Outdoor Learning – Ideas!

The aim is to choose a few which suit you ALL not to do them all! Take advantage of this lovely weather!

Many of the children will have tried lots of these ideas in Forest School already.

* Make a cafe full of mud pies (decorate them with leaves/ petals/ twigs. Write a menu of the delights on offer ‘leaf litter stew/ compost casserole)
* Make miniature dens/ nests for several toy animals, maybe use sticks and pebbles to create a grand fence/ garden path leading to their abode.
* Make potions using water and food colouring/ paint/ bubbles/ leaves/petals. Find different containers to fill (raid the blue recycling box!) which holds the most/ least, how can you successfully fill it without spilling lots, what happens if you stir the potion or shake it up? What happens if you leave it to settle?
* Go on a mini beast hunt, draw the insects, identify the insects, think about their habitat, carefully handle the mini beast to examine how it behaves, google facts upon the mini beasts you find.
* Build a bug hotel in your garden, use sticks and rocks and moss and anything else can find to try to create a habitat that mini beasts would like to visit, don’t forget to check your hotel to see if you have any guests!
* Make a minibeast trap! Dig a small hole deep enough to place a yoghurt pot ( or similar inside) and push soil up around its edges, drop in some bait ( cheese/ fruit) and pop a little roof on ( piece of wood supported by 4 small stones) to protect any trapped mini beasts from a downpour and wait!... check your trap regularly and don’t forget to set free anything you’ve caught!
* Raid the garage to find some large paint brushes, ‘paint’ your garden wall/ fence / patio with water. Watch how the water dries, maybe scribe pictures/ words with chalk before ‘painting’ them away.
* Collect some leaves from your garden or walk and use wax crayons to make some leaf rubbing, if you don’t have wax crayons you can carefully flatten some tinfoil over the leaf to make an impression.
* •Make a bird feeder, stick seeds into a cored apple or smear peanut butter into a tube and cover with seeds or mix seeds with lard and squish into an empty yoghurt pot and hang in your garden
* •Have a go at bird watching, sit quietly near your bird feeder and wait patiently to see which birds come to visit. Can you count them? Make a chart, draw one, correctly name the species?
* •Create a trail... can you leave a trail of clues (arrows made from sticks or stones)  around your garden for someone to follow leading them to some ‘treasure?’
* •Lay on your back on a sunny day and see what pictures you can spot in the clouds... maybe you could make up a story about something you spot.
* •Try making some land art, use stones or leaves or sticks or petals or fir cones to create a picture on your patio/ grass/ driveway. Maybe your family could all work together to make a big one!
* •Decorate a stone using paint or pens ( sharpies ) - you can bring your stone inside if you didn’t want it to get ruined in the rain.
* •Play noughts and crosses. Use 4 sticks to make the grid and choose a natural item (stone/ bark/ leaf) to be the nought or cross.
* •Make a nature bracelet. Ask a grown up to carefully wrap some sellotape loosely around your wrist ( sticky side out!) and when you are in the garden or on your walk you can stick items to it ( leaves, flowers, petals) to decorate it.
* •Try to make a kite, (empty nappy bags are perfect ) tie your bag to some string and run! Or you could try a more complex design using sticks
* •Make fairy bubbles! All you need is some soapy water ( washing up liquid & water) and a dandelion stem ( dandelions are edible so harmless -but make sure you pick one from an area you know to be clean from dog visitors or pesticides!) ... break the dandelion flower off so you are left with the hollow straw like stem, dip one end into your bubble solution and gently blow to make your fairy bubbles..
* •Try to make a gargoyle! If you mix some garden soil with water and a spoonful (or two) of cornflour you get a malleable clay like consistency which you can use to create a house gargoyle ( or if you prefer a mini beast or hedgehog or other creature to live in your garden until rainfall)
* Find some flowers in your garden or on your walk and return home to carefully press them using heavy books, make a picture with them once pressed.
* Try Hapa Zome. Find some juicy leaves and/ or flowers and sandwich them between scrap cotton fabric ( old shirt/ pillow case?) and bash them with a stone/ hammer/ wooden spoon until all the ‘juice’ has come out leaving a symmetrical imprint on your fabric.
* Make stick man and his family
* on a sunny day explore shadows, lay some paper on the ground and place a toy upon it so it casts a shadow, then carefully draw round its shadow . Maybe you can draw a whole pride of shadow lions or a whole herd of dinosaurs
* Make a journey stick, take a stick and a length of string/ wool with you on your walk and if you find something interesting then attach it to your stick by winding wool around it ,at the end of your walk you will have a record of your journey
* Try mud painting, mix a little mud from your garden to use and paint a picture. You could even try to find or make some natural paint brushes to use ( find a twig with some leaves on or use a stick and wind some wool and feathers round)
* Make some leaf bunting! String a line up across your garden and hang leaves up creating a bunting.  You could even write a letter on each leaf with a felt tip pen to create a message.
* Bury a time capsule! In 100 years time no one will believe we all had to stay at home because of a virus, they would love to read all about it! Find as many things as you can about this period of history to put in a time capsule and bury it in your garden.
* Make a fairy/elf house in your garden, don’t forget your fairy/elf might need a fence , a nice garden path and maybe even a swing
* Make a bird bath to help the birds find something to drink and somewhere to wash their feathers. All you need is a shallow container ( upturned bin lid , or similar, would be perfect ) , some stones to place in the  deepest part & some water
* Make a bubble snake! Ask for help to cut the base off a plastic bottle, place a fabric dishcloth over the cut base securing with an elastic band, dip the fabric into some bubble mixture ( washing up liquid mixed with water) and blow! The more you puff the longer your snake becomes!
* Be a worm charmer! Tap the ground with a stick to trick the worms into thinking it’s raining.. the faster you tap the more chance you have of charming a worm
* Make a foil riverbed. Place a length of tinfoil across the garden carefully shaping it into your river, fold the sides up a little so they create a barrier to stop your river overflowing. Create a very slow trickle of water ( hose pipe/ bottle/ cup) and watch how your river flows. Maybe you could float leaves or petals down your river or play (teeny tiny) pooh sticks with blades of grass
* Make a scarecrow, find some old clothes and stuff with paper/ straw and display in your garden!
* Chain of 5 - Find 5 things in the garden (or out on your walk) and line them up to make a connection chain – identify how and why they could be connected. Write a few sentences explaining you connection or make a short video clip.
* Biography of…Choose something in the garden (or out on your walk) that is of great interest to you and could be interesting to research. Make a story up about your find or map out it’s ‘life history’ e.g. a leaf, what sort of tree/bush/plant did it come from? How far back can you go for its origin? What could/would its future be?
* Sensory trail - Can you make a trail in your garden of different textures and smells? Guide someone else in your family around the trail and see if they can identify what they are touching or smelling?
* Den building - Use items from the garden and perhaps an old sheet to construct a den. Maybe you could have a snack and drink in there with your family?

Have Fun!!