



**tinyforest**  
earthwatch  
EUROPE

## KS1 LESSON IDEAS

### 10 ACTIVITIES TO INTRODUCE TINY FORESTS TO YOUR CLASSROOM!

Now is the perfect time to inspire and engage your students with nature, helping them to understand their impact on the natural world and take action to protect it. Our activities provide guidance on how to incorporate Tiny Forests into your curriculum, offering ideas for engaging ways to connect your pupils to nature and build their confidence!

#### NATURE PUZZLES

Ask each of your pupils to draw a shape on a piece of A4 card. The shape can be as simple or complicated as they like - you could pre-draw shapes for specific pupils to scaffold the activity. Then, encourage your students to gather natural materials such as twigs, leaves or feathers. They can then see which natural materials fit within their shape and which don't, like a jigsaw. You could set different challenges, such as the items mustn't touch, or there must be a certain number within the shape.

#### MEET A TREE

Learn more about trees by interacting closely with them. Approach the tree and write down some of its key features. What colour is its bark? What shape are its leaves? Does it make a sound when the wind blows? Does it have any flowers, fruit or seeds? You could pick a leaf to save, or do bark rubbings with crayons. Make sure to touch the tree and see how it feels. Think about what life the tree might support.

#### STORIES OF NATURE

Lots of children's books, such as "We're going on a bear hunt" or "The Gruffalo" could be told outdoors, using natural materials to act the story out or support the story telling experience. You could also use an outdoor space or natural items to inspire your pupils to write their own story for a creative writing lesson.

## **ALPHABET SCAVENGER HUNT**

Put students into groups and ask them to find items beginning with each letter of the alphabet. You could provide ideas for what they might find, or let them explore what they may find. You could provide them with a tray or an egg carton for them to gather their items. You could extend this challenge by asking them to use the items to make the shape of the letter, for example making the letter R out of rocks.

## **SORTING GAME**

Sorting is a great way to familiarise pupils with objects they would commonly find outdoors. You could pre-gather up your items or allow pupils time to gather their own items. Start by asking pupils to sort in to simple categories, like colour, shape or size. The activity could be scaffolded by assigning items to pupils and asking them to think of their own categories. This could help to build confidence, as there is no right or wrong answer and allows pupils to develop their own thoughts and ideas around what makes the items similar.

## **COLOURS OF NATURE**

Exploring the colours of nature is a great way to get pupils engaged with outdoor learning. Pupils could conduct a colour search, in which they find as many items of different colours, or of the same colour, as possible. Or, they could play a game of colour bingo using pre-made cards – when they see an item, they can tick off their colour, and the first to a line wins! Or, you could set a colour challenge, asking pupils to race in a relay style to collect items off a list, such as a leaf that isn't green or an object that is blue.

## **WHATS IN THE BAG GAME**

Find items of different sizes, shapes and textures and place them in to different bags. Ask the pupils to feel the items through the bag and describe them, guessing what they may be. Then, ask the pupils to put their hands in the bag and describe them again – have their opinions changed? What feels different? Then, remove the items from the bag and ask the pupils to inspect them again. At each stage, ask pupils to write down their observations – at the end of the exercise, they can compare their thoughts at each stage!

## SENSORY WALK

Forests are a great place to tune students in to their senses, and so a sensory walk can be a great mindfulness exercise. Start by asking students to sit silently for 1 minute, before asking them what they can hear. You could ask them what natural and man made noises they might have heard. Along the walk, ask students what they can smell. They may be able to sniff out different plants at different spots. Ask students to pick 5 things they can see – this could be any 5 things, or you may wish to set a challenge, such as 5 different plants or colours. Ask students to touch different objects, such as bark, pine cones or grass, and describe how they feel. Finish the walk off by trying some fruit that typically grows on trees, like apples or pears. You could summarise this exercise by asking students to record what they have experienced.

## ICE SUN CATCHERS

Gather up items from nature, such as twigs, leaves, flower or berries. Ask each of your pupils to make a pattern or picture with their items in either a cupcake tray or within individual cake tins. Add a small loop of string at the top. Then, add a layer of water on top of the items and place the tin in the freezer. Once they are fully frozen, they can be hung outside on trees or windowsills as natural sun catchers!

## NATURAL SUMS

A good lesson to use as an introduction to all things outdoors can be nature sums. Gather a few different kinds of items – sticks, stones and leaves work best. Then, assign each item a number, for example sticks represent 1, leaves represent 2 etc. Then, ask your pupils to do sums with them! The activity can be simplified by asking them to just count the number of items rather than assigning each item a number. Handling and using natural materials can build children's confidence with nature.