

Nature hunt



WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Card/paper – cut into postcard-size pieces

Pen, coloured pencils, paints, crayons

Rucksack, magnifying glass

Binoculars, nature fact-finding book such as a wildflower or bird spotting guide (optional)

ENGAGED FOR

At least one hour outside and continued exploring on further walks and outdoor adventures.

PARENTAL ENJOYMENT

I loved making these nature-hunting cards and I always feel good about getting us outside come rain or shine.

GOOD STUFF

Adventure

Body work

Care for animals

Confidence

Listening

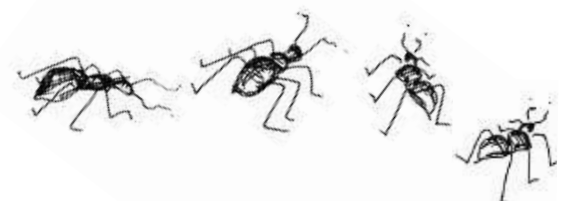
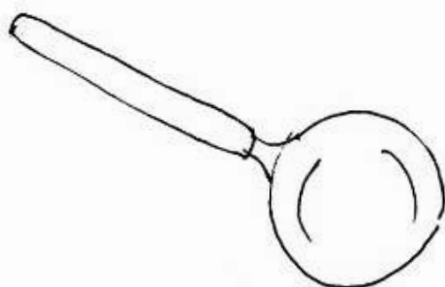
Nature

Speaking

Thinking

POTENTIAL FOR MESS

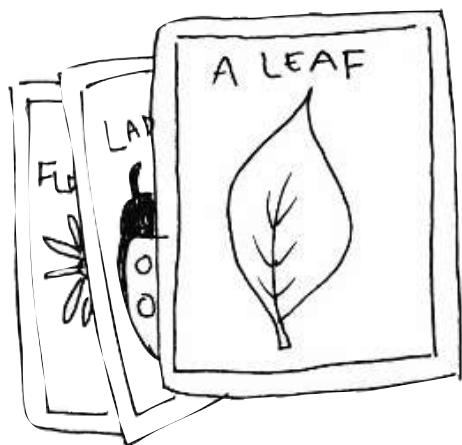
This is a zero-mess activity.



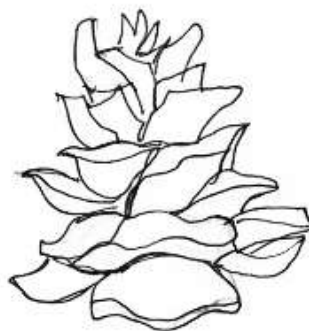
METHOD

Going outside has never been a problem with our daughter Mabel, who loves to jump in puddles, stand in the rain, be barefoot and dig with her hands. However, after a sick bug, which meant a few days of rest, she needed a little more encouragement than usual. She'd got used to the comfort of her 'sick bed' – cosy blankets, PJs all day long and more TV than usual!

On one of the days when she was napping, I decided to make some nature-hunting cards, exercising my own passion for drawing and hoping to create a fun little game for us on our next adventure. I had plain index cards to hand, but you can use A4 paper cut in quarters (the perfect size for small hands), then on each card I drew a picture of something that I knew we could find outside relatively



easily. I chose to draw a simple image of the following; blossom, a leaf, a feather, a woodlouse, a ladybird, a daffodil and, for the final card, dog poo (which made my husband laugh). As long as you are choosing accessible things that you are likely to see (we have two dogs!), then go wild, because the more interesting they are, the more fun you are going to have.



I must have had a lot of time on my hands at that point, because I was very much into this activity so I used watercolours to give the cards life, as well as writing the name of each thing above the picture (you can choose to do this or not, based on your age group).

I put the nature cards into Mabel's rucksack, along with a magnifying glass, then we put on our coats and wellies and out we went, nature hunting!

She absolutely loved having things to find, and to be able to find them successfully, without my help, meant a wonderful sense of achievement for her and it put a spring in her step as she excitedly ran from feather to stick. We used the magnifying glass to hunt out the woodlouse and this became a

very thorough part of the hunt as we peeked under pots and logs along our path.

I will make it clear, the dog poo card came with the strong warning of 'do not touch'; however, I was very grateful for the gift of a daffodil.