

Picture frames

This activity provides opportunities for children to become aware of caring for the natural environment by learning never to break branches from a living tree or pick a living plant, only to collect leaves and twigs which have fallen from trees or seed heads on plants which have finished flowering.

Children will develop observational skills and may begin to name some trees by identifying leaves.

This is a good activity for the autumn when there is a plentiful selection of natural materials to collect but it could be adapted to other seasons.

Resources

- Small wooden discs, pine cones, leaves collected in advance and an example frame
- Baskets to collect objects
- String
- Scissors
- Camera
- 'Natural Simple Land Art through the Seasons' by Marc Pouyet, published by Francis Lincoln

Activity

Children collect four sticks of a similar length

With adult assistance children make a rectangular or square shape with their sticks and fasten the corners with string. For very young children it may be helpful to have some pre-made frames.

Children collect items to display in their picture frame.

The children can take their frame back to school to use for other projects, leaving their designs as natural art for others to see.

Take photos of the children's designs.

Follow up

- This activity can be followed up at school with more 'placing and arranging' activities using the frames, wicker or willow rings or a printer's tray. Also, if available, provide an overhead projector for children to project their designs onto a wall.

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