



Botany & Magical Gardens



Botany & Magical Gardens (What's Included!)

- Introduction to the Unit of Investigation
- Materials Needed for Activities
- Vocabulary Words
- Guiding Questions
- Songs to Sing
- Books to Read
- Tips to Reinforce the Unit in Everyday Experience
- Know Wonder Learn (KWL) Chart
- Word Web (Expansion of Concepts Relative to Unit of Investigation)
- Expanded Play with Unit of Investigation
- 12 Activities (Including Materials Needed, Directions to Follow, and Targeted Learning Objectives)



Introduction: Botany & Magical Gardens

Embarking on an exploration of botany and nature inspires children to delve into the fascinating world of plants and flowers. As they immerse themselves in the wonders of botany, they cultivate an understanding of plant life cycles, the importance of nurturing growth, and the beauty of biodiversity.

Transitioning from the realm of botany to the realm of imagination, children connect their botanical knowledge into the enchanting world of fairy tales. As children engage in imaginative play, they deepen their connection to nature while expanding their creative and storytelling skills. Harnessing the power of imagination fuels cognition, igniting critical thinking, problem-solving, and language skills as children construct narratives, make decisions, and navigate imaginary worlds.

When administering activities, it's important to re-offer the same activities several times over. This allows children the opportunity to make deep connections, comprehend uses and properties, while contributing to mastery and memory recall. And keep in mind that learning is not confined to a specific time, place, or activity. It's an ongoing journey where connections are woven through daily interactions and engagement with the people, places, and materials that surround us.



Materials

Our suggested list of materials are items that will supplement the activities and experiences in your packet.

- Loose parts - Look to continuously gather and sustain your collection!
 - Empty paper towel/toilet paper rolls, empty egg cartons/containers
 - Branches, leaves, rocks, pinecones, seashells
 - Various caps, loose game pieces, buttons, bottles
 - Metal cans, lids, wires, chains, old keys, magnets
 - Rope, string, twine, ribbon, chiffon, fabric swatches
- Terra cotta pots
- Soil
- Seeds (for gardening)
- Pencil with eraser
- Coloring utensils (paint, markers, oil pastels, crayons)
- Contact Paper
- Cardboard
- Construction Paper
- Paint
- Paintbrushes
- Clay
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Food Coloring



Vocabulary Words

New & relative vocabulary words to incorporate in everyday experiences: In addition to incorporating the vocabulary words provided below, try to speak as you go! Talking to children as you go is one of the most powerful ways to expand upon receptive and expressive language development. The more language children are exposed to (when used in meaningful and relative context) the greater it contributes to language and future literacy skills.

- Botany
- Botanist
- Florist
- Garden
- Plants
- Flower
- Trees
- Greenhouse
- Conservation
- Compost
- Pistil
- Stigma
- Style
- Ovary
- Stamen
- Petals
- Receptacle
- Peduncle
- Bud
- Stalk
- Stem
- Bulb
- Seeds
- Roots
- Shoots
- Leaf
- Blossom
- Forest
- Woods
- Kingdom
- Magic
- Imagination
- Enchantment
- Fables
- Fairy tales
- Fantasy
- Fairies
- Dragons
- Elves
- Royalty



Guiding Questions

Guiding questions play a vital role in emergent curriculum as they spark curiosity, promote inquiry, and guide the direction of learning experiences based on children's interests and developmental needs. By posing open-ended questions that encourage exploration and discovery, we can tap into children's natural curiosity and foster a deeper understanding of concepts. These questions serve as a catalyst for meaningful learning experiences, empowering children to actively engage with their environment, make connections, and construct knowledge.

Guiding questions also help scaffold learning opportunities, providing a framework for observation, assessment, and reflection on children's interests, skills, and growth. They promote collaboration and dialogue, fostering a dynamic learning community where ideas are shared, perspectives are valued, and creativity thrives. Guiding questions honor children's voices, interests, and agency in shaping their learning journey.

- What makes something a plant and what do they need to grow?
- How do you think plants change during different times of the year in gardens?
- Why do you think bees and butterflies visit gardens, and what do they do?
- Can you guess why some plants only grow in certain places?
- What kinds of plants have you seen in gardens, and what makes them interesting to you?
- If you could grow any magical plant in a garden, what would it look like and what special powers would it have?
- Can you imagine a garden filled with fairy-tale creatures and enchanted plants? Describe what it would be like.
- What adventures do you think you could have exploring a magical garden?



Songs to Sing

Singing with children is a multifaceted tool for development, enhancing language skills through exposure to varied vocabulary and rhythms. The rhythmic and melodic nature aids memory, making learning engaging. Beyond cognitive benefits, singing promotes emotional expression, fostering a holistic growth experience.

Little Seed

(Tune: "The Wheels on the Bus")

The little seed goes in the ground,
In the ground, in the ground.
The little seed goes in the ground,
To grow into a plant.

The rain falls down upon the seed,
Upon the seed, upon the seed.
The rain falls down upon the seed,
Helping it to grow indeed.

The sun shines bright to warm the ground,
To warm the ground, to warm the ground.
The sun shines bright to warm the ground,
So the seed can be found.

The roots reach down and spread out wide,
Spread out wide, spread out wide.
The roots reach down and spread out wide,
To anchor the plant with pride.

The stem grows up and the leaves unfurl,
The leaves unfurl, the leaves unfurl.
The stem grows up and the leaves unfurl,
Becoming a plant, a wonder of the world.

Planting Seeds

(Tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

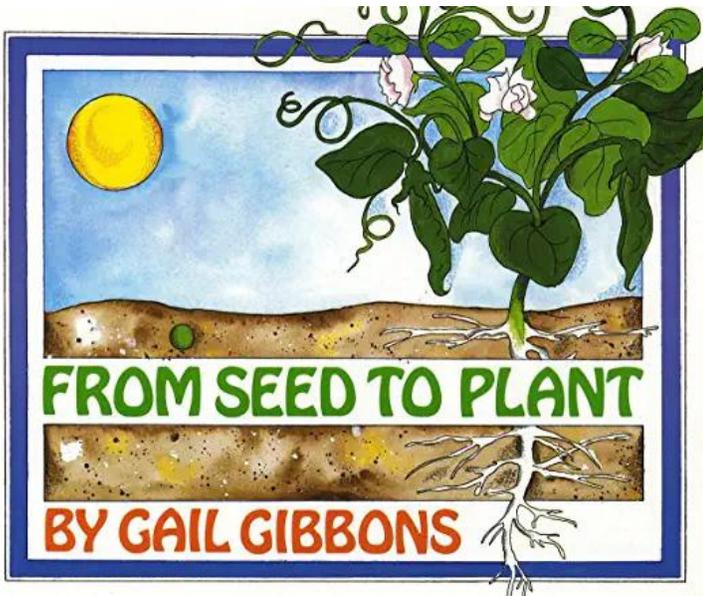
Planting seeds in the ground so small,
Watch them grow, big and tall.
Sunshine, water, soil, and air,
Plants grow strong with love and care.

Disclaimer: We Skoolhouse does not own the lyrics to any of the songs provided.

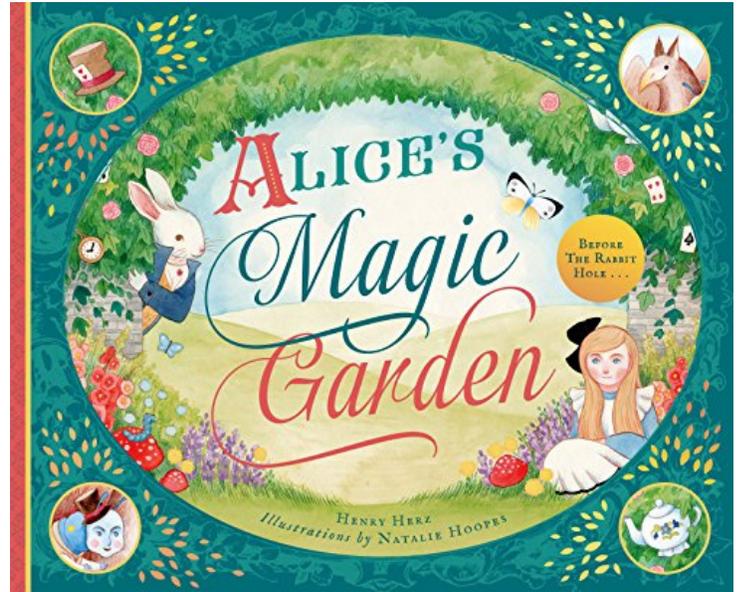


Books to Read

We select two books to support your unit of investigation - it's important to go slow and re-read the same books several times for greater comprehension and connection building. You can read the recommended book before they begin the hands-on work. We understand all children have different preferences and interests when it comes to books (and everything else), so please find our supplemental reads that can replace or add to the suggested books below:

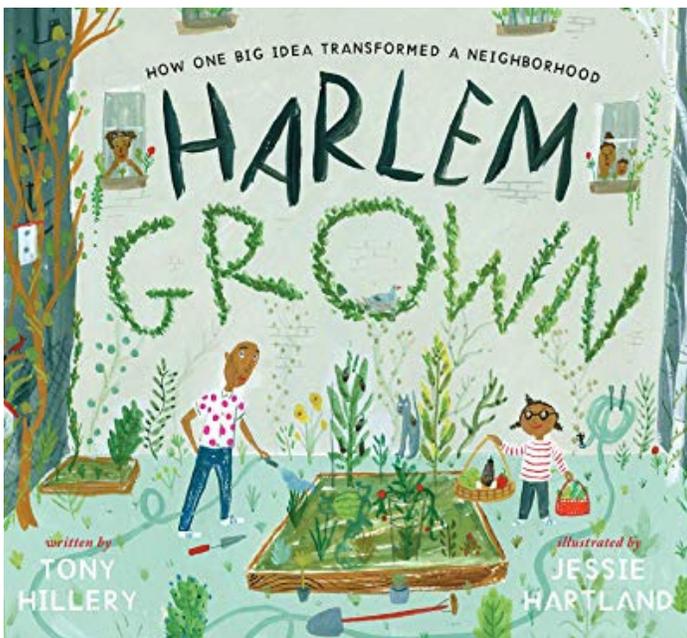


From Seed To Plant, by Gail Gibbons



Alice's Magic Garden, by Henry Herz

Supplemental Reads:



Harlem Grown, by Tony Hillery



Backyard Fairies, by Phoebe Wahl

Tips to Reinforce the Unit in Everyday Experiences:

Visit various locations that exhibit plants:

- Botanical Garden
- Greenhouses
- Farms and Ranches
- Stroll through the woods
- Flower shop and/or nursery
- Community gardens & compost sites
- Parks and playgrounds



- **Explore different artists, their work, and the materials used to make art.**
 - Provide watercolors after learning more about Claude Monet.
 - Art can also be in the form of photography! Provide a disposable camera or your cell phone for children to capture images of various types of plants & landscapes.

Community Involvement

- Invite children to plant seeds and gift them to loved ones, neighbors, or community helpers.
- Compost is a form of waste disposal in which foods and materials are repurposed to be used as fertilizer.
 - Check to see if you have any composting companies/sites in or around your community!
- Visit local community gardens & explore preparing and eating various snacks and meals that include fruits, veggies, legumes, nuts, & seeds.





KWL (**K**now, **W**onder , **L**earn) Chart

When kicking off a new investigation, it's recommended to create a large KWL (Know, Wonder, Learn) Chart for you and your children's reference (example below).

You can draw one up on a large sheet of oaktag or easel paper. Introduce a topic by prompting "what do you know about _____?" Once children have shared their prior knowledge, invite them to consider what they'd like to learn about the topic.

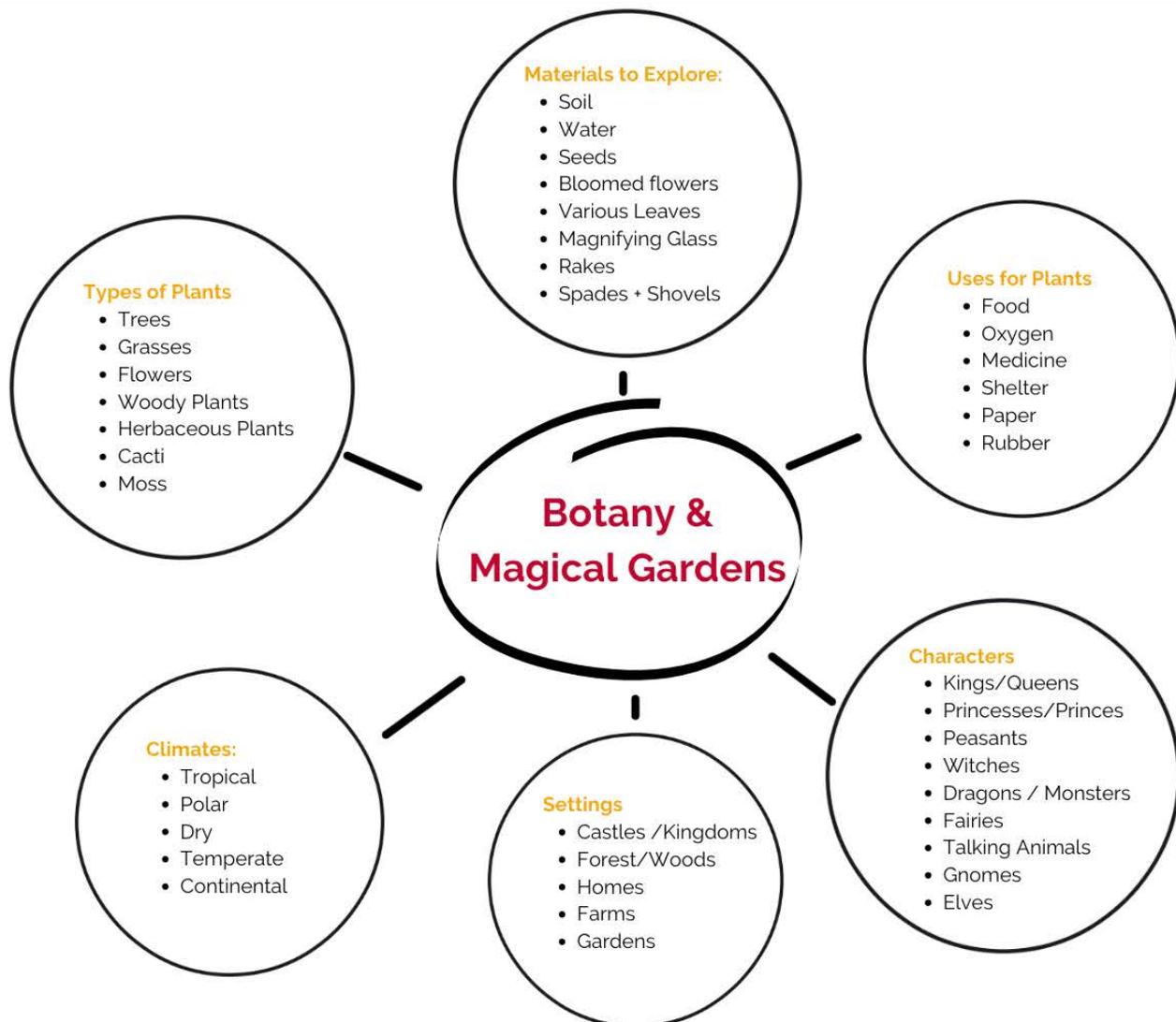
This running document is a place to guide your learning, prompting children to think more critically about the subject, while also formulating their own theories and ideas. Learning is not limited to one time and space, but rather, is an ongoing event. Add to this chart as thoughts, questions & revelations emerge over time.

Know	Wonder	Learn



Word Web: Botany & Magical Gardens

Word webs are another powerful tool to support connection-making, and connection-making is the core of learning! Word webs invite adults and children to think more critically about a specific topic, all while expanding upon research and ideas. While the below is an example of different directions your investigations may go, it is not limited to only these subcategories, but rather, just meant to get the wheels turning - see what else you and your children can come up with and expand upon!



Expanded Play

Learning concepts are best adopted when children can make everyday and tangible connections. Support your child's emergent knowledge and experiences by incorporating the topic in different areas of play and exploration.



Sensory & Small World Play

- Sensory bin/table filled with base of choice (e.g. soil, dried beans/rice/pasta, kernels, water beads, shredded paper) with toy people, natural materials, gemstones.
- Wooden toys, dolls, plush or toy animals, puppets, baby dolls, boxes to be used as a pretend castle.

Dramatic Play & Storytelling

- Consider adding various fabrics, cloths, & props to your child's play space to foster imaginative play!
 - Scarves, silk, wool, cotton, capes, crowns and caps, jewelry
- Add more fairy tales to your child's book shelves to incorporate new stories while inspiring their own.
- Invite children to create their own fairy tale stories!



Nature & The Arts

- Explore the forest, gardens, and different environments that can prompt new ideas for storytelling and imagination.
- Bring out a magnifying glass and clipboard (or easel) and have children search for and sketch local plant life.
- Research local theaters or performance companies that may have upcoming fairy tale inspired plays.

ACTIVITIES



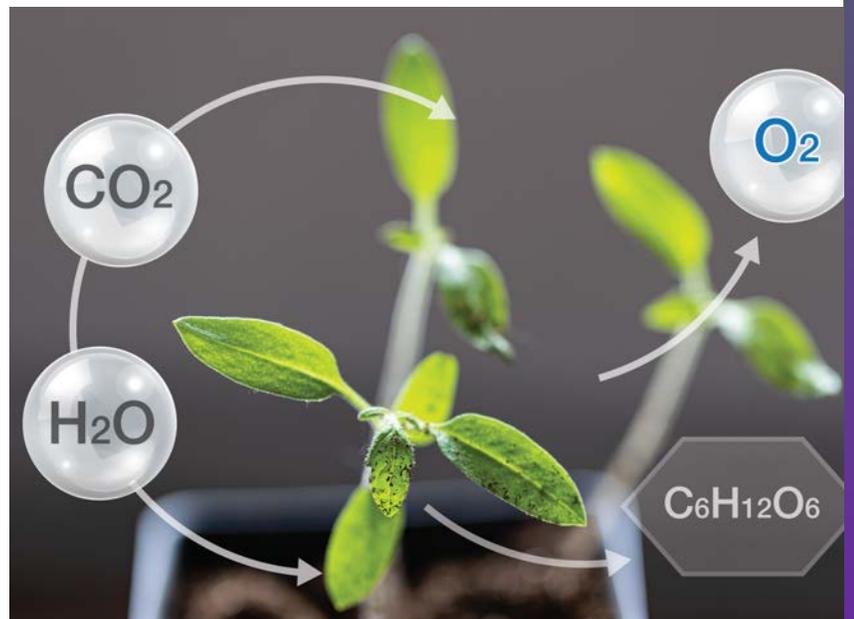
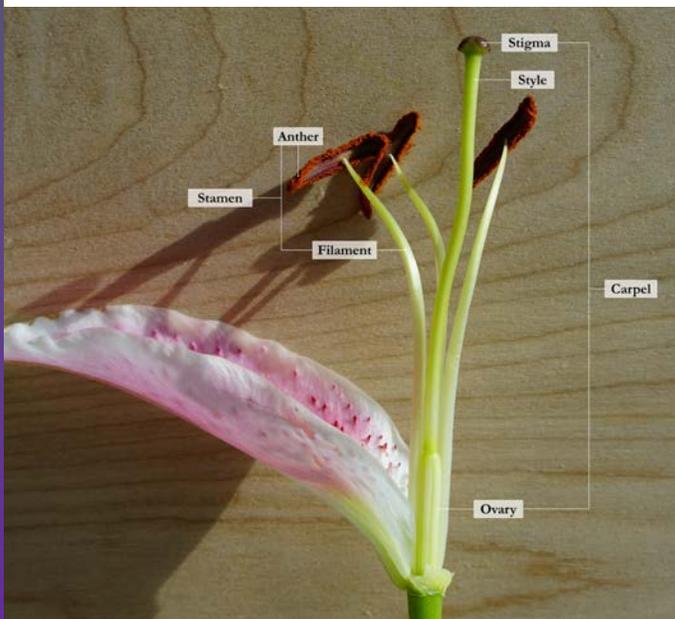


Beautiful Botany

Plants are fascinating living beings that come in various shapes and sizes, each with its own unique characteristics and contributions to our world.

Through the introduction of botany, children can explore the life cycle of plants – from tiny seeds to flourishing flowers or towering trees. This lends a hand to children better understanding what plants need to grow, including sunlight, water, soil, and care, and how these elements work together to nurture their growth is a key part of this exploration. Books & hands-on experiences will be some wonderful resources to support deep and meaningful learning.

You may expand upon and encourage deeper exploration by comparing and contrasting different types of plants, while inviting children to identify the various parts of plants, from roots and stems to leaves, flowers, and fruits. Another aread to explore may be the captivating process of photosynthesis, exploring how plants convert sunlight into energy to thrive and flourish!





Let's Grow & Create, Together!

MATERIALS

- Terra cotta pots
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrushes
- Potting soil
- Seeds (e.g., flowers, herbs, or vegetables)
- Watering cans or spray bottles
- Labels or markers (to add child's name on the bottom of each pot)

DIRECTIONS

- Provide each child with a small amount of potting soil and seeds and their own pot. Instruct them to plant the seeds in the soil according to the instructions on the seed packets.
- Assist children in watering their newly planted seeds using watering cans or spray bottles. Remind them to water their plants regularly to keep the soil moist.
- Once all the seeds are planted, provide each child with acrylic paints and paintbrushes so they can decorate their pots.
- Place the pots in a sunny area and watch as the seeds germinate and grow into plants!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Science:** Observing the growth of seeds into seedlings and eventually into plants introduces children to basic principles of plant biology and the plant life cycle. They develop an understanding of concepts like germination, growth, and the role of sunlight and water in sustaining plant life, laying the foundation for further scientific exploration.
- **Language Development:** Engaging in discussions about the planting process and naming different parts of plants supports language development. Children expand their vocabulary as they learn new words related to gardening and plant anatomy, enhancing their communication skills and comprehension.
- **Responsibility:** Taking care of their planted seeds and nurturing their plants teaches children about responsibility and accountability. They learn the importance of providing water and sunlight to help their seeds grow, instilling a sense of caretaking and empathy towards living things.
- **Creativity:** Through decorating their pots with unique designs and colors, children have the opportunity to express their creativity and imagination. They can experiment with different painting techniques, patterns, and colors, fostering their artistic abilities and encouraging them to think outside the box.



Multi-Texture Magic Garden Brushes

MATERIALS

- About 3-5 twigs/sticks
- About 3-5 different natural artifacts (leaves, flowers, feathers)
- Tape
- 1 white sheet of construction paper
- About 3 colors of paint (you can have your child choose or blend the colors)
- Tray to hold the paint

DIRECTIONS

- Take one natural artifact and attach it to the tip of each twig/stick with tape.
- Dispense the colors of paint and/or have your children blend (and label) their own colors.
- Welcome children to explore mark making as they can dip their multi-textured "brushes" into the paint and make various marks and images.
- Optional: After your children have explored for some time, you can prompt with questions such as: "what do you notice about the marks you made?"

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Sensory Exploration:** Children will engage in sensory exploration by experiencing the different textures provided by the multi-texture brushes. They will use their sense of touch to feel the various textures of the materials attached to the brushes, enhancing their sensory awareness.
- **Creativity:** Through using the multi-texture brushes, children will have the opportunity to express their creativity and experiment with different painting techniques. They can explore how each brush creates unique patterns and textures on their artwork, encouraging imaginative expression.
- **Exploration of Nature:** By using natural materials such as twigs, leaves, and flowers as part of the multi-texture brushes, children will develop an appreciation for nature. They will learn to identify different natural elements and understand how they can be incorporated into art-making processes.
- **Observation and Inquiry:** Children will engage in observation and inquiry as they explore how the different textures affect the paint application and overall appearance of their artwork. They may ask questions about why certain textures create specific patterns or effects, fostering curiosity and critical thinking skills.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Painting with multi-texture brushes requires precise hand movements and coordination. As children manipulate the brushes to apply paint onto paper or canvas, they will enhance their fine motor skills, including hand-eye coordination and grip strength.



Plant Life Scavenger Hunt

MATERIALS

- Shallow box or shallow tray
- At least 4 - 6 different colors of construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Plant life children find
 - Alternative: You can also purchase faux flowers/plants if there aren't many natural options around you.

DIRECTIONS

- Cut 4 - 6 sheets of different colored paper to fill the shallow tray.
 - You may choose colors based around your knowledge of the plant life around you or have your children choose the colors and see if they can find plant life to match them.
- Tape down each patch of colored paper to the base of your box/tray.
- Bring the tray along with you on the scavenger hunt, welcoming your children to try and find these colors in nature.
- To add mathematical concepts to this experience, you can invite your children to count the number of plants they find per colored sheet.
 - What color did they find the most of? Least?
 - Why do you think we find this color this most? Least?
 - How many plants did they find in total?
- Optional extension: Bring the loose plants together to form a mini bouquet children can later sketch and/or use plants for collage work.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Social and Emotional Development:**
 - Being out in the elements promotes autonomy, boosts moods and supports self regulation.
- **Cognition:**
 - Children will compare, contrast, and make connections between plant life and accessible colors to match.
 - Supports concepts of size, shapes, space, quantity, 1:1 correspondence, more than/less than, etc.
 - Embraces a wider range of color recognition by looking deeply at various shades and tones of different colors.
- **Motor:**
 - Fine and gross motor skills are fostered as children navigate outside to find, gather, and organize plant life.
- **Language & Literacy:**
 - Provide children with a variety of relative words that contribute to their evolving vocabulary, while using descriptive language to detail their observations.



Nature Collage

MATERIALS

- Fresh cuttings from plants & flowers or dried flowers
 - Optional: Deconstructed bouquet of flowers or artificial flower heads.
- Sectional tray and/or small containers
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Optional: Paint or coloring utensils

DIRECTIONS

- Arrange the flower cuttings and pieces in your sectional tray or small bowls.
- Place a white sheet of paper in front of it, with some glue and a couple of coloring utensils or paint nearby.
- Allow children to explore all the mediums in front of them, embracing their senses and how things work/don't work together.
- This is a process driven experience. Children may have a plan for a picture they'd like to create or may simply want to explore and be inspired as they go - there is no right or wrong or better or worse.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Cognitive Development:** Engaging in process-driven, open-ended experiences promotes focus and concentration through intrinsic motivation. Children will practice sustained attention and problem-solving skills as they explore the materials and make decisions about composition and arrangement, enhancing cognitive development.
- **Botanical Awareness:** Children will develop an understanding of different types of flowers and plant life as they select and arrange various botanical materials for their collage. They will learn to recognize different flower shapes, colors, and textures, enhancing their botanical awareness.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Manipulating small pieces of flowers and plant materials requires precise hand movements and coordination. Children will improve their fine motor skills as they pick, arrange, and glue down the botanical elements onto their collage, fostering hand-eye coordination and dexterity.
- **Creative Expression:** Through the process of arranging flowers and plant materials, children will express their creativity and imagination. They will experiment with different compositions, patterns, and color combinations to create unique and visually appealing collages, fostering creative expression.



Nature Weaving Board

MATERIALS

- 1 square or rectangular sheet of cardboard
- About 6 rubber bands (long enough to stretch across the board of cardboard)
- Various plant life or themed materials
- Scissors (to cut the sheet of cardboard)

DIRECTIONS

- Cut or rip off a sheet of cardboard.
- Can be roughly the size of a sheet of paper or smaller
- Invite children to wrap about 3 rubber bands lengthwise, spacing the bands evenly from one another.
- Invite children to wrap the other 3 rubber bands widthwise, spacing the bands evenly from one another.
- You can either have children bring their board outside and weave in materials as they find it, or collect and set up the materials on the table for them to sort through and organize, and weave at a later time.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Sensory Exploration:** Weaving with natural materials provides a sensory-rich experience as children feel the different textures, smells, and colors of the plants and fibers. This tactile exploration enhances sensory awareness and sensitivity to the natural world, fostering a deeper connection with nature.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Manipulating the natural materials and weaving them through the rubber bands requires precise finger movements and hand-eye coordination. As children handle the strands and adjust their weaving, they develop fine motor skills and dexterity, essential for tasks such as writing, drawing, and self-care activities.
- **Mathematical Concepts:** Through weaving, children can explore mathematical concepts such as symmetry, patterns, and counting. They may create symmetrical designs by mirroring their weaving on both sides of the board, or they may count the number of loops or strands used in their patterns, promoting mathematical understanding and reasoning.
- **Language Development:** As children engage in the weaving process, they have opportunities for verbal communication and language development. They may describe the colors, textures, and shapes of the materials they are using, share their ideas and preferences with peers, and engage in collaborative discussions about their weaving experiences, fostering language skills and communication abilities.



Nature Crown or Bracelet

MATERIALS

- Sturdy paper
- Assorted natural materials such as flowers, leaves, small branches, seeds, shells, etc.
- Scissors
- Glue or tape (optional)
- Markers or crayons (optional, for decorating the paper crown)

DIRECTIONS

- Cut a strip of sturdy paper to measure around the child's head for the crown or around the child's wrist for the bracelet.
- Optional: Have children decorate the paper strip with markers or crayons if desired.
- Offer an assortment of natural materials such as flowers, leaves, small branches, seeds, and shells with glue or tape for children to add to their crown or bracelet.
 - Ideally children should be welcomed outside first to collect the materials they will use for their crown/bracelet.
- Once the materials are added, allow time for the glue to dry then attach the ends to form the crown or bracelet.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Outdoor Exploration:** The activity encourages children to venture outdoors to collect natural materials, promoting outdoor exploration and a sense of adventure. As they search for flowers, leaves, and other treasures, they engage with their environment and develop an understanding of seasonal changes and the natural cycles of growth.
- **Gross Motor Skills Development:** Children may engage in gross motor movements such as walking, running, and bending while exploring their outdoor environment to gather materials. These movements promote physical development and coordination, contributing to overall gross motor skills enhancement.
- **Creativity and Imagination:** By arranging the natural materials in creative ways, children exercise their imagination and artistic expression. They have the freedom to design their crowns or bracelets according to their own preferences, allowing for individuality and creative exploration.
- **Sensory Exploration:** Exploring various textures, colors, and shapes of natural materials provides a sensory-rich experience for children. They engage their tactile senses as they touch and manipulate the different components of their crown or bracelet, enhancing sensory awareness and perception.



Magic Garden Window Art (or Sun-catcher)

MATERIALS

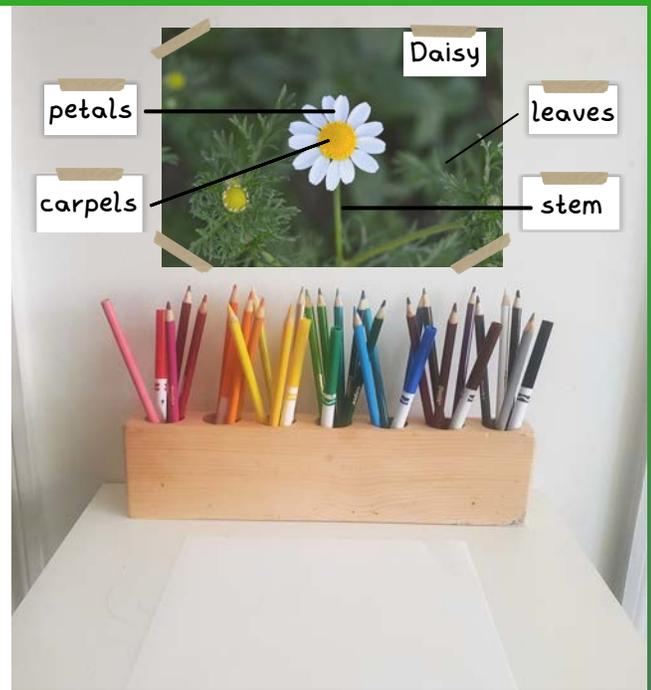
- For window art:
 - Painters tape
 - Large sheet of clear contact paper
 - Tray or sectional tray
 - Various natural materials; leaves, stems, flowers, dried flowers, sticks, feathers, etc.
 - Scissors
- For Sun-catcher (Same as above and..)
 - 1 sheet of cardboard
 - 1 hole puncher
 - 1 piece of string/raffia/rope
 - Clear tape
 - 1 pen or pencil
 - Coloring utensils to decorate the border

DIRECTIONS

- **For Window Art:**
 - Cut a large sheet of contact paper, big enough to fit as much space in your window as possible.
 - Tape the contact paper to the window, sticky part facing out!
 - Provide children with a tray filled with natural materials for them to then stick onto the contact paper.
 - Let them decorate their "magic garden window!"
- **For Sun-catcher:**
 - Cut a circle from the cardboard, approximately 4 inches in diameter, to create a cardboard ring.
 - Cut a piece of contact paper to fit the hole in the middle of the ring. Tape the back of contact paper to the ring, leaving sticky side exposed.
 - Invite children to add natural materials to the sticky part of the contact paper in the center of the ring.
 - Once materials are added, place another sheet of contact paper over the top, sticky side down, to cover the materials.
 - Tape the edges of the contact paper to the cardboard ring to ensure everything stays in place.
 - Punch a hole at the top of the ring and thread a string through.
 - Optionally, children can decorate the cardboard portion.
 - Choose a window to hang the finished sun catcher!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Sensory Exploration:** Engage in sensory exploration by touching and arranging different natural materials, promoting tactile awareness and sensory integration.
- **Creativity and Expression:** Express creativity by selecting and arranging natural materials to create unique designs or patterns on the contact paper, fostering imaginative expression.
- **Observational Skills:** Practice observational skills by observing the natural materials and their characteristics, such as color, texture, and shape, fostering attention to detail.



Magic Garden Sketching

MATERIALS

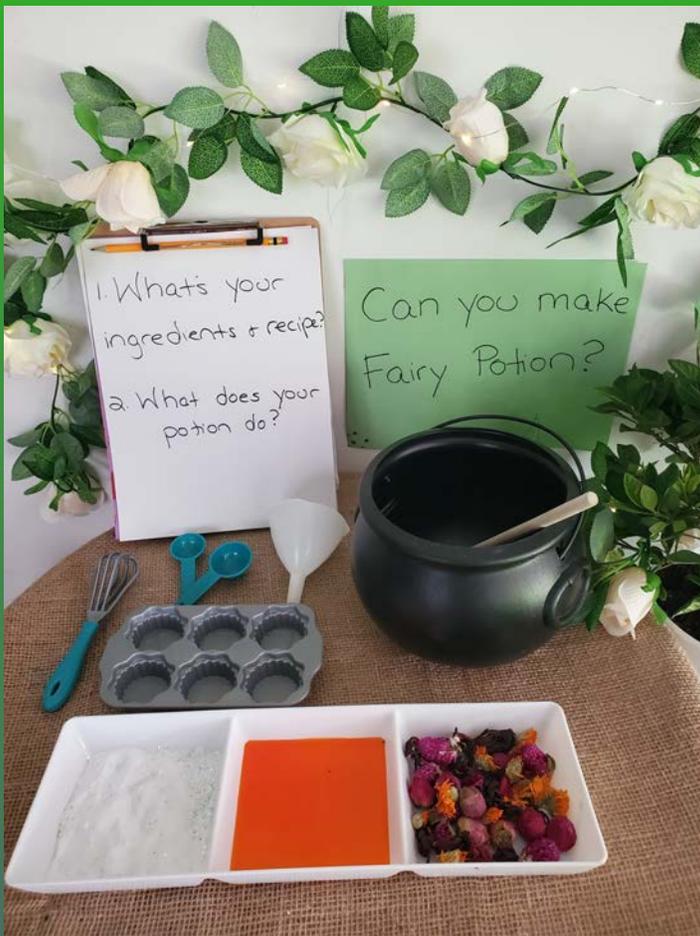
- Visual prompts (imagery from books, printed images, or a real plant or toy for still life sketching)
- Paper or sketchbook
- Coloring utensils of your choice (pencils, colored pencils, markers, crayons, or paint)
 - You can alternate the medium offered on different occasions - remember repetition of experiences is crucial!
- Optional: Magnifying glass for closer observation of real plants

DIRECTIONS

- Provide each child with paper, clipboard, or a sketchbook and a selection of coloring utensils.
- Invite children to sketch what they see in the visual prompts, encouraging them to use their imagination to create their own interpretations.
- Offer support and guidance as needed, but allow children to explore and express their creativity independently.
- Optional addition: If your child is developmentally able to, invite them to write out different parts of the plant, create and write a title their work, and/or have them write their name to support greater literacy development.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Observational Skills:** Develop the ability to carefully observe and analyze visual prompts such as images from books or real plants, honing children's attention to detail and encouraging them to notice the intricacies of the world around them.
- **Creativity and Imagination:** Foster creativity and imaginative thinking as children interpret visual cues and transform them into their own artistic creations, encouraging them to think outside the box and explore various possibilities in their sketches.
- **Fine Motor Skills Development:** Refine fine motor skills through the precise manipulation of coloring utensils, promoting hand-eye coordination, pencil grip, and control in sketching and coloring activities, which are essential for writing and other fine motor tasks.
- **Artistic Expression:** Provide a platform for children to express themselves artistically, allowing them to convey their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through the medium of sketching and coloring, fostering self-expression and confidence in their artistic abilities.
- **Nature Appreciation:** Cultivate an appreciation for the natural world by engaging with visual prompts depicting elements of nature, such as plants and flowers, encouraging children to connect with and appreciate the beauty and diversity of the environment around them. This activity serves as a bridge between art and nature, deepening their understanding and connection with the natural world.



Can You Make Fairy Potion?

MATERIALS

- 1 pot or bowl
- About 1 -3 spoons
- 1 section tray or about 3 small bowls
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Food coloring
- Optional: dried flowers, glitter, leaves, twigs, stones, etc.
- Kitchen supplies (measuring cups/spoons, whisk, funnel)

DIRECTIONS

- Next to the pot or large bowl, fill three separate compartments with:
 - baking soda
 - Vinegar + food coloring (& glitter if you have/want)
 - "Fairy toppings:" dried flowers, leaves, sticks, stones.
- Let children scoop the baking soda and add it to the bowl. Then they can add some colored vinegar on top to observe the fizzing reactions from combining the two ingredients together.
 - Allow them to add "toppings" as they choose.
- Prompt creative thinking with these guiding questions:
 - "What's your ingredients & recipe?"
 - "What does your potion do?"

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Social and Emotional Development:** Entrusting children to use kitchen items, as well as baking soda, vinegar inspires a sense of intrinsic motivation and pride in their capabilities.
- **Cognition:**
 - Scientific concepts: chemistry, observations, cause-and-effect, hypotheses, data collection, and reasoning.
 - Mathematical concepts: units of measurement, weight, density, volume and space, 1:1 correspondence.
- **Motor:** Pouring, mixing, stirring, and adding various materials exercises precise fine motor skills, as well as visual and depth perception when watching the chemical reactions.
- **Language & Literacy:**
 - Writing out the guiding questions supports letter recognition and reading skills.
 - Leading with the open-ended questions prompts expressive language, while increasing vocabulary and conversation skills.



Magical Wand Maker's Station

MATERIALS

- One long stick
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Sticky materials (tape, glue, ribbon, rope)
- Coloring utensils (e.g. crayons, markers, oil pastels, paint)
- Craft materials/loose parts/natural materials: Leaves, flowers, twigs, stones, gemstones, pipe-cleaners, pom-poms, glitter, shapes, etc.

DIRECTIONS

- Offer children the materials noted, welcoming them to make a magical wand.
- Allow them time to explore the materials and reflect on how they can create a wand with the materials provided.
 - You may help ensure the pieces are securely attached to the stick.
 - When they're done, invite them to share a story about their wand and the "powers" it contains.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Creativity and Imagination:** Fosters an environment where children can freely express their creativity and imagination, allowing them to explore endless possibilities and solutions to problems through imaginative play and creative activities.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Encourages children to develop problem-solving skills as they navigate imaginative scenarios and overcome challenges within their play, promoting critical thinking, adaptability, and resourcefulness.
- **Language Development:** Supports language development as children engage in imaginative play, storytelling, and role-playing, allowing them to express themselves verbally, expand their vocabulary, and practice communication skills in a fun and engaging context.
- **Social-Emotional Development:** Enhances social-emotional development by providing opportunities for children to navigate social interactions, negotiate roles, and develop empathy and understanding for others through collaborative imaginative play experiences.
- **Self-Confidence and Self-Expression:** Builds self-confidence and self-expression as children embrace their unique ideas, perspectives, and identities within their imaginative play, fostering a sense of autonomy, agency, and pride in their creative abilities.



Magical Garden Figures (With Clay)

MATERIALS

- 1 large ball of air dry clay
 - If you don't have clay, opt for play dough.
- Sectional tray or small bowls (for loose parts)
- About 3-6 small handfuls of different materials.
 - Consider: leaves, rocks, twigs, flowers/dried flowers, wood slices, pom poms, seashells, sea glass, caps, wooden shapes
- Optional: Visual images/inspiration of magical characters (e.g. fairies, gnomes, trolls, dragons, monsters, elves, etc.).

DIRECTIONS

- Fill your sectional trays/bowls with loose parts and place next to the large ball of clay.
- You may also add some images of different or preferred "magical garden" characters for inspiration.
- Allow children to experiment with the materials in their own way! They may just experiment and play with the clay or they may plot to create! There is no "right" or "wrong" in their exploration.
 - Refrain from asking: "what are you making?" This removes any pressure or expectation that their work should have a specific outcome.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Exploration and Experimentation:** Encourage exploration and experimentation with clay as children mold and shape their own fairy tale creatures, emphasizing the process of discovery and innovation over the final outcome, fostering a sense of curiosity and open-ended exploration.
- **Fine Motor Development:** Promote fine motor development through the manipulation of clay, refining hand-eye coordination, finger strength, and manual dexterity as children pinch, roll, and sculpt the clay to create their creatures, enhancing their control and precision in hand movements.
- **Creativity and Imagination:** Stimulate creativity and imagination as children delve into the realm of fantasy, envisioning and bringing to life their own unique fairy tale creatures, encouraging them to think outside the box and embrace unconventional forms and features in their creations.



Can You Make a Fairy House?

MATERIALS

- Various loose parts, natural/open-ended materials. Consider:
- Bark, twigs, branches, leaves, stems, rocks, stones, pinecones, seashells, fabrics, straw, flowers, etc.
- Materials to attach pieces (tape, glue, clay, rope, etc.)

DIRECTIONS

- To add an extra layer of fun to the experience, you may invite your children to execute this experience outside (at the park, playground, woods, backyard, etc.)
- Help children gather materials they may use to make a fairy house (or if there is a particular character your children likes; gnomes, elves, trolls, baby dragon, etc. they can make a "home" for them instead of a fairy).
- Prompt with leading questions such as:
 - "How can you make a home for a fairy/gnome/dragon?"
 - "What will you need?"
 - "What does a home need? Where should it be located?"
 - "What made you choose these materials?"

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Creativity and Imagination:** Stimulate creativity and imagination as children design and construct their fairy houses using natural materials, encouraging them to envision magical worlds and unique architectural designs.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Develop fine motor skills through hands-on manipulation of natural materials such as sticks, leaves, and stones, refining coordination, dexterity, and control as children assemble and arrange components of their fairy houses.
- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** Cultivate problem-solving abilities as children encounter challenges and obstacles while building their fairy houses, prompting them to experiment, innovate, and find creative solutions to construction dilemmas in a supportive and exploratory environment.
- **Environmental Awareness:** Promote environmental awareness and appreciation by encouraging children to explore the natural world and its resources as they collect materials for their fairy houses, fostering a sense of stewardship and connection to the environment.
- **Narrative and Storytelling Skills:** Enhance narrative and storytelling skills as children imagine the lives of the fairies inhabiting their houses, weaving intricate tales of magic, adventure, and friendship that stimulate language development, creativity, and expressive communication.



MADE FOR CHILDREN. DESIGNED FOR YOU.

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