

Why Outdoor Spaces for Children Matter So Much

by James Wike

As a landscape architect, I obviously believe that the way outdoor spaces are designed matters, but

the biggest challenge is not so much wanting to create a better outdoor environment

it's how to get it done.

It's not that easy.

At the National Arbor Day Foundation, I was part of a team that designed a demonstration outdoor classroom in Debraeth City, Debraeth, that serves children from ages 11 to 13. The space is a great example of how landscape architects and educators can work

together to create a physical design of the indoor classroom.

When I use the term "outdoor classroom," I'm not

talking about a plant-filled area that is only used as a

place for children to study. It's a

space that really works. These are

the

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

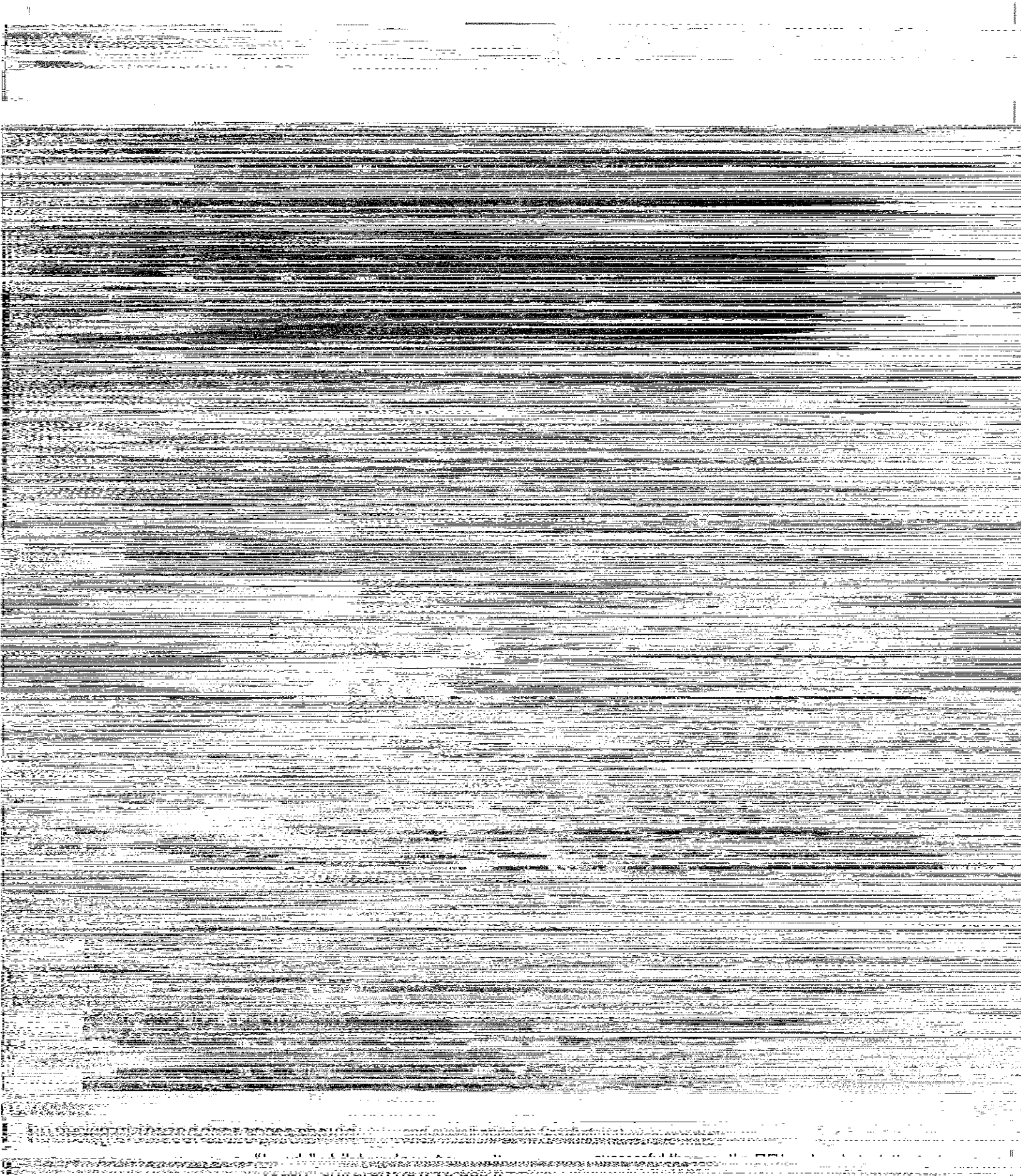
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION





of assisting with the Nebraska City project. I listened

Since our demonstration outdoor classroom is visited by carefully to all the exciting things the children do

and the principles upon which they were based. It



with the ability to understand basic tenants of visual composition and narration can make all the

childhood educators really work together, we can help

same chances I had

thing Children at the Arbor Day Farm in Dobrocks. I plan to attend this wonderful gathering and am excited

As a landscape architect, I know that I chose the

about the positive changes we might be able to bring about together in their book, The Geography of

had on a child to explore

Childhood. Mary Paul Gahhen and Stephen Dimple

working my way through a forest of

save]

Johnson 1001

fresh snow or watching my twig "boats" race down a ditch after a hard rain. I was learning about spatial

"It is quite possible for today's child to grow up without and 1997, the

decline in the amount of time today's children spend

than storethought once. It's difficult to tear

It spent playing outdoors decreased by four

Children benefit in so many ways from increased

outdoors

Well I write the

menor the fun, tomorrow at our world

they spent

