

Promising Practices in Nature- and Place-based Elementary Education

**Saturday, October 21, 2017
9:00 am–4:00 pm**

**Symonds Elementary School
79 Park Avenue, Keene, NH**

Join us for a new, day-long conference of educators who are redefining what's possible in elementary education. As we build school programs around place-based social studies, outdoor science lessons, Forest Fridays and more, we're connecting children to the natural world, local communities and big ideas. Antioch's popular *In Bloom* conferences have energized the nature-based early childhood movement, and participants have wondered, "What about the big kids?" *Inside-Outside* is our response.

Guilford Central School



Jen Fritz

We'll begin the day with a ceremonial opening, followed by a morning keynote. Breakout workshop sessions will follow, then lunch (on us)! The afternoon program consists of a second keynote and a second set of workshops from which to choose content of interest to you.

This conference is a collaborative event among the Department of Education at Antioch University New England, the Monadnock region Place-based Education Committee, the Harris Center for Conservation Education, The Caterpillar Lab, Symonds Elementary School and the Keene School District. It is made possible through funding from the George B. Storer Foundation.

"Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and wintergreen. The lives of the blue sailors, mallow, sunbursts, the moccasin flowers. And the frisky ones—inkberry, lamb's quarters, blueberries. And the aromatic ones—rosemary, oregano. Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms.

Attention is the beginning of devotion."

from *Upstream*, by Mary Oliver

Structure of the Day

8:15 am – 9:00 am	Registration Check-In
9:00 am – 9:10 am	Opening Circle
9:15 am – 10:15 am	Morning Keynote
10:30 am – 12:00 noon	Morning Workshops
12:00 noon – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Afternoon Keynote
2:15 pm – 3:45 pm	Afternoon Workshops
3:50 pm – 4:00 pm	Closing Circle

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Symonds Elementary School

KEENE SCHOOL DISTRICT



Morning Keynote

Place-based Education: A Year in the Life

David Sobel, Antioch University New England, Keene, NH and Jennifer Kramer, Guilford Central School, Guilford, VT.

Place-based education is a response to the alienation of schools from community, and the decoupling of schools from historic sites, local landscapes, and farms. Instead, we need schools that capitalize on the variety of local resources. In this way, place-based education develops academic skills, preserves community heritage and contributes to the economic revitalization of the community.

David will provide the big picture and Jen will describe curriculum projects from her classrooms that engage students in mapmaking, survival journal writing, botanical drawing, watershed tracing and saving the country store.



6th grade students at Guilford Central School

David Sobel is Senior Faculty at Antioch University New England, author of *Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities* and *Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens: The Handbook for Outdoor Learning*.

Jennifer Kramer is the 6th grade teacher at Guilford Central School in Vermont. She was recently awarded the Vermont VFW Teacher of the Year Award for middle school civics education. She specializes in creating real world, place-based education projects that engage students in learning about and contributing to the history, economics, politics and cultural traditions of the community.

Morning Workshops

Decomposers: Nature's Recyclers

Laura White, 6th Grade Teacher, Chesterfield Central School, Chesterfield, NH.

Learn about the cycling of matter in nature through soil science investigations in the field and in the classroom. Try your hand at activities that you can use to engage and inform your students: including soil coring, dissecting logs, soil shakes, and a decomposer scavenger hunt. Revel in rot!

Push Me, Pull You: Meeting NGSS through Outdoor Play

Hannah Lindner-Finlay, Teacher and Consultant, Westminster West, VT

One of the best ways to show that you really understand a concept is to apply that concept in variety of situations. Come learn how to introduce pushes, pulls, gravity, slope, and friction in the classroom and provide opportunities for students to apply their understanding of force and motion through outdoor play year round. In this workshop we will build giant marble runs, design and fly kites and experiment with water. We will also learn about ways to explore force and motion in the snow! To wrap it up, we will reflect on our own learning from the day and link it to the NGSS for our own grade levels. Models for documenting student learning will be provided.

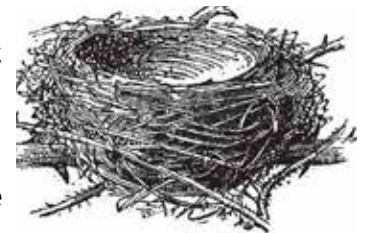
Building Models to Combat Erosion

Orly Hasbani, K-6 Enrichment Teacher, The Academy School, Brattleboro, VT

In this workshop we will explore how to address NGSS science and engineering standards while using our local environment. Specifically, we will study the effects of erosion at local streams and drainages. We'll construct models and go through the engineering process to try to minimize the effects of erosion on our landscape.

Noticing Nests

Sam Sintros, 3rd grade teacher, Franklin Elementary School, Keene, NH



Investigating bird nests in small urban pockets of nature encourages children to seek out other evidence of wildlife and become environmental stewards. In this workshop, we will investigate bird habitat and search for nesting sites a short walk away from Symonds School in Wheelock Park. We will then practice examining and building nests using a bird nest guide. These activities will reveal the myriad different nesting materials used by birds and how nests are constructed for strength and safety.

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Morning Workshops

Educating with Native Caterpillars

The Caterpillar Lab, Keene, NH

This interactive, hands-on workshop will present many aspects of caterpillar biology and challenge long-standing misconceptions about metamorphosis. We'll model activities that can be done in the classroom to illuminate the fascinating lives of Lepidopterans, and discuss how teachers can build knowledge and confidence to work with ever-more dynamic and interesting schoolyard insects. Lots of live animals on hand! Outdoors, naturalist Sam Jaffe will demonstrate many insect-finding and live-collection techniques that help bring insects and students together.

Lunch

A healthy lunch is provided. Please indicate any dietary restrictions when registering.

Afternoon Keynote



Once Upon a Time: Nature-Study in New England Schools, 1890-1930

Ellen Doris, Antioch University New England, Keene, NH

A century ago, the nature-study movement transformed American schools. The Three Rs didn't disappear altogether, but tadpoles, forests and flower gardens became part of the curriculum as well. Trace the nature-study era to the present to see how our early counterparts can inform, inspire, and hearten us.

*Ellen Doris is a faculty member in the Department of Education at Antioch University New England. Ellen has been an early childhood and elementary teacher in schools, museums and outdoor education programs. Her books include **Doing What Scientists Do**, for teachers, and **Life at the Top: Discoveries in a Tropical Forest Canopy**, for children.*



Afternoon Workshops



Nature Writing: Connecting Students to the Natural World through Writing, Reading and Observation

Betsy Bennett Stacey, Extensions Teacher, Keene Middle School, Keene, NH

Nature writing is a great way to help students establish a sense of place, reflect on their memories of nature, practice observation skills and work on writing. Experience the joys and satisfaction of nature writing outdoors at Keene's Wheelock Park and gain tangible lessons and curriculum that can be replicated with your class. We'll read examples of quality nature writing from well-known authors and practice varied styles of writing such as haiku, lyric poetry, essays, and descriptive scientific writing. Collect tips for teaching outdoors and establishing a nature writing program in your school.

Unearthing History: Using Cemeteries in a Place-based Classroom

Jen Kramer, 6th grade teacher, Guilford Central School, Guilford, VT

Doing local history in (and out!) of the classroom connects students with their communities in an engaging, meaningful way; it brings to life the abstract concepts and ideas traditionally covered in a textbook and fosters deep connections between students and their hometowns. In this workshop we'll explore sources for designing local history curricula in our teaching communities, focusing our work in Keene's West Cemetery. We'll create a timeline of gravestone materials and symbols and become historians, learning about some of the people buried there. Finally, we'll discuss other primary source materials that can be used in elementary classrooms to learn about the past.

Cavemanning

Jason Lovett, Lead Special Educator/Case Manager and Archaeologist, Kindle Farm School, Newfane, VT

In this hands-on, experimental archaeology workshop, you'll start with a piece of stone. Using primitive tools and a process called flint knapping to transform it, you'll wind up with an arrowhead! A curriculum that includes flint knapping is multimodal and multidisciplinary, offering lessons in history, geology, physics, and safety practices. Follow further in paleo footsteps as you learn how the Atlatl, an ancient hunting tool, can help you to bring down a mastodon.

Afternoon Workshops

Growing and Using Dye Plants with Kids

Michelle Parrish, Fiber Artist and Teacher, grades 1-2, The Common School, Amherst, MA <http://localcolordyes.com/>

Adding dye plants to your school garden can expand opportunities for the elementary curriculum, including history, science, agriculture, math, reading, crafts and textiles. Many easy-to-grow plants and flowers can be used to dye natural fibers such as fleece, yarns, or cloth, and are fascinating and fun to explore. This workshop will cover recommended dye plants for a school garden as well as harvesting, storing, and using dye plants in the classroom. Michelle Parrish, teacher, weaver, dyer, and spinner, is also a member of the New England Flax and Linen Study Group. She has cultivated a dye and fiber plant garden for use with students for ten years.



These photos courtesy of Michelle Parrish

When registering, be prepared to select the morning and afternoon workshops of your choice. Our conference day will include a mix of inside and outside . . . rain or shine!

A map and directions can be found on the registration page.

For more information or questions, contact Peg Smeltz, msmeltz@antioch.edu, 603-762-0012.

Unless otherwise noted, photos are by Ellen Doris.

Up Close and Personal: Investigating Local Woodlands

Paul Bocko, Teaching Faculty, Antioch University New England, Keene, NH

Inspired by *One Small Square: Woods* by Donald Silver, investigating small study plots in the woods engages early elementary students in field study. Nature is observed up close and personal to build a foundation for understanding larger ecological systems. Participants in this program will walk to Ladies Wildwood Park near Symonds School to inquire into the nature of fall with hand lenses, guidebooks, and sketch books in hand. Group members will share their small square findings with each other and envision how this activity can be nested in a larger study design with meaningful connection to local citizens.



Paul Bocko

Registration Fees:

Individual	\$125
Group Rate (3 people from same school/district)	\$100 each
AUNE Alumni	\$75
AUNE Students	\$50

To Register, visit:

<https://www.antioch.edu/new-england/event/inside-outside/>