

CAPABLE. CONFIDENT. CURIOUS.

From Principles to Practice: Real Ideas. Real Stories. Real Learning.

From the Framework

The practice of **play-based learning and intentionality**, as described in Capable, Confident and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework, reminds us that while play is central to children's learning, it is not left to chance. Educators are intentional in how they observe, plan, and respond—shaping environments and experiences that support children's curiosity, creativity, and development.

Whether children are telling stories under a tree or creating scavenger hunts in a field, outdoor play becomes a powerful context for literacy, numeracy, and discovery when educators are actively engaged in extending and supporting the learning.





About this Issue

This issue highlights exploring literacy and numeracy through nature. Summer brings an abundance of plants, animals, and natural wonders—offering rich opportunities to nurture literacy and numeracy in joyful, hands-on ways. Whether counting pinecones, drawing in the dirt, or telling stories under a tree, nature invites learning every day.

Nature Hunt

Submitted by: Children's Place Daycare

At our center the children would prefer to be outside all day. We have a very large open field behind the daycare and the children love to explore and “look for treasures.” They will spend hours watching an ant hill, collecting pinecones, looking for new types of flowers, etc.

- ☐ **5 flowers** 
- ☐ **1 bee** 
- ☐ **3 clouds** 
- ☐ **6 butterflies** 

We started making scavenger hunts for the children. We always include numbers and pictures as well as the written word so the children are becoming familiar with the spelling of common words. The children take their list with a clipboard and head out to the field to find all the items. The older children like to make their own scavenger hunt checklists and challenge their friends to find the items.

Adalynn's Story

Submitted by: Charlene Caines, Harbourside Elementary Pre-primary Program

The child in the chair—her name is Adalynn!

Adalynn put a lot of time and effort into writing her very own book. She came up with the idea all on her own. When she was finished, she came to me and asked if she could lead circle time with her book! We gathered on the mat, and she began her story, holding it up after each page to show the matching picture.



The children were very engaged in Adalynn's story, and it gave her a sense of pride and accomplishment. They asked her questions, and she answered them with confidence. It was a proud moment as an educator—she wanted to do what we do each day, but with her own personal touch.

Extending Adalynn's Story Outdoors

Adalynn's Story was a powerful example of how children take ownership of their learning. The following idea builds on that moment, offering a way to support storytelling and literacy in an outdoor setting.

Invite children to create their own "nature books" using found materials like leaves, sticks, or petals as inspiration. Provide clipboards or cardboard with paper and markers. Encourage them to tell a story about something they see, hear, or feel outside. Gather in a shady spot and let children share their stories with the group—just like Adalynn did! This fosters storytelling, sequencing, vocabulary, and confidence in a joyful, natural setting.

Etuaptmumk

Etuaptmumk, or Two-Eyed Seeing, guides us to see the strengths of both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing. When we bring this perspective into outdoor play, we can help children connect with the land in deeper, more respectful ways.

Invite children to observe the natural world with curiosity and care. Ask: "What do you notice?" "What do you wonder?" Encourage storytelling that includes not just what they see, but how they feel in nature. This practice nurtures a sense of belonging, stewardship, and connection—values that are central to

Learning with Mi'kma'ki 

**DO YOU
HAVE A
STORY TO
SHARE?**

We'd love to feature your story from an early learning and child care program in the next issue of Capable. Confident. Curious.

If you'd like to include photos, please email us to request an Image Consent Form.

Story topic: **The Art of Storytelling**

Submit by: **August 25, 2025** to be considered for the September issue.

Submit your story to: ELCCprofessional.learning@novascotia.ca