

Forest School Activities



Animal Habitat

What you will need:

- Collection of natural items scattered around an out-door area (e.g. feathers, leaves, twigs, mud etc.)

The Activity:

- Ask the children to sit in a circle and discuss what types of 'homes' different animals live in and what materials they use to make these homes.
- Ask children to go and search (in the prepared outdoor area) for some items that could be used to make a habitat for an animal.
- When children return, place all of the items in the centre of the circle.
- Have a go at making some suitable homes for the animals, in different places, e.g. a home for a bird - in a tree, a home for a hedgehog - on the ground.



Musical Nature

What you will need:

- Collection of natural items scattered around an outdoor area (e.g. stones, wood, shells and seeds)
- Wire

The Activity:

- Encourage children to collect objects that they think could make interesting sounds.
- Cut some grooves into a stick to make a rasp. Drag another stick over it to see what sound it makes.
- Let children have a go at making sounds or musical instruments with their objects, e.g. sticks as drumsticks, seeds inside something to make a shaker etc.



What's in Your Circle?

What you will need:

- Hoops (or string)

The Activity:

- In small groups, give children a hoop (or piece of string to make a hoop with).
- Ask children to go and find a special area to place their hoops down.
- Ask them to look carefully at what is inside their hoop – leaves, sticks, plants, feathers etc.
- Children discuss with other groups, some of the different things found within their circle. Discuss what is growing and what is not. Can they predict what might change inside their hoop over time?
- Over the next few weeks, the children can revisit their hoops and see what has changed.



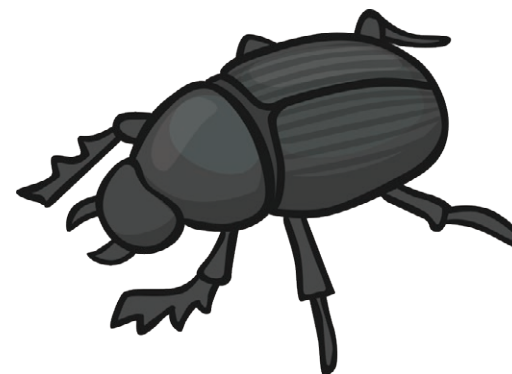
Memory Game

What you will need:

- Collection of natural items scattered around a woodland area (e.g. leaves, feathers, twigs, acorns etc.)

The Activity:

- Ask children to collect a number of items from the woodland area. Remind them not to pick wild flowers.
- Divide the children small groups (or pairs).
- Place all the items they have collected into the middle of a circle.
- Tell children that they need to try to memorise all of the items in the circle.
- Children turn away as an item is removed from the middle.
- Choose one child to guess which item has been removed.



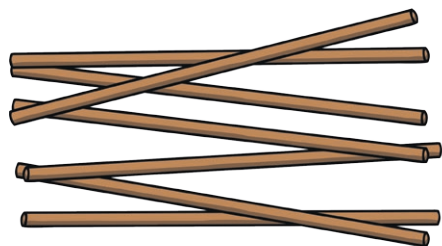
I Spy

What you will need:

- Cardboard tubes
- Outdoor/woodland area

The Activity:

- Give each child a cardboard tube.
- In pairs, ask children to explore the area using the tube to focus on specific things, up close or far away.
- Encourage the children to show their partner the natural items they have found.



Follow the Leader

What you will need:

- Piece of string/wool (1m in length, 1 per child)
- Outdoor/woodland area with natural items scattered around

The Activity:

- Ask children to find a stick each and wind some string/wool around the end.
- Go on a slow walk around the outdoor area and ask children to collect natural objects as they walk. Ask them to be selective and only choose their favourite items.
- Children attach the objects to their stick by winding the string around them.
- When you have finished the walk, ask children to describe the objects they have collected and explain why they chose them.



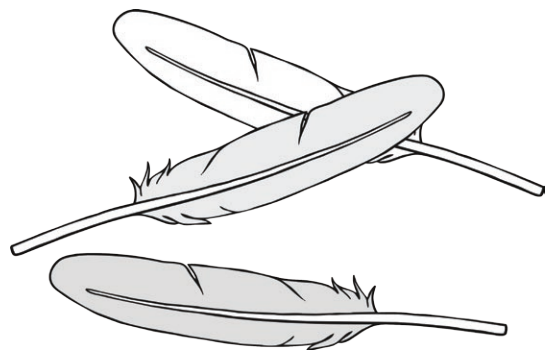
What am I?

What you will need:

- Collection bags
- Outdoor/woodland area with natural items scattered around (e.g. leaf, feather, twig, acorn etc.)

The Activity:

- Ask children to collect natural items from the woodland area.
- Ask them to get into pairs and put their items into the middle of the circle.
- Allow each child to choose an object (without touching or naming it) and describe it. Their partner then has to try to guess which object is being described to them.
- Children then swap over.



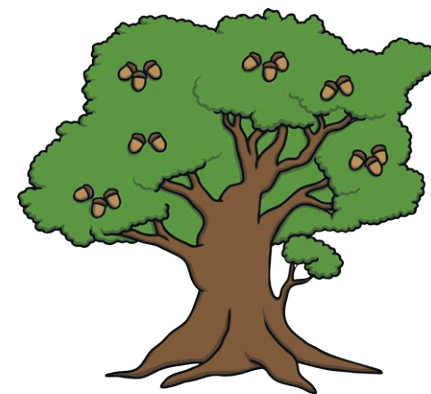
Collection Game

What you will need:

- Collection bags or boxes
- Outdoor/woodland area with natural items scattered around

The Activity:

- Ask children to work in pairs to collect 8-12 natural objects.
- First child sorts items into different criteria's e.g. soft items/hard items etc.
- The other child has to try and guess how they've been sorted.
- Children take it in turns.



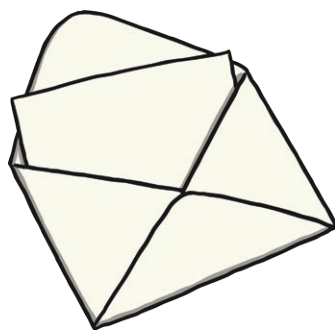
Design Your Own Woodland

What you will need:

- Large piece of paper and pen
- Woodland area

The Activity:

- Ask children to walk around the woodland area and discuss the natural things they can see. Which do they like/dislike and why?
- Ask them to use their imagination to help design their perfect woodland area, including the things they have seen that they like.
- Draw and label the children's ideas, ensuring that you think about and discuss the sustainability of your woodland area.



Letters

What you will need:

- Variety of natural resources scattered around an outdoor area (e.g. sticks, stones, feathers etc.)
- Muddy patch or sandpit
- Letter (from an animal) hidden somewhere in the area

The Activity:

- Ask children to find the hidden letter and see which letters they recognise. Help them to read the letter out loud.
- Tell children that you have no pens, pencils or paper with you. How will you reply to the letter?
- Take suggestions and encourage them to find objects scattered around, to either form letters or use for writing in the sand/mud.



Can you Find...

What you will need:

- Natural resources in a box or basket

The Activity:

Ask the children to find the following:

- a green object
- a beautiful object
- a straight object
- a fluffy object
- a round object
- a yellow object
- a smooth object.
- a rough object

Can they find something that is not on the list?

Take a picture of all the objects that have been collected. See if you can make a mobile with some of the items.

Nature Art

What you will need:

- Blindfolds
- Collection bags
- Variety of natural resources scattered around an outdoor area

The Activity:

- Show the children examples of ephemeral/transient artwork (art that is only temporary). Discuss the objects that the artists have used.
- Ask the children to collect 2-3 natural objects that they believe could make a piece of natural artwork.
- Blindfold some of the children and get them to feel some objects and guess what they are made from. Encourage them to describe textures they feel.
- Ask children to work in small groups to create a piece of artwork with their objects.
- Take pictures of the children's finished artwork.
- As a class, walk around all the different pieces of artwork created and talk about different objects that have been used.

Leaf Baskets

What you will need:

- Collect together a quantity of leaves (dry, supple leaves of medium size are best)
- Plastic bowl
- Glue
- Petroleum jelly

The Activity:

- Turn the bowl upside down.
- Cover the bowl with a thin coat of petroleum jelly.
- Make a layer of leaves inside the bowl and cover with glue, as you would with papier-mache.
- Add a number of layers.
- Leave the basket to dry.
- When the leaves are completely dry, remove the bowl.

You could also decorate the basket with other natural objects, e.g. small seeds.



What Plant Am I?

What you will need:

- Labelled pictures of plants that grow in your outdoor area
- Box or bag

The Activity:

- Ask the children to sit in a circle.
- Ask a child to choose one of the pictures and look at it carefully. They then place the picture into the box/bag and sit with it in the centre of the circle.
- Encourage the children in the circle to ask questions which will help them to guess which picture is in the box/bag.
- Each child asks a question about the plant.
- The child in the centre answers the questions until the children think they know what the plant is. They then choose someone to guess which plant has been put in the box/bag.



Leaf Whispers

What you will need:

- Quiet surroundings
- A leaf collected by the children

The Activity:

- Ask the children to sit in a circle.
- Tell the children that the special leaf has a secret message and that we can only hear it one at a time.
- The children are going to help the leaf to carry its message around the circle from the first child to the last.
- The adult comes up with a message to be passed around the circle, then holds the leaf first and whispers the message to the child next to them. Explain that everyone else needs to be very quiet.
- The leaf is then passed around the circle, as each child whispers the message to the next.
- When the leaf comes to the last child in the circle, they say out loud what the leaf's message was. Is it the same as the one the adult said? Discuss why it may be slightly different.