

50 things to do outdoors before you are 12

Think back to when you were 12 or younger. What did you do? Did you fly a kite or build a den? Did you throw some snow or hunt for treasure? My generation did all these things. Today what do kids do? Many play on their PlayStation or X-Box. They spend a lot of time on their computers. Many fail to go outside in the real world. A lot of adults find this quite alarming. To the point where in Britain the National Trust has recently published a top 50 list of 'Things to do before you're 11¾'.

The so called 'bucket list' documenting outdoor adventures every child should experience, has been developed to combat the rise of computer games and help children connect better with nature and their environment. Research published recently suggests that fewer than one in ten of today's children have played in a wild place compared to half of their parent's generation and 10% cannot ride a bike.

The National Trust in Britain decided to 'take it back to basics' and highlight some of the fun activities children can enjoy and which their parents often took for granted, such as building a den, flying a kite and running around in the rain. Do you remember the days of scraped knees, muddy clothes and nettle stings? These were once everyday hazards for boisterous girls and boys but with the rise of computer games and over-cautious parents, it seems fewer youngsters are venturing into the great outdoors. Among the list of activities is bug hunting and playing conkers. How many kids do that today? When was the last time you skimmed a stone across water, went canoeing or dammed a stream?

Stephen Moss, a naturalist and broadcaster working for the Trust called for parents and particularly grandparents to pass on their experience of the outdoors before the traditional childhood is relegated to the history books. The National Trust hopes that children will embrace the '50 things' and start having their own outdoor adventures with their family. Other top 50 things include ideas for older children like abseiling, lighting a fire without matches and 'geocaching' – a high tech form of hide and seek using GPS. Maybe we might see a revival of the rope swing or visiting an island? Happy days!

(See page 2 for the top 50 list)

Category: Survey / Outdoor Activities / National Trust

Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

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- 1 Climb a tree
- 2 Roll down a really big hill
- 3 Camp out in the wild
- 4 Build a den
- 5 Skim a stone
- 6 Run around in the rain
- 7 Fly a kite
- 8 Catch a fish with a net
- 9 Eat an apple straight from the tree
- 10 Play conkers
- 11 Throw some snow
- 12 Hunt for treasure on the beach
- 13 Make a mud pie
- 14 Dam a stream
- 15 Go sledging
- 16 Bury someone in the sand
- 17 Set up a snail race
- 18 Balance on a fallen tree
- 19 Swing on a rope swing
- 20 Make a mud slide
- 21 Eat blackberries growing in the wild
- 22 Take a look inside a tree
- 23 Visit an island
- 24 Feel like you're flying in the wind
- 25 Make a grass trumpet

- 26 Hunt for fossils and bones
- 27 Watch the sun wake up
- 28 Climb a huge hill
- 29 Get behind a waterfall
- 30 Feed a bird from your hand
- 31 Hunt for bugs
- 32 Find some frogspawn

- 33 Catch a butterfly in a net
- 34 Track wild animals
- 35 Discover what's in a pond
- 36 Call an owl
- 37 Check out the crazy creatures in a rock pool
- 38 Bring up a butterfly
- 39 Catch a crab
- 40 Go on a nature walk at night
- 41 Plant it, grow it, eat it
- 42 Go wild swimming
- 43 Go rafting
- 44 Light a fire without matches
- 45 Find your way with a map and compass
- 46 Try bouldering (a form of rock climbing)
- 47 Cook on a campfire
- 48 Try abseiling
- 49 Play geocache (GPS version of hide & seek)
- 50 Canoe down a river

EXERCISES

1. **Things to do outdoors before you are 12:** Think of three things you did outside before the age of 12. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) **Discuss the top 50 list.**

6. **Things to do outdoors before you are 12:** In pairs from the article think of five things you did outdoors before you were 12. Write them below. Then add five things from the list you think kids today should do. Write them below. Discuss together.

Your favourite things from the article	The things kids should do
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. **Let's roleplay 1:** In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Radio 1* studio in London. Today's interview is about: *50 things to do outdoors before you are 12*.

1	A parent	3	A National Trust spokesperson
2	A 10 year old	4	Stephen Moss

8. **Let's tell a story!** In pairs. Look at the top 50 things...Prepare a short story to tell the class about what things you did outdoors before you were 12. (Consider using your own ideas as well.)

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9. Let's roleplay 2: In pairs. Start a conversation about today's computer kids and what you did when you were 12. *5-minutes.*

10. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Who created the top 50 things you should do before aged 11¾?
- 2) Who is Stephen Moss?
- 3) What is GPS?
- 4) What is geocaching?
- 5) What is abseiling?

Student B

- 1) Fewer than one in ten have what?
- 2) 10% cannot what?
- 3) What is canoeing?
- 4) What are conkers?
- 5) What is a kite?

11. Outdoor activities: In pairs fill in the following... Discuss together.

What you might find in a forest	What you might find in a park
1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____
What you might find by the sea	What you may find in a garden
1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

12. Presentation: In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a two minute presentation on: **20 things to do outdoors before you are 12.** Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation to the class. The class can vote on the best presentation. Class – After the presentations go through the good and weak points on each presentation. Learn from the results.

13. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **20 things to do outdoors before you are 12.** Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) The 'bucket list' _____
- b) When I was 12 _____
- c) I would like to _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) When did you last climb a tree?
- 3) When did you last hunt for treasure?
- 4) When did you last swing on a rope swing?
- 5) When did you last feel like you were flying in the wind?
- 6) When did you last feed a bird in your hand?
- 7) When did you last go on a nature walk at night?
- 8) When did you last light a fire without matches?
- 9) When did you last try abseiling?
- 10) When did you last find your way with a map and compass?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?
- 3) When did you last light a camp fire?
- 4) When did you last go rafting?
- 5) When did you last fly a kite?
- 6) When did you last visit an island?
- 7) When did you last eat blackberries growing in the wild?
- 8) When did you last bury someone in the sand?
- 9) When did you last go sledging?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's discuss! Things to do outdoors before you are 12

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Things to do outdoors before you are 12

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING: edited

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

50 things to do outdoors before you are 12

Think back to when you were 12 or younger. What did you do? Did you fly a kite or build a (1)_____? Did you throw some snow or hunt for (2)_____? My generation did all these things. Today what do kids do? Many play on their PlayStation or X-Box. They spend a lot of time on their computers. Many fail to go outside in the real world. A lot of adults find this quite alarming. To the point where in Britain the National Trust has recently published a top 50 list of 'Things to do before you're 11¾'. The so called '(3)_____ list' documenting outdoor (4)_____ every child should (5)_____, has been developed to combat the rise of computer games and help children connect better with (6)_____ and their environment. (7)_____ published recently suggests that fewer than one in ten of today's children have played in a wild place compared to half of their parent's (8)_____ and 10% cannot ride a bike.

experience

treasure

nature

research

bucket

adventures

generation

den

The National Trust in Britain decided to 'take it back to basics' and (1)_____ some of the fun activities children can enjoy and which their parents often took for granted, such as building a den, flying a kite and running around in the rain. Do you remember the days of scraped (2)_____, (3)_____ clothes and nettle stings? These were once everyday hazards for (4)_____ girls and boys but with the rise of computer games and over-cautious parents, it seems fewer youngsters are venturing into the great outdoors. Among the list of activities is bug hunting and playing (5)_____. How many kids do that today? When was the last time you skimmed a stone across water, went (6)_____ or dammed a stream? Stephen Moss, a naturalist and broadcaster working for the Trust called for parents and particularly grandparents to pass on their experience of the outdoors before the traditional (7)_____ is relegated to the history books. The National Trust hopes that children will embrace the '50 things' and start having their own (8)_____ adventures with their family.

conkers

outdoor

boisterous

muddy

canoeing

childhood

highlight

knees

GRAMMAR: edited

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

50 things to do outdoors before you are 12

Think back to when you were 12 or younger. What did (1)___ do? Did you fly a kite or build a den? Did you throw some snow or hunt (2)___ treasure? (3)___ generation did all these things. Today what do kids do? Many play (4)___ their PlayStation (5)___ X-Box. They spend a lot of time on their computers. Many fail to go outside in the real world. A lot of adults find this quite alarming. To the point where in Britain the National Trust has recently published a top 50 list of 'Things to do before you're 11¾'. (6)___ so called 'bucket list' documenting outdoor adventures every child should experience, has been developed to combat the rise of computer games and help children connect better with nature and their environment. Research published recently suggests that fewer than one (7)___ ten of today's children have played in a wild place compared to half of their parent's generation (8)___ 10% cannot ride a bike.

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you

The National Trust in Britain decided to 'take it back to basics' and highlight (1)___ of the fun activities children can enjoy and (2)___ their parents often took for granted, (3)___ building a den, flying a kite and running around in the rain. Do you remember the days of scraped knees, muddy clothes and nettle stings? (4)___ were once everyday hazards for boisterous girls and boys but with the rise of computer games and over-cautious parents, it seems fewer youngsters are venturing (5)___ the great outdoors. Among the list of activities is bug hunting and playing conkers. How many kids do that today? (6)___ was the last time you skimmed a stone across water, went canoeing or dammed a stream? Stephen Moss, a naturalist and broadcaster working for the Trust called for parents and particularly grandparents to pass on their experience of the outdoors before the traditional childhood is relegated to the history books. The National Trust hopes (7)___ children will embrace the '50 things' and start having (8)___ own outdoor adventures with their family.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:

Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

1	treasure	11	nettle
2	computer	12	muddy
3	den	13	particularly
4	experience	14	broadcaster
5	traditional	15	kite
6	childhood	16	generation
7	outdoor	17	quite
8	adventures	18	bucket
9	revival	19	environment
10	knees	20	highlight

LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-2129199/National-Trust-campaign-lists-50-things-children-theyre-12-years-old.html>

<http://www.shropshirelive.com/2012/04/13/50-things-children-should-do-before-they-ar-12/>

<http://www.thisisgloucestershire.co.uk/National-Trust-list-50-things-age-12/story-15804766-detail/story.html>

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