

Activities for children

Activity sheets 1 - 5



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Introduction

Gatekeeper for Parents and Carers.

The recent Report by Stephen Moss for The National Trust, “Natural Childhood” has drawn attention to the fact that fewer children now have the opportunity to experience the excitement of exploring and discovering the natural world around them.

We fundamentally believe that an awareness of Nature’s beauty and an enjoyment of the freedom it offers, invariably leads to a personal sense of happiness and satisfaction. For this reason, we want to encourage everyone and our future generation of children to go outdoors, explore and discover.

This website will provide outdoor activities suitable for children from aged 4 to 10 and will be updated regularly to suit each season.

The activities will be described in the same, clearly defined format.

- A. A list of skills which may be enhanced by completion of the activity.
- B. Details of planning, providing Template charts on which children may record what they need for the task and define what problems they might encounter.
- C. The equipment required.
- D. The method, providing a step by step description of how to carry out the task.

Activities for children Aged 4 to 11

Template chart 1

Invertebrate sculptures in their habitats

Children can self- assess results using score of:

- A. Pleased
- B. Quite happy
- C. Not very happy



Sculptures of invertebrates

To parents, teachers and home educators

Enjoying this activity will assist in developing the following skills

- A. Encourage observation of similarities and differences.
- B. Reinforce an understanding that different invertebrates live in different environments.
- C. Develop an awareness of the importance of the food web.
- D. Enhance skills of manipulating clay, wire and other materials to create a model.
- E. Advance the ability to plan and work out problems, such as suitable materials and ensuring balance.

Planning

Discuss the activity with the children and suggest they complete Template Chart 1.

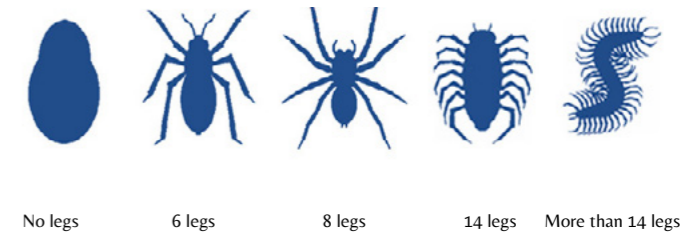
Equipment

- a. A5 boards
- b. Clay
- c. Pliable garden wire or similar
- d. Pliers. Used under supervision
- e. Acrylic paints
- f. Brushes
- g. Gold spray. Used outdoors by adults only.
- h. Plastic sheet on which to spray models
- i. Pocket Pack cards
- j. Template chart 1

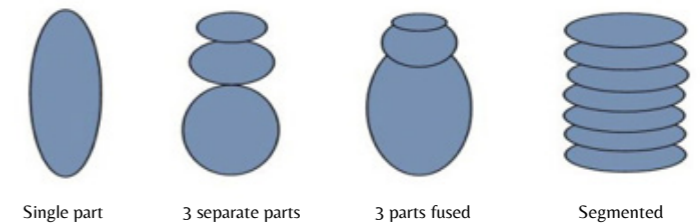
Method

In order to create accurate models of invertebrates, look at the structure of creatures illustrated on the Pocket Pack cards.

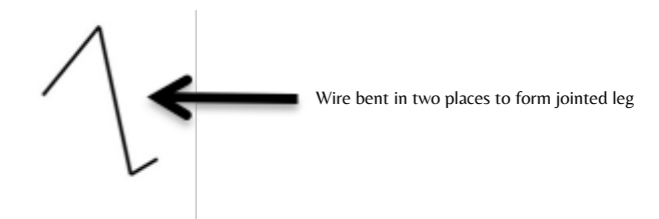
1. How many legs does it have?



2. What shape is its body?



3. Does it have jointed legs?



4. Make the correct body shape using the clay.
5. Join parts together with barbecue sticks or wire as required.
6. Decide on the number of legs required and, if jointed, make in the shape as shown above, bending the wire with pliers.
7. Create the legs for younger children. Older children can be shown how to use pliers safely and then make the legs by themselves.
8. Place the creatures on the boards, using clay to support the creatures if necessary. These supports can be modelled as logs or stones as part of a habitat.
9. Using natural materials collected beforehand, such as dead leaves, stones, twigs and fungi, create a representation of the habitat in which that creature lives.
10. Paint the creature using acrylic paints, which will successfully cover clay while still damp.
11. Cover the ground outdoors with the plastic sheet and spray the models with just a touch of gold. This will create the "wow" factor and bring the model alive. Use only very little gold spray, or the colours of the invertebrates will be obscured.

Allow models to dry and the fumes to clear before removing indoors.

Activities for children Aged 5 to 11

Template chart 2

Potato sculptures

Children can self- assess results using score of:

- A. Pleased
- B. Quite happy
- C. Not very happy



Potato models made by all ages, including robots, rabbits, monsters, pigs and insects

To parents, teachers and home educators

Enjoying this activity will assist in developing the following skills

- A. Motivate imagination and concentration.
- B. Develop manipulative skills.
- C. Foster an understanding of design construction and the importance of balance.

Planning

Discuss the activity with the children and suggest they complete Template Chart 2.

Equipment

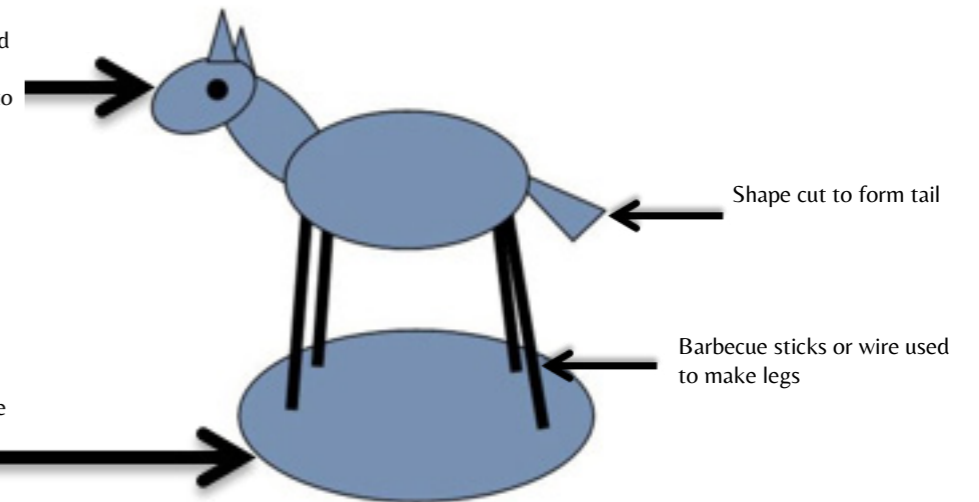
- a. Potatoes of all shapes and sizes
- b. Knives (Under supervision)
- c. Barbecue sticks
- d. Scissors (Under supervision)
- e. Pliers (Under supervision)
- f. Pliable wire of various thicknesses
- g. Gold spray. Used outdoors by adults only.

Method

1. Select the potatoes most suitable for the model and cut to shape as required.
2. Cut the barbecue sticks to the required lengths and piece together the model, ensuring that it stands un-aided.
3. Cut a flat base on a large potato to form a flat support is required.

Example of a horse made from potatoes

Head, neck and body formed by potato shapes, joined by barbecue sticks or wire cut to size



4. Add details which relate to the subject being created. For example, wire can be formed into curly wire tails or arials. Wind pliable wire around a pencil, removed and then cut to size.
5. When the models are finished, arrange outdoors on a plastic sheet. Spray liberally with gold paint, ensuring that the potatoes, all wire and sticks are covered.

Allow to dry and the fumes to clear before removing indoors.

Activities for children Aged 4 to 9

Template chart 3

Collage using natural materials

Children can self- assess results using score of:

- A. Pleased
- B. Quite happy
- C. Not very happy



Winter landscape with house and pond

To parents, teachers and home educators

Enjoying this activity will assist in developing the following skills

- A. Develop an awareness of the natural materials which surround us.
- B. Inspire imagination through using twigs, catkins, leaves, fruits etc to create a picture.
- C. Enhance an understanding of size, balance and weight.
- D. Encourage observation and concentration.

Planning

Discuss the activity with the children and suggest they complete Template Chart 3.

Equipment

- a. Containers in which to collect the materials
- b. A3, A4 or A5 boards or stiff card
- c. Glue
- d. Scissors (Under supervision)
- e. Acrylic paints
- f. Brushes
- g. Fine wire if required

Method

1. Decide on the subject of the collage, village, garden, pond, habitat etc.
2. Collect natural materials from outdoors.
3. Create the picture and stick in place.
4. Paint certain features if required.

Activities for children Aged 3 to 6

Template chart 4

Sorting leaf shapes

Children can self- assess results using score of:

- A. Pleased
- B. Quite happy
- C. Not very happy



Leaf shape design

To parents, teachers and home educators

Enjoying this activity will assist in developing the following skills

- A. Encourage observation and concentration.
- B. Heighten an awareness that different trees produce different shaped leaves.
- C. Boost the skill of sorting simple shapes into groups.
- D. Enhance artistic skills in using those shapes to create a design.

Planning

Discuss the activity with the children and suggest they complete Template Chart 4.

Equipment

- a. Containers in which to collect various leaves
- b. A3, A4 or A5 boards or stiff card
- c. Glue
- d. Scissors (Under supervision)

Method

1. Sort the leaves into groups and keep in separate piles.
2. Keeping each type together, create a design and when satisfied, stick the leaves on the cardboard.
3. Count the numbers of types found and record by writing 'X' number of shapes on the display.

Activities for children Aged 3 to 6

Template chart 5

Making plaster casts of animal footprints

Children can self- assess results using score of:

- A. Pleased
- B. Quite happy
- C. Not very happy



Fallow Deer



Badger



Fox



Animal footprints cast in plaster

To parents, teachers and home educators

Enjoying this activity will assist in developing the following skills

- A. Encourage an awareness of the many animals which live in the natural environment
- B. Motivate patience and concentration in looking for animal tracks outdoors.
- C. Develop the ability to plan and decide what may be required to complete a project.

Planning

Discuss the activity with the children and suggest they complete Template Chart 5.

Equipment

- a. Plaster of Paris
- b. Mixing bowl
- c. Container of water
- d. Spoon for stirring
- e. Paper clips
- f. Strips of flexible plastic, approx: 40cms x 8cms wide (cut from plastic bottle or similar)
- g. plastic bags to hold finished casts

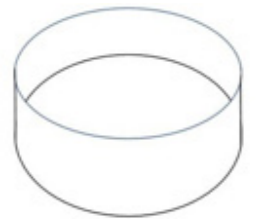
Method

1. Using large plastic bottles or similar, cut strips of plastic of about 8cm wide. You may need two strips to make one plaster cast, so cut strips from several bottles.



2. Look for animal prints on areas of damp, bare earth.
3. Select those well-defined and surround it with plastic strip.

Plastic strip clipped together to form a water tight circle around footprint



4. Overlap the ends of plastic strip and clip securely with paper clips.
5. Mix the plaster in the bowl and pour into the plastic strip.
6. Ensure that the plaster does not leak away at the sides.
7. Repeat the whole process if there are more footprints in the area.
8. Leave the plaster for about 15 to 30 minutes to dry completely. Timing depends upon the prevailing weather conditions.
9. Remove plastic and plaster cast, keeping the earth (which will be stuck to the bottom of the cast) in place until you get back to base.
10. When completely dry, remove the earth and wash plaster cast in water.
11. Paint the completed plaster cast with white paint, white shoe cleaner or outline the actual animal print using acrylic paints.