



Forest and Nature School Practitioners Course: About the Online Start

The COVID-19 era has presented all of us with many challenges, but it has also presented us with the opportunity to (once again!) examine and improve our course. Transitioning the course to an online start is a new pivot for us and we want to embrace this new way of delivering the course with care.

How will the online start work?

The online start will consist of 8 one-hour video conferences during which practitioners and facilitators will dive deeply into the elements of the Forest and Nature School pedagogy, just as they would during the in-person part of the course. Sometimes those discussions may take place with the whole group; others will happen in small breakout groups or in pairs.

Before each session, your facilitators will invite you to engage with readings, videos, and other resources. They will also invite you to participate in various practices that we hope will deepen your relationship with the land, and prompt questions and reflection that you can then share with your fellow practitioners in discussion and/or in the reflection pieces you will create and upload to Storypark, our pedagogical documentation platform.

Beginning coursework:

These reflection pieces - the documentation of your own learning journey - will take different forms for different people. They may be written, they may include photos and video or audio recordings, they may include drawings, etc. We encourage you to be creative and to express yourself in a way that is meaningful for you! You will have the option to share your documentation pieces so that all the practitioners in your cohort can view and interact with them, or you may choose to share them privately with your facilitators.

In keeping with the FNS ethos, facilitators will then provide you with feedback, ask questions, nudge your boundaries, encourage you to dig deeper and challenge yourself and your practice. The reflections you share on Storypark will be part of your coursework (which will be completed in the months following the in-person course culmination - see below for more information). Facilitators



will not assign grades; rather, you will determine together if the depth and quality of your thinking and practice has changed, and where you may want to continue to research, reflect, and challenge yourself.

What about the in-person part of the course?

The online start will not replace the in-person part of the course! Rather, our hope and hunch is that it will actually open up a great deal of space during the in-person part of the course for play, tool work and other “hard skill” practice such as firebuilding, as well as connecting with each other and the land, and celebration. The in-person dates will be facilitated by the same facilitators who mentored you online. With much of the theory and pedagogy explored online, the in-person part of the course will be 4 days.

Finishing coursework:

While much of your coursework will be submitted over the 6 initial months online, there will be some assignments that we will ask you to complete after the in-person part of the course (risk assessments, for example). You will have 3 months following your in-person course to complete your coursework. If you feel you would benefit from an extension beyond that time frame, we ask that you please check in with your facilitator.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the online start, please contact us at admin@childnature.ca.

PATHWAY TO CERTIFICATION

