

**Text B: Outdoor learning – a good idea or another educational fad?**

*The following text discusses outdoor learning in schools.*

Apparently, many people find the arguments for taking children out of the classroom and into the great outdoors compelling. 85 per cent of parents in the UK, and many elsewhere too, say they believe that young children should spend more school time away from their desks and learning outdoors. Not that they necessarily want to give their children these experiences themselves, but schools should do it. And not just taking your books outside to sit on the grass on a sunny day either. The majority of a child's school day, rain or shine, should be spent outdoors, building their self-esteem by log-jumping or developing team-work skills by literally building bridges. 5

It's true that most young kids like being outdoors. There's evidence to show that even working in a classroom with a view of greenery outside is better for their wellbeing. The argument that the social and physical benefits of an outdoors education will sustain children as they grow older is, maybe, convincing. But whether it's the extremes of weather or the need to prove yourself to universities and employers, there are limitations to adopting a whole-scale outdoors education model, especially beyond the early years of schooling. What about the bookish kids, or those with allergies or disabilities? What about the shift of resources from books and new technology to outdoor spaces? There will have to be risk assessment processes and teacher retraining. How can the same ethos of outdoor learning be maintained as pupils transition from one school to another? Those same parents who wanted more outdoor learning for their young offspring might wish they'd settled for a few more plants in the classroom instead. 10 15