



Premier Content Partner Spotlight: Yellow Door

An Interview with Carole Mills, Owner



AWE Learning is committed to providing engaging and educational digital experiences for young learners. As part of this mission, we are thrilled to highlight Yellow Door as one of our premier content partners.

Yellow Door is renowned for its innovative and interactive learning resources designed to foster creativity, literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills in early childhood education. Their content seamlessly integrates with AWE Learning's platform, ensuring children have access to high-quality, hands-on learning activities in libraries, classrooms, and other educational environments.

Through this collaboration, AWE Learning continues to enhance its offerings with research-backed, engaging, and developmentally appropriate educational materials. We are excited to work alongside Yellow Door to support educators and inspire young minds to explore, learn, and grow.

What is the history behind Yellow Door the company? How and why was it founded?

Yellow Door was founded in 2006 and from the beginning, play has been at the heart of everything we do. Our aim is to spread the joy of play-based learning through resources that inspire, excite and delight! Our products are well-loved and well-known for their quality, innovative design and open-ended nature.

We're proud to offer a creative combination of resources in a variety of formats from digital software to hands-on resources made from natural, quality materials like stone and sustainably-source wood. Together, they provide rich educational opportunities for children to explore early learning concepts in hands-on meaningful ways.

Much of Yellow Door's content is inspired by customer feedback. How essential is it for you and your team to receive feedback on your content and how it helps create or modify content?

It's a privilege and a joy to be welcomed into early childhood environments to work with children and educators throughout the development process. To ensure the design, content and appeal of new products offer optimum play value and learning opportunities, we talk to educators and children who offer a wealth of valuable ideas. This ensures the final products are robust enough to deliver learning opportunities through early childhood play experiences. It's wonderful to watch children play and see the additional value they get from the resources. Recently, our Fish – Sensory Play Stones were put to the test as they went on adventures swimming in the muddy pond, hiding under the Play Shell then cleaned off as they sped down water shoots into a clean water tray! We watched the co-operation and collaboration as children talked, imagined, explored, and learned from each other. Children's curiosity about the natural world is limitless, and the nursery provided an indoor world of fish stories and activities to bring the fish indoors and extend their interest. On another occasion, the children tested our "Discover Dinosaurs" app and questioned "Why don't they roar?", "Can they walk?", and "What do they eat?". These questions further shaped the development of this successful app.

"Alphabet Pebbles" is one of Yellow Door's most popular titles. How did the feedback of this title help inspire other Sensory titles, as well Science & Nature titles?

Alphabet pebbles are a great example of how important testing and feedback are in the creation of Yellow Door products. We developed them back in 2008, and it was the first time we had tried to produce anything with stone.

We started out by tampo printing with ceramic paint on real river stones. However, when we took them into Early Childhood environments, we quickly discovered that if you put anything on the surface of a stone, it can be ground off, especially when used in sand (just think about how sand is made), and who wouldn't want to play with pebbles in sand? This started a challenging manufacturing journey, and we found we could only achieve the durability we wanted by engraving each letter shape into the surface of the stone and applying a non-fade paint to each letter by hand.

We've been making our alphabet pebbles, and all our stone products, that way ever since because there's no other way to create a product with all the natural appeal of real stone that stands up to rigorous use in an early childhood environment.

The tactile, visual and play appeal of these stones has been developed over many years into a wide range of sensory stones.

Our science and nature products have required creative innovation to develop familiar recognizable objects and shapes in a wide color palette with an appealing texture that meets all regulations and certification so it's safe for children 2 years and above.

What are some new titles/projects that Yellow Door is currently working on that we can expect to see in 2025?

We have lots of exciting products in development for later this year and early 2026. There will be a new addition to our best-selling "Let's Roll" range and our popular Sensory Play Stones collection will continue to grow with new sets in our Mud Kitchen and Exploring the World ranges.

Other ideas are brand new, but we're keeping them a secret for now! We'll be using familiar materials and some new ones too, all while continuing to be environmentally aware in our choices.

We have recently launched a Discover Dinosaurs app and have a lovely idea for an app that we are working hard to make a reality, so look out for news on our website and register for email updates.

Play is at the heart of Yellow Door's mission. How important is Play in early learning development?

As Maria Montessori famously said, 'Play is the work of the child'. During a child's formative years, play is the essential foundation upon which all learning and development are built. Through play, children make sense of the world, absorb new concepts, practice new skills, forge friendships, and develop confidence. It is a deeply enriching and therapeutic experience offering

clarity, calm and comfort while embedding essential life skills. The deeper the engagement, the stronger the connections - both in the brain and in the child's understanding of the world.

Children are intrinsically drawn to the natural world and learn best when engaged with visually appealing, tactile resources. This is why so many of our products draw inspiration from nature and are weatherproof, durable and designed to withstand robust, outdoor exploration.

From Traditional Tales books, apps and wooden characters to our popular dinosaur and bug-themed collections, our products are designed to spark curiosity and nurture children's innate drive for discovery.

The Yellow Door approach is to offer digital play experiences alongside physical play to deepen learning. Our apps have been structured to develop skills in line with early learning standards, using a variety of visual representations, animations and simple interactions which put the child at the centre of their own learning.

We create apps to add value and give children a positive experience of using technology as they learn and grow. Digital environments allow children to discover and play in an imaginary world, encouraging children to explore, investigate and deepen their understanding in an interactive hands-on way.

We also support educators with expert pedagogy, providing a collection of downloadable materials to support our resources, proving practical ways to inspire learning, extend play and reinforce key learning concepts. Because when play is enriched with carefully curated resources, the learning stays with children long after the play has ended.