology of Devon, including a visit to a local quarry. We also worked on

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composting and recycling projects. Together all these projects led to a much greater awareness of the ever growing need to care for our school and our community, our environment and our planet.

Photo gallery



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Quotes

'The quarry visit was absolutely fantastic I learned a lot about Devon rocks, how they are quarried and how old they are.'

'It has been really good using different materials that would have been thrown away to make recycled plant labels from.'

'I am really proud of our artwork on the compost bin.'

'I've learned what can be composted and it was really cool to use recycled things like my Mum's welly boot as lettering on our compost bin.'

'We all had great fun. Thank you for inviting us to do this for the show. We just can't wait to see it at Hampton Court.'

Helpers and sponsors

Local organisations willingly involved in helping our school in this project were:-

- Otter Rotters Timber Recycling (John Fearn & Mike Richardson made the composter)
- Bardon Aggregates (quarry visit, supplier of pebbles for gabion basket and the Stoneycombe rock sample for cutting and polishing)
- Jenkins Stone Company (polishing the Stoneycombe rock and sculpting the map of Devon).
- Parents of children at the school contributed recyclable materials for the project e.g. tiles, slates, wood, plastics etc. and numerous ideas for our contribution – a real school community effort.

Other information

The School Gardening Club meets every Wednesday lunchtime for Year 5 and every Friday lunchtime for Year 2. We have three 'outdoor classrooms' - our Five Senses Garden, our Wildlife and Science Pond and our new Greenhouse/Square-foot Garden. Here we are learning about plant life from seed to flower or fruit, the growing seasons, the making of "black gold" compost, the value of teamwork, and the joy of practical success outside the classroom. All this work is complementary to the science, art, maths and geography elements of the school curriculum.

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