

Natural Art

Explore the outdoors and develop sensory exploration by creating natural works of art!

Learning aims

- Physical development - fine motor skills
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design
- Communication and language
- Personal, social, emotional development.



Resources

- Natural resources collected from across the seasons; stones, sticks, driftwood, leaves, acorns, fir cones, flowers, bark, shells, rocks, lavender
- Elastic bands, clothes pegs, string - to attach items together i.e. for paint brushes
- Camera to record the artwork
- Other suitable materials found in nature e.g. soft conker shells for patterns
- Blank canvas and tape to create canvas space.

Activity outline

Works of art can either be completed on an individual canvas or done as a whole group, in a large scale project.

- Explore the outdoors and collect your resources
- Remember to follow all safety procedures appropriately and observe safeguarding processes
 - For ideas and support, take a look at our visits and outings policy and procedure template for England, Scotland and Wales for support.
- Encourage the children to look around for any fallen leaves, twigs, flowers, feathers etc. to collect
- Provide the children with a blank canvas, an individual square canvas or framed space on the concrete floor of your setting with tape
- Leave the resources for the children to explore and create
- Remember to discuss why it is important to choose items that have fallen on the ground rather than pulling them from trees - try to discourage children from pulling leaves and flowers off trees and plants
- If there is a lack of natural resources, why not hide some resources around the area for children to find?
- Collect a range of twigs for the paint brush handles and tool tips such as leaves for the brush and create a stock pile
- Depending on the season you could use seeds and their shells such as soft conker shells for mark making.

You can also create some natural paintbrushes as well:

- Use the elastic bands, string or clothes pegs to attach a chosen tool tip to the wooden stick handle
 - Encourage children to see if they can attach their chosen material onto their stick. This will also help support fine motor skills
- When you are ready, provide the children with paint and ask them to create their masterpieces
 - Engage in conversation with the children about their homemade brushes and the effects they create
- Encourage children to photograph their finished piece/s of art.

Extending the activity

- Link the activity to the environment - how else can we support the environment?
- Discuss why it was important to not pick fresh leaves and flowers and only ones that had fallen/ been discarded.

Special considerations

- *Ensure that materials are safe for children to use and beware of choking hazards*
- *Take a look at our visits and outings policy and procedure template for England, Scotland and Wales for support on taking children on trips away from nursery*
- *Be careful of sharp objects such as conker shells or plants such as nettles which can cause harm*
- *Ensure you and the children dress appropriately for any weather conditions.*