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y Loteri Genedlaethol
Thanks to National
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calontaf.co.uk  
CalonTaf@rctcbc.gov.uk

DISCOVERING YNYSANGHARAD:

Eco-Explorers in Green Spaces

**A Teacher's guide to Well-being, Health and Sustainability
at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park**

Ynysangharad War Memorial Park is a unique space where history, nature, leisure, commemoration and human connection come together to provide your pupils with a rich learning experience.

This is a companion to our other teaching packs:

Game On! and A Journey through Time and Remembrance

CURRICULUM FOR WALES

This resource
is intended for
progression step 3,
but can be adapted
for use at other
stages.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg | This document is also available in Welsh

Parc Coffa
YNYSANGHARAD
War Memorial Park
Pontypridd CF37 4PE



Trawsnewid Trefi
Transforming Towns



Mae croeso i chi gyfathrebu â ni yn y Gymraeg | You are welcome to communicate with us in Welsh
53187-22 • 2025

Welcome to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park!

This educational pack invites you to explore the park's green spaces and discover how they contribute to our well-being, connecting to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the new Curriculum for Wales. Get ready to delve into the fascinating world of nature, history, ecology, sustainability and community, all within this amazing park.

From the very beginning, YWMP was designed with the well-being of the community at its heart. Created as a haven for working people toiling in the harsh conditions of early industry, the park offered fresh air, recreation, and a connection to nature – recognising the vital link between green spaces and a healthy life. Today, we continue to celebrate and share those benefits with you, inviting you and your learners to explore the park and discover its power to enhance well-being.

Links to AOLEs: (Areas of Learning and Experience)

■ HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

This is a core focus of your pack, exploring the links between green spaces, physical activity, mental health, and emotional well-being.

■ SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The park provides opportunities to study local ecosystems, biodiversity, plant life, and animal habitats.

■ HUMANITIES

Ynysangharad Park has a rich history, connecting to local heritage, social history, and potentially even industrial archaeology.

■ EXPRESSIVE ARTS

The park can inspire creativity through photography, sketching, creative writing, music composition, or even performance art.

■ LANGUAGE, LITERACY & COMMUNICATION

Activities can involve reading maps and information boards, writing nature journals, creating poems or stories inspired by the park, or presenting findings from investigations.

■ MATHS AND NUMERACY

The park offers opportunities for measurement activities (distances, tree heights, etc.), data analysis (such as surveying park users), and spatial reasoning tasks (map reading and orienteering).

HISTORY AND HERITAGE:

Ynysangharad War Memorial Park (YWMP) is a testament to the collective spirit and vision of the Pontypridd community.

The park was not, as were many others, gifted by a wealthy benefactor, but was acquired through public subscription and contributions from the Miners' Welfare Fund. This is a powerful example of shared purpose, as local people, surrounded by heavy industries that were affecting their health, recognised the value of green spaces, recreational opportunities and sporting activities.

The park was officially opened in 1923 by Viscount Allenby, the commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force during the First World War. The layout of the park has changed very little since it opened, retaining many of its original features, making it ideal for learning about the history of the park and the communities it serves.

Find out more about the history of the park [HERE](#)

www.rctcbc.gov.uk/YnysangharadWarMemorialParkPontypridd

For more information on the history of the park, see the 'Discovering Ynysangharad – A Journey Through Time and Remembrance' teachers' pack.

Key Features of the Park:

• Evan James & James James Statue:



Erected in 1930, this is a memorial to the father and son who composed the Welsh national anthem *Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau* / Land of My Fathers.

• Bandstand:



This opened in 1926 and highlights the park's role as a cultural hub extending beyond sporting activities. Music is still played here.

• War Memorials:



From the beginning, YWMP was intended as a place of remembrance. While initially meant to honour the fallen from Pontypridd in the First World War, it now commemorates local people who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country.

• The Lido:



The National Lido of Wales, recognised with a Grade II listing, welcomed its first visitors on July 30, 1927. It was restored to its former glory and updated in 2015, and remains the only surviving open-air lido in Wales.

• Sunken Garden:



This was built in 1923 and was influenced by Italian landscape design.

THEMES AND TOPICS

Since it opened, YWMP has promoted the value of community space. Finding out about these offers rich learning opportunities for your pupils.

With the flexibility of the new curriculum, you can integrate a variety of learning experiences into your lessons, ensuring that your pupils gain the most from their time in the park, with plenty of follow-up classroom work.

• CONNECTING WITH NATURE:

› Biodiversity:

Explore the variety of plants and animals in the park. Conduct surveys, identify species, and learn about their roles in the ecosystem.

› Sensory Experiences:

Encourage learners to engage their senses through activities like nature walks, listening to birdsong, or creating nature art.

› Mindfulness and Relaxation:

Guide learners through mindfulness exercises or nature meditations to promote relaxation and appreciation for the natural world.

• WELL-BEING BENEFITS:

› Physical Health:

Highlight the benefits of physical activity in green spaces, such as walking, playing games, or engaging in sports.

› Mental Health:

Explore how nature can reduce stress, improve mood, and boost creativity.

› Social Well-being:

Discuss how parks foster social connections, community building, and a sense of belonging.

• SUSTAINABILITY AND ECO-CONSCIOUSNESS:

› Environmental Responsibility:

Encourage learners to understand their impact on the environment and learn about sustainable practices.

› Conservation:

Explore the importance of protecting green spaces and the role of parks in conserving biodiversity.

› Climate Change:

Discuss the impact of climate change on the park and how we can contribute to mitigating its effects.

SKILL AND CHALLENGE

Each activity offers a different set of challenges, which the pupils can explore and discuss:

• FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN (9-11):

Focus on fun and basic skills.

• FOR OLDER CHILDREN (12-14):

Introduce more complex rules, encourage strategic thinking and include more historical context.

Each activity can be simplified or made more challenging, depending on the age of the pupils.

BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS:

- › Satisfies cynefin
- › Offers opportunities for cross-AOLE activities
- › Engages pupils of all academic and physical abilities
- › Develops awareness of and pride in the history and heritage of locality
- › Can be taught year-on-year
- › Requires no specialist knowledge from the teacher
- › Can be used to establish links with local individuals

CYNEFIN, GLOBAL WALES AND DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

While being very much a feature in the local landscape, YWMP is a microcosm reflecting the interconnectedness of Wales and the world.

Through its people, sporting heritage, architectural influences, commemorative spaces, and natural environments, the park offers multiple topics through which to make global connections.

By supplementing your park explorations with research at the county archive, local library, and community resources, you will ensure that your pupils get the best possible learning experience.

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Investigating Biodiversity:

Species Identification:

Use identification guides or apps to identify trees, plants, insects, and birds in the park. Create a biodiversity map or guide for the park.

Plant Adaptations:

Investigate how different plants have adapted to their environment in the park. Compare leaf shapes, root systems, and other features.

Exploring Ecosystems:

Food Chains and Habitats:

Identify producers, consumers, and decomposers in the park. Create food chains and webs to show how energy flows through the ecosystem.

Environmental Impact:

Discuss human impact on the park's ecosystem, including pollution, litter, and habitat loss.

Scientific Investigations:

Tree Growth:

Measure tree circumference and height to estimate age and growth rates. Investigate the factors that affect tree growth.

Soil Analysis:

Collect soil samples (with permission) and analyse their properties (pH, texture, moisture). Discuss the importance of healthy soil for plant growth.

Technology and the Environment:

Environmental Monitoring:

Use digital tools (e.g., weather apps, air quality sensors) to monitor environmental conditions in the park.

Sustainable Technology:

Research and discuss how technology can be used to promote sustainability in the park, such as solar-powered lighting or water conservation systems.

ACTIVITY

MINIBEAST DETECTIVES

Objective: To explore the biodiversity of invertebrate life in Ynysangharad Park; to identify different types of minibeasts and their habitats; to understand the role of minibeasts in the park's ecosystem.

Materials: Magnifying glasses; identification guides (books or apps); clipboards and pencils for recording findings

Provide an overview of what minibeasts are and how they help with decomposition, pollination and food for other animals. Divide the learners into small groups, each with their own area to explore.

- Have them record their findings, using their magnifying glass and identification chart.
- Discuss findings.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages curiosity, exploration, and a sense of connection with the natural world, encouraging mindfulness and appreciation for the intricate ecosystems within the park.

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY

PARK EXPLORERS – MEASURING NATURE

Objective: To practice measuring skills using different units (cm, m); to compare the sizes of different natural objects in the park; to collect and record data accurately.

Materials: Measuring tapes or rulers; clipboards and pencils for recording measurements; string or yarn for measuring irregular objects.

Discuss different units of measurement (centimetres, metres) and their uses. Divide learners into small groups and challenge them to find and measure different natural objects in the park, such as: the circumference of tree trunks, the length of leaves or branches, the height of flowers or bushes, or the distance between two landmarks (e.g., trees, benches).

- Have them record their findings.
- Discuss results, using bar graphs or charts to display data.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages physical activity, exploration, and a sense of accomplishment. It also encourages curiosity, teamwork, problem-solving skills, and an appreciation for the mathematical principles found in the natural world.

HUMANITIES

ACTIVITY

HISTORY DETECTIVES – UNCOVERING YNYSANGHARAD'S PAST

Objective: To investigate the history of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park; to analyse primary and secondary sources to learn about the park's past; to understand the significance of the park to the local community.

Materials: Access to online resources (e.g., local history websites, archives, old maps); old photographs or postcards of the park; interview questions for park staff or local residents; art materials for creating a timeline or presentation.

Introduce Ynysangharad Park and its significance as a war memorial and community space. Divide learners into small groups and assign them different research tasks related to the park's history, such as who created it and why, what does it commemorate, are there notable people associated with the park.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages a sense of curiosity, connection to the local community, and appreciation for the park's history and heritage. It also encourages research skills, critical thinking, and collaboration.

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

CREATIVE ARTS

Visual Arts:

› Drawing and painting:

Capture the beauty of the park's landscape, individual trees, flowers, or wildlife through sketching, painting, or collage.

› Photography:

Document the park's features, textures, and changing seasons through photography. Experiment with different angles, lighting, and composition.

› Sculpture:

Create sculptures using natural materials found in the park, such as leaves, twigs, stones, or fallen branches.

› Land Art:

Create temporary artworks using natural materials found in the park, such as leaf arrangements, stone patterns, or stick sculptures.

Music:

› Soundscapes:

Record the sounds of the park (birdsong, wind, water) and create soundscapes or musical compositions inspired by these sounds.

› Nature-inspired Music:

Compose melodies, rhythms, or songs inspired by the sights and sounds of the park. Use instruments or vocal sounds to express the mood and atmosphere.

› Performance:

Perform music or songs in the park, using the natural environment as a stage and backdrop.

Drama:

› Role-play:

Imagine and enact scenes from the park's history, taking on roles of people who might have used the park in the past.

› Storytelling:

Create and tell stories inspired by the park's environment, wildlife, or historical events.

› Movement and Dance:

Develop movements and dances inspired by the natural world, using the park's spaces and features as inspiration.

Creative Writing:

› Soundscapes:

Write poetry inspired by the park's beauty, nature, or atmosphere. Experiment with different forms and styles of poetry.

› Story Writing:

Create stories set in the park, using the environment and its features as inspiration for characters, plot, and setting.

› Nature Journaling:

Keep a nature journal to record observations, thoughts, and feelings about the park. Use descriptive language and imagery.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

Engaging with expressive arts in the park promotes well-being by fostering creativity, self-expression, and emotional connection with the natural world. It encourages imagination, mindfulness, and a sense of joy and wonder.

ACTIVITY

NATURE'S PALETTE – CREATING ART WITH NATURAL MATERIALS

Objective: To explore the textures, colours, and shapes found in nature; to create artwork using natural materials found in the park; to express creativity and connect with the natural world.

Materials: Variety of natural materials (leaves, twigs, stones, bark, flowers - ensure these are collected responsibly and sustainably); cardboard or paper for the base of the artwork.

Discuss using nature as inspiration for art. Show examples of land art or artwork created with natural materials. Discuss the importance of respecting the environment and collecting materials responsibly.

- Encourage learners to observe the different colours, textures, and shapes found in nature.
- Ask them to sustainably collect fallen or loose items and to use these to create their own unique artwork.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages creativity, self-expression, and connection with the natural world. It fosters mindfulness, sensory exploration, and appreciation for the beauty and diversity of nature.

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

CREATIVE ARTS (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY

POETRY IN THE PARK - NATURE'S VOICES

Objective: To use the park as inspiration for creative writing; to explore different forms of poetry (e.g., haiku, free verse); to express observations and feelings about nature through words.

Materials: Notebooks and pencils; examples of nature poetry (optional).

Discuss the concept of nature poetry and how poets use language to express their observations and feelings about the natural world. Share examples of different poetry forms, such as haikus, free verse, or rhyming poems.

- Encourage learners to engage their senses as they walk around the park.
- Prompt them with questions like what do they see, hear, smell or feel.
- Ask them to find a spot where they are comfortable, and to write a poem based on their feelings.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages creativity, self-expression, and mindfulness. It fosters a deeper connection with nature, allowing learners to express their observations and emotions through the power of language.

ACTIVITY

MINDFUL MOMENTS IN THE PARK

Objective: To experience the benefits of mindfulness in a natural setting; to practice focusing on the present moment and engaging the senses; to connect with nature and promote relaxation and well-being.

Materials: A quiet and comfortable spot in the park; Optional: yoga mats or blankets to sit on.

Discuss the concept of mindfulness and its benefits for mental and emotional well-being. Explain how focusing on the present moment and engaging our senses can help reduce stress and improve focus.

- Guide learners through a simple breathing exercise. Have them sit comfortably, close their eyes (if they feel comfortable), and focus on their breath as they inhale and exhale slowly.
- Encourage learners to open their senses and observe the natural world around them.
- Have learners reflect on their experiences, discuss how being in nature made them feel and how they can incorporate mindfulness into their daily lives.

WHY THIS IS GOOD FOR WELL-BEING:

This activity encourages relaxation, stress reduction, and a deeper connection with nature. It fosters mindfulness, sensory awareness, and an appreciation for the present moment, leading to improved mental and emotional well-being.

FIND OUT MORE:

YWMP website: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/YnysangharadWarMemorialParkPontypridd

Glamorgan Archives: www.glamarchives.gov.uk

Pontypridd Library: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/PontypriddLibrary

Rhondda Cynon Taf Heritage Service Digital Archive: www.rctourheritage.com

Advice for Teachers on taking pupils to the park and on using the activity sheet

Taking pupils to the park

Visiting the park is an exciting and fun experience for your pupils but it is **important to set clear boundaries with them before heading out.**

Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your trip to YWMP.

- **SAFETY:**

Remind pupils about basic safety rules, like staying together, not talking to strangers and to shout out if they get lost. Introduce the pupils to the park rangers and supporting staff who are happy to help.

- **FIRST AID:**

Bring a kit for minor injuries – they're going out in nature, cuts and grazes can happen.

- **PATHS AND MOWN AREAS:**

It's tempting to run everywhere, but reinforce the need for them to stick to paths and mown areas. Long grass and 'wild zones' are homes for lots of creatures that shouldn't be disturbed.

- **NATURE'S TREASURES:**

It's fine to pick up twigs, leaves and flowers that have already fallen to the ground, but we should leave those that haven't in their place so that everyone can continue to admire their beauty.

- **SHARE THE SPACE:**

They will need to keep an eye out for walkers, runners and cyclists.

- **RESPECT THE PARK:**

All litter needs to be either taken back to school or placed in a litter bin.

Activity Sheet

Print off the double-sided activity sheet for each of your pupils before you visit the park.

- It is available in Welsh and English, in colour and black-and-white.
- It's ideal for interactive learning about the park's green spaces and the importance of well-being.

Thank you for using this pack to explore Ynysangharad War Memorial Park with your pupils. We hope you have a fantastic time discovering its wonders and making memories that will last a lifetime.

Get ready for an Adventure

at YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK

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We're going to explore nature, discover hidden wonders, and find out how to be awesome - just like the amazing trees, plants, and creatures you'll find in the park.

MY SPECIAL PLACE

Take a moment to wander through the park and find a spot that feels calm and peaceful to you.

It could be a bench, under a tree, or a sunny spot on the grass.

Engage your senses - sit still for a while and concentrate on what your senses are telling you. Write down what you notice.

• What can you see?

• What can you hear?

• What can you smell?

• What can you touch without moving from your spot?

• What do you feel?

The sun? A breeze? The ground under you?

NATURE'S RESILIENCE

We all face challenges in life, and sometimes we need to find our inner strength to manage them. Nature can be a powerful teacher in this.

We can find inspiration and tools to build our inner resilience from looking around us in the park.

Strong Trees

- Find a tree.
Are its top branches moving in the breeze?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- All trees have a strong base to stand on - their roots.
Can you spot any of their roots?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Write a poem or a few sentences on how roots keep the tree strong:

Flower Power

Flowers can be all different colours, shapes and sizes, and they can bloom even in difficult conditions.

Find a flower and draw it below.
Remember not to pick the flower!

What colour is it?

What size is it?

Find out what type of flower it is when you get back to school.

Get ready for an Adventure

at YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK

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NATURE'S OBSTACLE COURSE

Create your own obstacle course at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park! Don't just walk – turn the park into your own adventure playground.

Use your imagination and find exciting ways to jump, balance and hop your way around every part of it. Remember not to go into flowerbeds, areas of long grass or areas set aside for habitat. And remember to be mindful of others and keep safe.

Balance Challenge:

Find something narrow to walk along, trying to keep your balance.

What did you walk along?

Jumping Challenge:

Find something to jump over.

What was it?

Stepping Stones Challenge:

This doesn't have to be stones! Can you hop from sunny spot to sunny spot without touching the shade? Or maybe create a path stepping over tree roots and only touching grass. Get creative and see what kind of stepping-stone adventure you can invent.

What did you use as your stepping stones?

Zigzag Run:

Run in a zigzag pattern around some trees or other obstacles. Do this with friends and see if you can do it without bumping into each other or anything else!

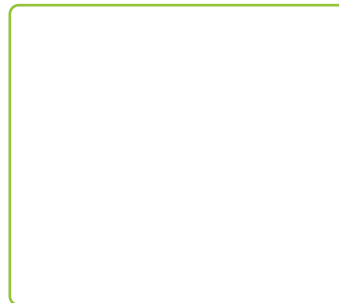
NATURE'S COLOURS

Nature is its own rainbow! Did you know that colours can influence how we feel and even change our moods?

Can you find something in the park in each of these colours?

Draw your discoveries in the boxes below and write what it is underneath.

GREEN



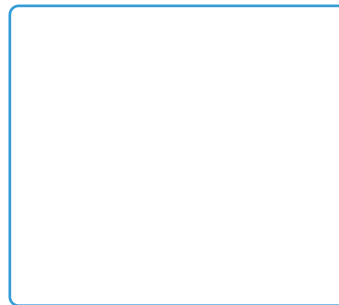
What is it?

RED



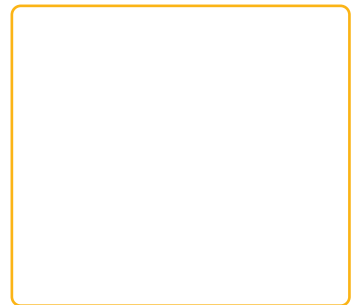
What is it?

BLUE



What is it?

YELLOW



What is it?

Think of your favourite colour and how it makes you feel.

Blue can be calming, yellow cheerful, red exciting.

• What is your favourite colour?

• How does it make you feel?