

Austin Nature and Science Center

Hiking Activity Deck



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1. Nature Journaling Reflection

Approximate time: 10-20 minutes

Materials: Journals/ Paper, crayons, pencils

Instructions:

1. Find a quiet spot to sit in nature.
2. Sit quietly for few minutes to sit and observe your area.
3. Journal about what you see, feel, smell, experience. Journal in a way that captures the experience for you. This could be in writing, by drawing, creating nature rubbings. Create your own little memory of this experience!

Here are some prompts to help you if you're stuck!

- What plants or animals are you seeing right now? Describe them so you can identify them up later!
- Imagine how an animal might use this space.
- What sounds do you hear? What is making them?
- How has this spot changed since last time you visited?
- Describe your favorite memory in nature.

Safety Considerations:

Be sure sit spots are away from dangerous plants or animals.

2. Nature Weavers Reflection

Approximate Time: 10-20 minutes

Materials: String, sticks

Instructions:

1. Find 3-4 sticks that are the same size.
2. Tie together at the corners to create a square or a triangle.
3. String yarn from top to bottom several times, creating harp-like strings.
4. Find items in nature to weave through these strings.

Safety Considerations:

Give clear instructions for what should be left in nature. Do not collect bird artifacts, anything that is still alive, or anything that could be dangerous.

3. Sharp Eyes Pair Game

Approximate time: 10-20 minutes

Materials: None

Instructions:

1. The objective is to notice visual differences and concentrate on the sense of sight. Face your partner and observe their appearance for several seconds, trying to memorize what you see.
2. Turn your back to your partner and change just one thing about your own appearance, (remove a watch, take off a hat, untuck a shirt, etc.).
3. Face each other again and see if they can identify the change in one minute or less.

Adaptions: Play with nature items, or items around your home!. Lay out several nature items in a specific order and change one thing while your partner covers their eyes.

Safety Considerations:

Be respectful of your partner!

4. Trail Bingo Activity

Approximate time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Trail Bingo Card

Instructions:

See what you can find along the trail! Be sure to stay on the path!

Wildflower	Animal Scat on the Trail	Signs of Water	Animal Tracks
Butterfly or Moth	Bird Nest	Pick Up Trash	Signs of Insects Eating
Tree Shorter than You	Fruit, Seed, or Berry	Hear a Bird Singing	Amphibian
Insect	Mammal	Lichen or Moss	Woodpecker Hole

5. Macro Photos Activity

Approximate time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: camera

Instructions:

1. Send someone ahead to take a close-up photo of something the you will see while hiking.
2. Show the photo to your hiking partner and see if they can find it along the hike! If you're outdoors, you may want to give them some hints or narrow down the location where they're looking. You can also do this with items around your house!

Safety Considerations:

Stay clear of dangerous plants, animals, or parts of the trail.

6. Mystery Boxes Guessing Game

Approximate time: 5 minutes per item

Materials: Boxes or bags

Instructions:

1. Place mystery objects from nature in a small box (such as a tissue box) or bags.
2. Try to (silently) guess what the items are.
3. You may guess after everyone has had a chance to form their opinion.
4. Reveal the mystery item!

Safety Considerations:

Do not select dangerous items for the mystery box

7. Egg Carton Sort Guessing Game

Approximate time: 10-20 minutes

Materials: Egg cartons

Instructions:

1. This activity encourages the use of visual observation to collect items that fit into a certain category. Have each person take an empty egg carton.
2. Each person will come up with a category and they will have to find 12 items that fit their category.
3. Switch cartons with a partner then take turns guessing the category.

Examples of categories:

Things that are green

Things that make up soil

Parts of a tree

Things that are soft

Things that smell nice

Safety considerations:

Be careful not to add anything that could hurt you to your egg carton

8. Texas Flood Hiking Game

Approximate time: momentary fun along the hike

Materials: nothing

Instructions:

1. Like “floor is lava.” While hiking, have someone shout “Texas floor!” and everyone in the group must find a rock, tree stump, or log to jump up on to be saved from the lava.

Safety Considerations:

Be sure there are places to step off the trail safely before calling out “Texas Flood!”

9. Bear Hunt Song

We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one. What a beautiful day! And I am not afraid! Uh-uh!

Grass! Long wavy grass.

We can't go over it. We can't go under it. Oh no! We've got to go through it!

Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy!

- *Uh-uh! A river! A deep cold river. - Splash splosh! Splash splosh! Splash splosh!*
- *Mud! Thick oozy mud. - Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch!*
- *A forest! A big dark forest. - Stumble trip! Stumble trip! Stumble trip!*
- *A snowstorm! A swirling whirling snowstorm. - Hooo woo! Hooo woo! Hooo woo!*
- *A cave! A narrow gloomy cave. - Tiptoe! Tiptoe! Tiptoe!*

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Bear Hunt (cont)

WHAT'S THAT! One shiny wet nose! Two big furry ears! Two big goggly eyes! IT'S A BEAR!

Quick! Back through the cave! *Tiptoe! Tiptoe! Tiptoe!*
Back through the snowstorm! *Hoooo woo! Hoooo woo! Hoooo woo!*

Back through the forest! *Stumble trip! Stumble trip! Stumble trip!*

Back through the mud! *Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch!*

Back through the river! *Splash splosh! Splash splosh! Splash splosh!*

Back through the grass! *Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy!*

Get to our front door. Open the door. Up the stairs Oh no! We forgot to shut the door. Back down stairs. Back upstairs. Into the bedroom In to the bed Under the covers I'm not going on a bear hunt again.

10. The Ants Go Marching

Song

The ants go marching *one by one*, hurrah, hurrah

The ants go marching *one by one*, hurrah, hurrah

The ants go marching one by one,

The little one stops to suck his thumb

And they all go marching down to the ground

To get out of the rain, BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

2. The little one stops to tie his shoe - And they all go marching down to the ground
3. The ants go marching three by three, - The little one stops to climb a tree
4. The ants go marching four by four, - The little one stops to shut the door
5. The ants go marching five by five, - The little one stops to take a dive
6. The ants go marching six by six- The little one stops to pick up sticks
7. The ants go marching seven by seven, - The little one stops to pray to heaven
8. The ants go marching seven by seven - The little one stops to roller skate -
9. The ants go marching nine by nine, - The little one stops to check the time
10. The ants go marching ten by ten, - The little one stops to shout "The End", And they all go marching down to the ground
To get out of the rain.

11. Walking Walking

Song

(sing works with each step/ hop)

Walking, walking

Walking, walking

Hop hop hop

Hop hop hop

Running Running Running

Running Running Running

Now lets Stop

Now lets Stop