



10 NATURE BASED IDEAS FOR HOME LEARNING



Kia ora! I hope you enjoy this resource. I have pulled together 10 different nature-based ideas that can be done with minimal resources - most can be found either in the garden, on a walk in your local neighbourhood or at home.

These ideas are aimed at helping to improve mental health and wellbeing through spending time outdoors, while also linking to the curriculum and supporting key competencies. They're also great ideas for lockdowns!

There are a few ways you can use this resource:

1. You could share an idea on a Zoom call with your students to do before your next call, when they can then report back to you.
2. You could share one or two ideas at a time with your class via email or your online communication tool.
3. You could share the whānau version with your students (this version doesn't have all the curriculum links and is a separate page at the end).

Once back in the classroom you can also use these in your outdoor classroom.

Want more? Come check out some of our other free resources at www.littlekiwisnatureplay.com/project/freebies/

Nature's Patterns

Go for a walk around your garden or neighbourhood and collect some natural resources e.g. sticks, leaves, seeds, nuts, stones, shells.

Create your own pattern using the resources you collected. Can you make a miniature pattern, a large pattern, a round pattern, other shapes, a colourful pattern, a pattern with only five items, a vertical pattern? Or make a mandala, you might need to find out what it is first!

Curriculum Links:

Maths, science, thinking, belonging, communication, participation, fine motor development, problem solving, sorting, classification, concentration, creativity, imagination, organisation.

Build A Nest

Go for a walk around your garden or neighbourhood and collect some natural resources e.g. sticks, leaves, moss, lichen, feathers, grass, mud (maybe make this at home).

Create your own bird nest using the resources you have collected. Why do birds build nests? What is a habitat? Would your nest be good for a big or small bird? How do birds make their nests without hands? Can you see any birds' nests in your local trees? How do they compare to yours? Could you build a child size nest?

Curriculum Links:

Art, science, maths, thinking, problem solving, fine motor development, creativity, imagination, patience, persistence, organisation, belonging, concentration.

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Nature Frame

Collect some sticks and find something to bind the sticks together. TIP: Ti Kouka (Cabbage Tree leaves) can be used to bind the sticks together, just take strips off the leaves to do so.

Break the sticks into four lengths. Take strips of Ti Kouka or string and tie the sticks together to make a 4-sided frame. Feel free to add other resources to your frame, get creative!

Next, go outside for a wander and look through your frame until you find a 'picture' you like. Remember the picture, the colours, what's in it and the size of things. Then go and either draw the picture from memory OR write a description of the picture.

Curriculum Links:

Arts, language, maths, technology, persistence, being involved, problem solving, fine motor development, creativity, reflection, attentiveness.

Leaf Life

Go for a walk and collect 10 different leaves.

Sort the leaves from smallest to largest. Then group them into different groups i.e. ones with smooth edges, ones that are serrated, ones with many little leaves or large ones.

Which ones are soft? Which ones are spiky? Which ones are dry? Which ones have freshly dropped off a tree, how can you tell? Can you identify the name of the tree from looking at the leaf? Are there any leaves from native trees? What is the Māori name of the plants? When they're scrunched up, which ones smell nice and which ones smell bad?

Curriculum Links:

Science, maths, art, exploration, thinking, curiosity, organising, classification, sensory development, comparison.

Bug Hunt

Go into your garden or to a path and sit in one place for 5 minutes.

Look closely at the area around where you are sitting and notice what insects you can see or hear. Notice their size, how many legs they have, if they have wings and how many body parts they have. What colours, how many, what types? NB: You can use a magnifying glass if you have one.

Choose an insect that has interested you the most. What is it about that insect that you liked? What do you think it was doing? What do you think it eats? Where do you think it lives? Can you find out what type of insect it is? What is the Māori name? Collect your data and draw a picture or write a story of the insect that interested you the most.

Curriculum Links

Science, maths, art, language, classifying, observation, fine motor development, thinking, managing self, curiosity, comparison.

Weed Warrior

Go outside and find a big weed! Double check with an adult to make sure it's a weed.

Explore the weed. Look at its roots, the stem, the head, is there a flower and/or seeds? Have a go at dissecting it. If you have some scissors these could be useful. What did you notice when you dissected it? What shapes did you see? Can you find out what the name of the weed is? What makes a weed a weed? Why do people want to get rid of weeds, what impact can weeds have on our native plants?

Curriculum Links

Science, maths, language, classifying, observation, fine motor development, thinking, managing self, curiosity.

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Boat that Floats

Go for a walk and gather some resources that would be helpful to make a boat. This could include sticks, leaves, flowers, grass and something like Ti Kouka (Cabbage Tree) which can be used like string to tie it together if needed.

Once you have created your boat, put some water in a bucket or a sink and see if it floats!

Why do you think it stayed afloat or sunk? What materials helped it stay afloat? If you could make one change to your boat what would that be and why? What did Māori use to make boats that could carry people? What did they use for paddles? How would you make a boat that could hold a child?

Curriculum Links

Arts, maths, science, Te Ao Māori, technology, thinking, exploration, persistence, managing self, participating, fine motor development, problem solving, creativity, imagination, confidence, curiosity.

Make A Hut

In your outdoor space (or inside if you don't have one) build a hut or shelter. Use what is available e.g. sticks, broomsticks, tarps, old blankets or sheets, tables, chairs, tarpaulin, ropes, trampoline or a fence.

Consider if your hut would be good if it rained or if it was windy? Could you do anything to stop the rain coming through? How many people does it fit, is it sturdy, is there anything you would do to improve the construction?

Curriculum Linking:

Maths, technology, construction, problem solving, creativity, confidence, persistence, thinking, managing self, participating, reflection, resourcefulness.

Olympic Obstacle Course

Gather a variety of resources from around the home that you can use to create an obstacle course. This could include pieces of wood, a garden hose, old tyres, broom sticks, tarpaulin, rope, chairs, shoes, bamboo, balls – anything that could be used as an obstacle.

When designing your course think about incorporating balance, agility, speed, jumping, crawling and even a skill! Use what you have and think creatively.

Curriculum Links:

Maths, physical education, arts, problem solving, thinking, confidence, persistence, responsibility, imagination, managing self, participating, sharing an idea, reflection, resourcefulness.

Outdoor Potions

Ask your parents for some containers or old pots and pans they don't mind getting dirty.

Go for a wander around the garden or your neighbourhood and collect some potion making stuff like flowers, grasses and leaves. Add water and make a magic spell or perhaps make a café and design a menu!

Curriculum Links:

Science, maths, thinking, participating, managing self, language, writing, fine motor development, problem solving, creativity, imagination, sensory development.

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