Make natural homes for nature

Make homes for animals using natural materials such as sticks e.g. nests for birds, dens for hedgehogs or imaginary creatures.

Maths same but different

Get the children to find natural items. Call out a number and ask the children to represent that number using the natural materials as a written number, as a numeral, as fractions, or percentages. You could also make them into equations.

Chalk drawing

Can be used for spelling, handwriting, maths (times tables, shape, angles, fractions, tally charts, pictograms etc) and art.

Natural art

Make a picture using natural materials. Try using natural materials as paint brushes e.g. sticks with leaves tied to them. You could mud paint and link this to cave art or you could make banners to express your views on the environmental problems we are facing.

Read and write outside

On dry or warm days why not read outside. Be it a private reading book, poem or a class story. You could then write a story or poem based on this whilst still sat outside.

Sensory exploration

Have a minute of silence listening to the sounds In pairs 1 person wears a blindfold whilst the other is brought back a natural item they need to feel then swap over.

Look for a rainbow in nature or use paint colour pallets to try and match to.

Make a natural smoothie using scented plants in the grounds.

Try eating herbs or any other edibles if you have any growing.

Make boats to float

Make boats to see if they float in puddles, a pond or a bucket. Could use natural or recycled material. Challenge yourself to help a character, to fit a certain number of cubes on without sinking, etc.

Green men

Use clay on trees to create a face. You could also add other natural materials and come up with a story of who that Green Man represents and why he is there.

Times table target practice

Set up numbers outside. Call out a times table and get the children to run, throw a beanbag or throw a mud ball at the correct answer.

Phonics aerobics

Set out pe equipment – hurdles, hoops, bean bags, skipping ropes etc. At each item of pe equipment get them to either say the phonic, say a word with the phonic.

Phonics bingo or treasure hunt

Hide phonics cards in your space the get the children to find them all. Could get them to say a word once with the phonic in them or make them into sentences

Go on a nature trail

Can be themed around nature using spotter, scavenger or bingo sheets.

Could also theme – look for angles, look for properties of particular materials, describe shape. Incorporate some mindfulness activities.

Bug hunt

Go for a bug hunt. You could record your results in a tally and then create a pictogram using natural materials.

Mindfulness

Do some outdoor stretches.

Have a minute of silence listening to the sounds Wearing a blindfold, in one hand feel an item and in the other do a continuous line drawing of what you feel.

Make a natural picture frame (tie 4 sticks together) and create art within in it.
End with a tadah list – saying at least 1 thing you have achieved that day e.g. not argued with someone, tried an activity, laughed etc.

Make bird feeders

Can make using lard and pine cones, thread cheerios onto natural wool or twine, roll an inner tube of a toilet or kitchen roll in peanut butter then seeds or make a feeder using juice cartons or lollypop sticks.

Watch the clouds

Watch the clouds, use cloud ID sheets to identify what type of cloud it is. Describe the shape of the cloud maybe it looks like a dog or a piece of cake etc.

Make seed bombs

Make the clay into a flat circle, add a small handful of soil to the middle before scattering a few seeds on the soil. Fold up the clay to completely enclose the seeds and soil. Then throw or plant where you want. You could research guerrilla gardening who were the movement behind creating these.

Dye your puddles

Measure the height of a tree

On wet days why not add drops of natural food colourings to your puddles and swirl around with a stick. You could try to capture these by lightly pressing paper onto them and then letting them dry.

Choose a tree that is fairly clear of other trees

and obstacles. Walk away from it, and wait until

you can just see the top of it when looking at it

upside down through your legs. Then measure

the distance from that point back to the tree

using a trundle wheel or long tape measure.

Murder mystery

Set out clues – either prepared laminated or use nature to set up piles of snapped twigs and muddy footprints.

Get the children to solve the mystery and justify who did it.

Act out a press conference after where some people ask questions as journalists and others answer as the detectives.

Outdoor Yoga

Do your yoga outside. Why not try it barefoot for an extra sensory experience.

Stick stories

Read the stick man or Stanley's stick story then act out the stick and all its uses.

Act it out

Do your drama outside where there is more space and the sound dissipates better. Act out excerpts from books, role play social dilemmas e.g. feeling frustrated, someone leaving someone out etc. You could also try movements of animals e.g. ants, butterflies etc or mime mirroring each other.

Build it

Make 3D structures either by calling out the name of the shape or by letting the children decide.

Why not try testing the properties of these materials are these structure waterproof or windproof? Then discuss why they might or might not be.

Be a weather watcher

Collect rainfall using a rainfall gauge made from plastic bottles then keep a record of the water collected. Make a weather vain and keep a weather diary.

Make a home for nature

Make a bug hotel – there are loads of designs out there from pallets for bug houses, plant pot based designs for earwigs, tin cans for bees.

Create an imaginary creature

Create an imaginary creature using clay and natural materials. Then write your own top trump card for it. Battle it out with your top trumps to see whose creature is the ultimate animal.

Play icebreaker games outside

Name games with balls, everyone wearing the same game, people who have X siblings, stand in a line in height order without talking and so many more can all be done outside.

Map your area

Map your grounds. Don't forget to include a title, key and north arrow. If the children aren't sure of north play a game of compass corners to get them moving around.

Design your own outdoor game

Make your own noughts and crosses board using sticks and natural counters, stick jenga or use your creativity to invent a game then let everyone have a go of each others games

Play with water

Splash in puddles, transfer it from different containers, measure its volume or why not make your own water wall.

Draw your shadow

Use chalk to draw your shadow at different times of the day to explain how the sun rises and sets.

Litter pick

Go litter picking to help wildlife and realise why its important not to drop litter.

Taste a wild tea

Try mint, nettle or dandelion tea using leaves picked from your grounds

Make an ice sculpture

In snow and ice make an ice sculpture or even an igloo if you have enough snow!

Make a kite

Use natural/craft materials to create a kite for a windy day. Can discuss options such as shape, weight, length of string, etc to make the most effective kite.

Outdoor potions and spells

Set up equipment including bottles of coloured water, spray bottles, a pestle and mortar, flowers and leaves, etc and mixing implements such as whisks, spoons, pipettes, and funnels with empty bottles. Let children explore and create whatever they like.

Make rockets

Make rockets to set off outside and measure the height and distance of their flight. You can use recycled materials to build. Then launch with bicarbonate of soda and cola or berocca (or alka seltzer) and water.

Make musical instruments

Using natural and recycled materials make musical instruments and try to play a few well known songs

Make a sound map

Find a space and listen in silence whilst you draw what you can hear where you can hear It

Quizzes outside

Options don't need to be written down give 2 or 3 options and get them to stand at which answer they think is correct

Paper Aeroplanes

Have a paper aeroplane competition. Who can throw theirs the furthest and do some styles travel further then others?

Make your own camouflage

Use natural dyes such as crushed leaves, onion skins and mud to make your own camouflage fabric then try attaching string to make into capes and hide in them!

Make a stick skeleton

Build skeletons of different creatures using sticks to represent bones

Outdoor obstacle course

Use PE equipment, chalk, outdoor play equipment and gyms to create an obstacle course for everyone to follow.

Outdoor dance party or aerobics

Bring out a party speaker or other way to play music outside. Bring out dressing up things, scarves, streamers, skipping ropes etc for children to dance and exercise to.

Build a den

Use materials you have such as long sticks, string, traps, scarves, sheets, PE benches and equipment, etc. Build a den that they can sit in. Could be with a particular focus, e.g. a waterproof shelter, a bird hide, a reading nook or a den for a particular story character.

Find a tree

In pairs one person should wear a blindfold whilst the other guides them to a tree. The person wearing the blindfold has to feel the tree before coming back to a central point. Once everyone is back ask the people wearing their blindfold to try and guess which tree was theirs and why they think this

Get growing

Get growing either in pots or planters. Grow seeds from scratch such as herbs and cress or tidy up existing green spaces removing weeds

A-Z challenge

Can you find something for every letter of the alphabet outside?

Play with mud

Have a mud menu. Get creative and use any old pots or utensils to create a mud meal and embrace imaginative play.

Hiding Games

Play hide and seek, sardines or dance ninjas to learn about camouflage and hiding places

Make a wreath

Use willow or dog wood to make a wreath then decorate it with seasonal plants and decorations e.g. holly for Christmas, feathers at Easter etc.

Decorate a tree

Use ribbon, string and natural materials to decorate your tree. Include messages of positivity and kindness to keep you smiling.