



# 2025/2026 PROGRAM GUIDE

## The Canadian Ecology Centre

Centre écologique du Canada

# OWLS

OUTDOOR WAYS OF LEARNING & SHARING

“Increasing Capacity for  
Outdoor Learning in Schools”

“A PD Opportunity for  
Educators”



[www.canadianecology.ca/owls](http://www.canadianecology.ca/owls)  
[education@canadianecology.ca](mailto:education@canadianecology.ca)

# What is OWLS?

## An overview...



### Creating Capacity & a Community of Support

OWLS is a **professional development** program that helps educators design and deliver safe, experiential, and curriculum-based outdoor lessons.

Teachers gain the tools and confidence to bridge indoor and outdoor learning with innovative, creative approaches.

With a focus on social and emotional growth, OWLS creates deeper opportunities for students of all ages to build skills in inquiry, self-regulation, problem-solving, and critical thinking.



### Overall Vision/Goals

#### Curriculum Links

Literacy & math

#### Outdoor Learning

Schoolyards & nearby nature

#### Bridge Spaces

Indoors ↔ Outdoors

#### Resiliency

All seasons, all weather

#### Inquiry

Meaningful for all ages

#### Assessment

Tools & strategies outdoors

#### Resources

Ongoing support for teachers

#### Safety

Risk assessment strategies

#### Professional Growth

Networking & development



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# OWLS Facilitators & Supporting Partnerships



## Experienced & Creative Educators

OWLS facilitators are qualified educators with extensive experience in outdoor and environmental education.

Many hold additional training in Early Childhood Education, Forest School practices, Wilderness First Aid, and risk management.

With diverse teaching backgrounds from JK to Grade 12, our team works collaboratively with educators to create safe, meaningful outdoor learning opportunities for both students and teachers.



## Networking, Sharing & Partnership Opportunities

- Shared outdoor lesson plans and resources.
- Virtual PD sessions throughout the school year.
- Networking opportunities for collaborative sharing.
- Ongoing support with the OWLS team.

OWLS has partnered with the following organizations to provide additional supports, opportunities and resources for OWLS participating teachers and schools!



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# OWLS is for Everyone!

## How can we help?



### Risk, Safety & Policies

Safety is our top priority in all outdoor learning experiences.

By combining safe outdoor learning practices with effective outdoor classroom management, students develop resilience, self-regulation, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

OWLS facilitators also collaborate with teachers to create schoolyard risk assessment plans that align with each school's outdoor policies.

### ELK/Primary/Junior

#### Curriculum-Based

Outdoor learning & assessments

#### Social & Emotional Growth

Supporting students' well-being

#### Inquiry & Play

Discovering emergent learning

#### Math & Literacy Skills

Hands-on, real-world practice

#### Cross-Curricular Connections

Integrating multiple subjects



### Intermediate/High School

#### Curriculum-Based

Meaningful outdoor learning experiences

#### STEAM Connections

Science, technology, engineering, arts & math

#### Creative Assessment & Projects

Hands-on, project-based learning

#### Critical Thinking Skills

Problem-solving and reasoning

#### Real-World Applications

Links to careers and workplace skills

#### Cross-Curricular Connections

Integrating multiple subjects



### French & English Available

OWLS programs are available in both French & English.

OWLS facilitators can deliver outdoor learning experiences in French to support:

**French school boards,  
French Immersion programs,  
and bilingual classrooms.**

This ensures all students can engage meaningfully while strengthening language skills in authentic, real-world contexts.



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# Main Intentions



## Explore

Explore new and different ways to engage students in the outdoor and experiential learning environment.

## Help and Support

Help and support the curriculum and assessment expectations in a variety of subject areas (based on teacher and student needs)

## Discover

Discover connections and relationships between the learning that takes place in both the outdoor and indoor learning environment.

## Observe

Observe and acknowledge the emergent learning of students as they participate in inquiry/ exploration based activities.

## Program Goals

- ✓ Support social & emotional growth
- ✓ Development of leadership & teambuilding opportunities
- ✓ Promote environmental stewardship
- ✓ Fostering resiliency, responsibility & adaptability



## Experiential Learning Cycle

OWLS programs encourage ongoing reflection on learning:

- What?** (participation)
- So What?** (reflection) &
- Now What?** (application)



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# Program Options

## Which one is right for you?...



### OWLS Mentor

#### Professional development to grow your outdoor teaching skills!

Designed to help create ongoing, meaningful outdoor learning experiences, this mentorship program helps educators integrate curriculum and assessment connections seamlessly into their lessons.

This is ideal for teachers who are new to outdoor learning—or those looking to expand their pedagogy—participants receive guidance, resources, and hands-on support to confidently bring outdoor education into their classrooms.



### OWLS Discover

#### Experience OWLS in action!

Get a firsthand preview of the OWLS experience.

Educators can observe our facilitators delivering engaging, curriculum-linked outdoor lessons, gain insight into hands-on, inquiry-based learning strategies and see how outdoor education can be seamlessly integrated into their classroom practice.

**Choose from a list of preset lesson plans**



### OWLS Custom

#### Custom OWLS program

Each school or teacher may have unique needs that don't fit our standard OWLS programs.

Our custom "A-la-Carte" option allows us to design a tailored program to meet the specific goals of individual schools or boards.

This flexible approach ensures meaningful, curriculum-linked outdoor learning experiences for every setting.

**INCLUDING THOSE OUTSIDE OUR REGIONAL AREA.**



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# OWLS Mentor Teacher Mentorship Program



Develop meaningful outdoor learning experiences with hands-on guidance, practical resources, and strategies to connect curriculum and assessments.

This mentorship empowers teachers to confidently bring engaging, inquiry-based experiences to their students.

## In-person sessions

Five sessions (approximately 1–2 hours each) are delivered by an OWLS facilitator. Facilitators collaborate with participating teachers to integrate curriculum connections (based on current in class curriculum focus) into engaging outdoor lessons. A mentorship teacher must be present for each session.

## Intro & Risk Assessment

The OWLS facilitator will meet with the teacher and administration (virtually or in person) prior to the 5 sessions to review the program and discuss their unique needs and site. This will include guidance on a site risk assessment.

## Mentorship Pricing

**Full Program:** \$2,500 + HST

- 5 classroom sessions
- Access to OWLS lesson plans (BONUS: Outdoor Learning Kits)

**Add a Teacher:** \$1,500 + HST /additional teacher

- Maximum 3 teachers per day
- All teachers must be from the same school and attend on the same day



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# OWLS Discover Outreach/Preview Program



Get a firsthand preview of the OWLS experience. Observe our facilitators delivering engaging, curriculum-linked outdoor lessons and discover how to bring hands-on, inquiry-based learning into the classroom.

## Program

1 session (30 min – 1 hr) delivered by our OWLS facilitators. Teachers choose from a list of preset grade specific lessons linked to literacy, math and science.

## Outreach Pricing

**1 Class: \$350 + HST**

- Session Length: 30–60 minutes

**Add a Class: \$150 + HST/additional class**

- Maximum 3 classes per day
- All classes must be in the same school and occur on the same day



# OWLS Custom Custom Program



Tailor an OWLS program to fit your school or board's unique needs. Flexible, curriculum-linked outdoor learning experiences can be designed for any setting—even outside our regional area.

**Contact us to discuss how OWLS can support you!**



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