



## HELLO PARENTS,

Exploring the natural world through hands-on science is an important and enjoyable way for children to learn. They can observe, manipulate and experiment with objects from their natural environment, predict what will happen, and test their predictions. Such self-directed activities stimulate children's curiosity, connect them to nature, and help them develop a sense of respect for the environment and empathy for all living beings. In this newsletter, we provide fun activities that will support your child in discovering science in nature.

## ACTIVITIES

### INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

#### ANIMALS IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Take your child for a walk outside. Point out the sounds and sights around you, such as birds chirping or cawing, insects crawling, dogs running around and sniffing, squirrels climbing up trees, etc.
- Encourage your child to imitate the animals' sounds or movements.
- Provide your child with vocabulary to describe what they are seeing.
- At home, find books that feature the animals you saw on your walk.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

### TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

#### NATURE DISCOVERY BOTTLE

##### MATERIALS:

- Clear bottle with lid
- Magnifying glass

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Bring the empty bottle with you when you and your child go on a nature walk.
- Encourage your child to collect various nature items and put them in the bottle. Some examples include: leaves, flowers, rocks, etc.
- When you are done collecting, put the lid back on the bottle.
- Have your child observe the items in the bottle and ask questions to encourage your child to talk about them.
- Offer your child a magnifying glass to discover the details.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

### PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

#### PINECONE WEATHER STATION

##### MATERIALS:

- Pinecones
- Paper
- Markers
- Camera

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Take your child for a walk and collect some pinecones.
- Put the pinecones outside where your child can easily observe them daily.
- Notice what happens to the pinecones when the weather is dry (they open up) and when it is going to rain (they close down).
- Have your child record what happens with the pinecones each day by drawing pictures.
- Encourage your child to predict what the weather will be by observing the changes in the pinecones.

[Click here](#) to learn more about pinecones.

### JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

#### WALKING WATER

##### MATERIALS:

- 3 empty glasses
- Food colouring (red and yellow, blue and yellow, or red and blue)
- Paper towel

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Choose the pair of colours you want to mix.
- Fill two glasses with water and add one food colour to each glass.
- Place the empty glass between the two glasses with coloured water.
- Cut the paper towel in half and then fold each piece into quarters lengthwise.
- Stick one end of the paper towel into the coloured water and another end into the empty glass. Do the same with both glasses filled with coloured water.
- Observe what happens: the water moves, or "walks", up the paper towel into the empty glass until the water levels of all three glasses are equal.
- Discuss with your child why the water moved and how the new colour was created.

[Click here](#) for more activities.

### SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

#### SODA BOTTLE COMPOST

##### MATERIALS:

- Empty 2-litre soda bottle
- Soil
- Leaves, grass, newspaper, vegetable scraps, etc. Do not put meat, dairy and oil in the bottle.
- Camera
- Paper
- Markers
- Notebook

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Cut the top of the bottle, remove the label, and rinse it out well.
- Start with a layer of soil on the bottom and alternate between soil and compostable material.
- Add some water when the bottle is filled up.
- Have the compost sit in the sunlight for several weeks.
- Observe the materials in the bottle and note the changes happening over time.
- Keep a record of the changes by taking photos or drawing pictures of what is happening.
- This recycled science project is a great hands-on way to learn about composting.

[Click here](#) for more outdoor science activities.



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#### A TIP FOR TODAY

- Observe and study plants and animals in their natural environments.
- Observe and record changes in nature. For example: clouds changing shapes, leaves turning colours, the ground getting soggy after a rainfall, etc.
- Encourage your child to ask "why" questions and seek answers to their questions.
- Add natural items, such as sticks, rocks, pinecones, etc., to your child's toy collection.