



MAKE IT

**THE
GROWING
SCHOOLS GARDEN**

**LEARNING OUTSIDE
THE CLASSROOM**

Culture and Creativity Sector

Woodland Spirits

department for
children, schools and families

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Woodland spirits



Description

Similar to the motifs and emblems to be found decorating ecclesiastical buildings, early civilisations offered gifts and presents to the spirits that they believed inhabited the woodlands. These were offerings that celebrated the seasons, flowering, fruiting, evergreen foliage, and the foods/supplies to be found in the woods – the most commonly seen representation is the green man (thought to be behind the Robin Hood stories).

Function

To decorate the trees, peer out from the foliage, hide behind the trunks and dangle from the boughs. Some will be placed very obviously swinging from the trees but the majority will be placed slightly concealed to surprise visitors, creating the impression that dozens of cheeky eyes are watching as you progress through the garden.

Location

Primarily situated in, on and amongst the native trees of the woodland area.

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Construction

Sizes

Various sizes are possible from a few centimetres in height to 50cm. The majority should be around 15cm. Numerous exhibits and styles are required.

Special Details

- Traditionally these features would be representations of the good and mischievous spirits of the woodland. They are representations of the type of personality thought to be responsible for looking after the woods. The projects should reflect this with as diverse a range of expressions and characters as possible. They can be as humorous, gruesome and scary as possible.
- Spirits should contain bright and vibrant colours to stand out from the predominantly green vegetation.
- Wire, string or twine should be incorporated to allow for these spirits to be fastened into the trees.
- The spirits can be either representations of the face or may be complete gremlin-style body spirits.

Materials:

Composed predominantly of natural materials, utilising twigs, sticks and sawn timber, also natural cloths, pebbles, beads and clay.

Contributing schools

Portway Junior School, Hampshire



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Perranporth County Primary School, Cornwall

Woodland spirits have been fired out of clay. Other garden creatures have been created using willow. These techniques are regularly employed by the school in the designing-and-making work so enjoyed by the children.

In the garden

