

The Climate Spa

The climate Spa is a play on the idea of SPA being an acronym for Spaces for Playful Awakenings. It's designed to be run and occupied by children who wish to train to be "Sparkitects." "Sparkitects" are free thinking curious types who see the world differently from adults because adults get their playfulness and curiosity pushed out of them and find themselves suffering from apathy and ignorance towards nature and climate change.

The sparkitects are invited to devise "Playful Awakenings" for adults in a green space. They are also guided by a story of the first "Sparkitect" who scattered seeds from space to enable SPA's to grow. In this SPA the children share their playful awakenings and add them to a list of "treatments" that will be shared across other SPA's in the world.

The ambition is to link "Sparkitects" around the world together and have them change the way we tackle climate change locally and globally. By giving the children agency and the information they need to awaken the adults they begin to shape the future.

We don't want to prescribe how the space is used or how the idea evolves, but to get us started, what follows is some guidance and a list of ideas on how to use the book, the narrative, the space and the ideas for formal and informal learning.

The Letter

A mysterious letter arrives at your school. It is addressed to your class and comes from a local girl who remains anonymous. Read the letter to your class- you will find a PDF on our website, you can print it off or read from a tablet.

The Book

The book is an illustrated fantastical hero journey telling the story of a young girl who comes of age and travels the world in a magical tree balloon. She experiences the worlds wonders through 5 biomes and learns from the most ancient people on earth how to look after it. She has a terrible premonition in a dream about the worlds destruction and so literally plants seed that will grow the solutions to shape the future. The seeds grow tree balloons where imagination can take flight- the landing of a tree balloon (which can only land where there is evidence of great yearning for a better world) in a local space



The Climate Spa

creates the space for playful awakening- our Climate Spa. The book is a PDF on our website or can be ordered in advance from us. Please don't print the book yourself.

Learning opportunities from the book and the letter

The letter is designed to blur the boundaries of what is real and what is fantasy and invite the children to suspend their disbelief and enter into the play.

We encourage this approach by inviting them to imagine where the balloon might have landed, what is its significance, what might happen, how do we find out about it ?

With the book we encourage the idea of entering into the narrative and creating your own- what do you yearn for, where would you travel, what would be your greatest adventure, who could help you, if you could build a travel device what would it be, who would you like to meet, if you could befriend an animal who would it be, what do you dream about, what do you imagine is in the arctic, underwater, in the jungle. What superpowers do animals have that we could borrow to save the planet ? What might you see from a balloon. What do the tiny people do all day, what do they talk about, what concerns them. What does your town look like from the sky, from the stars ?

Draw, paint, dance, play, sing, write songs and poetry, make short films or video posts, but most of all, devise ways that you can "awaken wonder" in adults and show them how to see things differently. What "seeds" can you plant? What ways can you get adults to connect with nature?

The Spa

When you visit the SPA, you will be invited to take the "Sparkitect Oath" and play in different zones. The zones are "awakening wonder" "measuring what matters with what matters" "seeing the invisible" and "bringing people together."

Each zone has creative play cards and a range of kit to play with. The cards and kit suggest ways of "awakening wonder or measuring or seeing or gathering." We want the children to devise the play and write/draw their own creative card and hang it in the basket. Your job as the teacher is to give them freedom and keep the imagination stimulated- remember they are devising for adults not just playing themselves so encourage them to devise wondrous awakenings and celebrate every offer.

We will gather the cards at the end of each visit and share them in the "Sparkitect book of Playful Awakenings."



The Climate Spa

The children can continue to talk to Kay and share how their adult is doing – having been awakened.

Formal Education

There is a plethora of opportunities to use the letter, the book and the immersive experience for more formal education.

Questions about who wrote the letter, and the book can open up lots of discussion and explorations. What did the girl who wrote the letter actually witness, what is the balloon for, when will this event happen, where will it happen, why is it happening here, can get the children talking about news, internet, truth, fantasy, reporting, social media, imagination, play, open curiosity, creativity and how to question stories and information they receive. It can also lead into social and emotional welfare when we talk about yearning and relationships with parents and wider society. It can explore climate anxiety and feelings of apathy and helplessness and ultimately show how imagination and play in the real world can support positive connections. Discussion about the book and the biomes opens up exploration into climate impact on animals and nature as well as on humans.

Experiences in the SPA- Space for Playful Awakening are the most important as it supports an embodied and collective exploration. Imagination and fantasy are always grounded in our own realities so however fantastical an idea is it is a spark in enlightening a possibility. So seek out the possibility and explore it. Eg one child invented a time machine that was powered by black hole energy that allowed us to go back and forward to change extinction and destruction tipping points. The possibility here is foresight and action now. Turning the fantasy into reality is a space for playful awakening that has impact.

Another child invented an enchanted garden where flowers and trees could talk and sing- this prompted adults to talk and sing to the flowers and look after a more diverse garden.

The Book offers many opportunities to explore many subjects and attitudes.

1. Geography- exploring the map of the world and its biomes. We have used 5 but there are hundreds more you can explore. We ran workshops with an old fashioned printed map placed on the floor and floated a mini balloon with a basket around the world. Each time it touched down the children had to research the flora and fauna and gain super powers from them in order to boost their Sparkitect power rating.
2. Science- In the book Dad is a Balloon engineer, Kay flies according to the weather systems and winds, she dips into the ocean, she lands on ice



The Climate Spa

sheets, and jungle and desert and corals. The science behind the destruction and change of all these natural phenomena can be explored. Physics and the science of floating and forces, of propulsion and pressure can be explored around the balloon. Natural sciences can be explored in the research into the flora and fauna. Space and oceans offer great backdrops for explorations into solar system and oceanic eco systems.

3. Literacy and numeracy- simply reading the book, interacting with Kay online, researching the biomes, writing instructions for playful awakenings, working out how to measure things with other things supports literacy and numeracy.
4. Digital- the interaction with Kay and the posting of the “playful awakenings” offers interactive digital literacy.
5. History and social- your local community have a history of adventurers and of ballooning, it also has a history of activists and campaigners who helped change things- what stories can you find and how might those characters compare to Kay? The suffragettes recovered in a convalescence arboretum in Bath- a tree was planted for each person who was jailed for protesting? What other ways has nature influenced or marked history- local and global ? How is it doing it now ?

We hope these ideas are useful and would be very happy to explore more bespoke learning adventures with you. Please do get in touch and visit our websites

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