

ASSOCIATE

## JULIET ROBERTSON



*“It’s not so much ‘thinking outside the box’ as losing the box and just thinking outside*

Humanity has spent most of its existence outside in natural environments. We’ve evolved to survive and flourish in green spaces but have come to live – and study – in little boxes. It’s just not natural

In a country which has been a pioneer in outdoor learning for many years, Juliet is one of its leading proponents, throwing off the shackles of the classroom and the school buildings and taking learning back to basics - outside where we belong. In doing so, the shackles come off traditional classroom-bound teaching too and what is unleashed is a level of creativity and learning in young people that frequently surprises their teachers.

For many children, the only time they leave the classroom to learn is on the once-a-year field trip to the nearest historic monument from which the school hasn’t yet been banned. And even these trips are getting fewer thanks to the time-hungry constraints of the Elfin Safety. Yet it doesn’t have to be that way. From numeracy, literacy and science that really comes to life from being outside to field trips, gardening and even getting the whole community involved in transforming school grounds into powerful learning environments, Juliet has built a career helping schools make the most of what is beyond their four walls.

She is as much in demand for her school-based support as she is as a speaker at conferences in Scotland and beyond. Her blog, I’m a Teacher Get Me Outside of Here! has almost 6000 regular visitors per

month. She has also written a great deal of CPD material including co-creating a series of events that address the important area of critical skills development from an outdoor learning perspective.

And all this in a country that boasts some of the wettest places in Europe.

At a time when children are becoming increasingly sedentary and risk averse, when obesity rates are rising along with the illnesses that go with it, not to mention the fact that environments are under pressure and changing fast, now is the perfect time to take the learners – and the learning – outside. Let Juliet and Independent Thinking lead the way.

If you need further proof of the importance of Juliet’s work let’s leave you with the words of one Samuel Wilderspin, the 19th century educational pioneer who brought you such innovations as the ‘playground’ and the classroom ‘gallery’:

*“The absurd notion that children can only be taught in a room, must be exploded. I have done more in one hour in the garden, in the lanes, and in the fields, to cherish and satisfy the budding faculties of childhood, than could have been done in a room for months”*

Feedback from recent Events include:

*“The day spent with Juliet has had a noticeable effect on outdoor learning here already. We have classes out every*

*“Often, it is the children who exhibit the most challenging behaviour inside who benefit most from spending time learning outside” - Dirty Teaching*

*day using the playground for literacy and numeracy and the upper school staff are in the final stages of organising woodland visits. Everyone is having a go and so far everyone, especially the children, are enjoying it”*

*“Inspirational ideas for use throughout the school”*

*“You have given me ideas to make more effort and encourage others to open the doors”*

*“I would just like to thank you for such a practical, inspiring and informative day. I can honestly say that today was the most useful and interesting course I have ever been on. I really liked how you linked the theory to practical considerations and had reasoned arguments for all that you did”*

### Books written by Juliet Robertson:

- *Dirty Teaching*
- *Messy Maths*

Juliet has been with Independent Thinking since 2011.

All Independent Thinking Associates are DBS checked.

See our website:  
[www.independentthinking.co.uk](http://www.independentthinking.co.uk)  
for more information.