



Lauren MacLean

Lauren MacLean is an elementary school teacher, accomplished author, and outdoor learning consultant whose work celebrates the joy of connecting with nature. Her picture books—*Me and My Sit Spot*, *Finding Common Ground*, and *Risky Play Gone Away*—inspire young readers to explore, take risks, and build meaningful relationships with the outdoors. Her educator's guide, *Sitting With Nature: An Educator's Guide to Sit Spots*, equips teachers with strategies to bring learning outside.

As the *Teach Outdoors* podcast host, Lauren shares practical tips and conversations with educators who champion outdoor learning. As a former educator at Soaring Eagle Nature School, she deeply understands place-based learning, social-emotional development, and play-based exploration.

Lauren is passionate about integrating math and storytelling in nature, fostering curiosity and social-emotional competencies through outdoor experiences. She is dedicated to ensuring that everyone feels welcome, that they see themselves reflected in outdoor spaces, and that inclusive planning practices create opportunities for all learners to connect with the natural world.

**Place-Based
Learning and
Environmental
Stewardship**

**Valuing Emergent
Learning and
Nature Play**

**Supporting Social
Emotional Learning
Outdoors**

**Making Learning
Visible Through
Observation and
Documentation**

Keynote & Workshop Sessions

Lauren offers several keynote and workshop sessions. Keynotes are typically 60, 90 or 120 minutes, while workshops can be adapted to run anywhere from 60 minutes to a full day. Sessions can be stand-alone or can be grouped together based on the needs, interests, and needs of a community.

Explore the sessions listed below, and ask us about options to tailor a session for you!

For booking inquiries, email info@outsidepinconsulting.com



<https://teachoutdoors.ca>

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Session Descriptions

What's Stopping Us? Debunking Myths and Embracing the Power of Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning offers transformative benefits for students' academic, social, emotional, and physical development. Many educators, however, still hesitate to take learning outside due to common concerns like behaviour management, accessibility, unpredictable weather, and time constraints. This session will explore why outdoor learning is essential and provide practical, research-backed strategies to help educators navigate hesitations.

Through engaging storytelling, real-life examples, and myth-busting insights, we will address the concerns educators have and reframe them as opportunities for growth. Participants will walk away with simple, actionable steps to make outdoor learning a natural and manageable part of their teaching practice—whether they have access to a forest, a schoolyard, or just a patch of grass.

By the end of the session, participants will feel empowered to rethink their approach to outdoor learning, challenge their assumptions, and ask, "Why wouldn't we?" instead of "What's stopping us?"

Format: Keynote or Workshop

Audience: All



Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning has the potential to eliminate barriers, resulting in a sense of belonging and empowerment for all students. But first, we need to ensure that these experiences are accessible for students who are experiencing barriers to nature-based learning. Through hands-on activities and engaging storytelling, this session will highlight real-world examples of how outdoor learning environments can be made more inclusive, creating opportunities for all students to learn and experience the power of the outdoors.

Participants will examine common barriers that students face in outdoor learning and explore practical solutions to reduce or eliminate them. We will discuss key strategies that address sensory, physical, mobility, and social emotional needs to ensure all students feel safe and supported outdoors.

This workshop will provide participants with tools and strategies that can create structured yet flexible outdoor activities that accommodate all students while maintaining the sense of wonder and curiosity that nature inspires. Participants will leave with practical strategies, an increased awareness of inclusive teaching practices, and a commitment to making outdoor education accessible for all.

Format: Keynote or Workshop

Audience: Educators, support staff, families



Engaging Students' Social-Emotional Learning through Outdoor Learning

This interactive workshop explores how outdoor classrooms can provide a powerful setting for supporting social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health and wellbeing. By incorporating consistent, nature-based routines, educators can create safe, predictable environments that help students build resilience, manage emotions, and strengthen their sense of belonging.

Participants will engage in hands-on activities—such as sensory games, mindfulness exercises, and collaborative storytelling—that nurture key SEL competencies. The session will also highlight culturally responsive approaches that ensure all students feel welcome in nature and see themselves reflected in outdoor learning spaces.

Grounded in current research, this workshop draws on Attention Restoration Theory, CASEL's SEL framework, and inclusive teaching practices to support educators in making outdoor learning accessible to all. Attendees will leave with practical strategies and ready-to-use activities to foster emotional well-being and social connection in any outdoor setting.

Format: Keynote or Workshop

Audience: Educators, support staff, families, students



Discovering and Uncovering Numeracy in Nature

Step into the enchanting world of numeracy in nature during this immersive workshop! Together, we'll explore how the natural environment serves as a rich and dynamic classroom for mathematical discovery. By engaging with the outdoors, we'll uncover patterns, symmetry, measurement, and algebraic thinking hidden in plain sight. Through hands-on activities and inquiry-based learning, we will explore the ways in which nature provides real-world applications for mathematical concepts, making learning more meaningful and engaging for students.

This workshop will highlight seasonal wonders and thematic activities that connect math to real-world experiences. We'll dive into all five math strands through interactive explorations—counting tree rings to analyze growth patterns, measuring the height of trees using simple tools, and recognizing geometric shapes in natural formations. Participants will also engage in playful, low-prep math games that foster curiosity, problem-solving, and collaboration, demonstrating how mathematical thinking can be seamlessly woven into outdoor routines.

We will discuss strategies for adapting these activities to different grade levels, learning environments, and curriculum expectations, ensuring accessibility for all learners. By the end of this session, educators will feel inspired to integrate math into outdoor learning with confidence. Participants will leave with hands-on strategies, adaptable activities, and a renewed appreciation for the beauty of mathematics woven throughout the natural world, empowering students to see math as a living, dynamic part of their everyday lives.

Format: Workshop

Audience: Educators, support staff, families, students



Literacy and Stewardship: Enhancing Outdoor Learning with Arts-Based Education

This interactive workshop explores the powerful intersection of literacy, environmental stewardship, and arts-based education. Participants will discover how outdoor learning experiences enhance literacy skills while deepening students' understanding of their relationship with the natural world. Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, participants will explore strategies for supporting reading, writing, and oral language development in outdoor settings.

The session will highlight literacy-rich outdoor experiences such as story walks, poetry in nature, place-based journaling, and shared storytelling. We will also examine the role of arts-based education—visual arts, drama, and music—in bringing literacy to life, making reading and writing more meaningful and engaging for students. Participants will learn how these creative approaches not only strengthen literacy skills but also foster environmental stewardship by encouraging students to see themselves as caretakers of nature.

Throughout the workshop, attendees will engage in practical, adaptable activities designed to fit various grade levels and outdoor settings. Participants will leave with concrete strategies for integrating literacy and arts-based education into their outdoor classrooms, ensuring that students develop both a love for literacy and a deep connection to the environment.

Format: Keynote or Workshop

Audience: Educators, support staff, families, students

