Haywood Grove School
Proud to be Special - Proud to be Different

# FOREST SCHOOL IDEAS

**1. Go on a minibeast hunt**

Get you wellies on and get your kids out in the fresh air and take a closer look at your garden. You'll soon notice it's teeming with wildlife! Can you find...

a worm after a spring shower

a bumblebee looking for nectar

a spotty ladybird exploring the grass

a slimy snail in a dark damp spot

a butterfly basking in the sunshine?

**2. Make a loo roll bird feeder**

This is messy fun kids will love to get stuck into. And it will help them learn about the birds in your neighbourhood.

You can make this simple feeder with items you probably already have at home:

- Smother a cardboard tube in peanut butter (no added salt and sugar versions are suitable for birds).
- Roll it in bird seed and thread some string through the hole.
- Tie it up in your garden where birds will feel safe eating.

How many garden birds will you spot? Take a look at our blog to help you and your children identify them.

You could keep a running log of the birds you see visit your birdfeeder.

**3. Go on a scavenger hunt**

This is a fun idea for kids of all ages. You can keep it really simple for little ones - help them look out for different colours or textures in nature. For older children, challenge them to hunt for seasonal signs such as leaves changing, blossoms etc,  Or ask them to see how many tiny natural objects they can find to fit inside a matchbox.

There's so much to see, can you find…

**Nature hunt:**

Leaves

scented blossom

springy moss

sticky leaf buds

a lichen-covered twig

a piece of eggshell (stay well away from bird nests, look for fragments of shell that have fallen to the ground)

conker shells

**Tiny treasure hunt:**

You'll need to keep your eyes peeled for this activity. Hunt for really small things you can fit into a matchbox. Collect little leaves, blades of grass, small snail shells, tiny twigs, feathers and pebbles. Turn it into a competition with your family – who can fit the most items inside their box?

You can take a magnifying glass on your scavenger hunt to help children to investigate their finds. Can they see intricate patterns, subtle colour changes and interesting textures?

**4. Make natural art**

Art and crafts will be a popular way to keep kids busy. To mix things up, put the pencils and crayons to one side and look for natural art materials instead. Collect fallen leaves, petals and sticks and use them to make a picture or sculpture.

You could even use the objects as 'stampers' or paintbrushes - dipping them in paint and rolling, brushing or stamping them on paper to create interesting patterns and effects.

Get creative - natural objects make excellent art materials.

**5. Move like minibeasts**

This is a great way to get young children active and help them burn off some excess energy. You can do it outdoors or inside.  Challenge your kids to:

lie on the ground and wriggle like a worm

flap their arms like a butterfly flutters its wings

put their hands on the floor and scuttle about like a spider

do some giant leaps like a cricket

crawl on the floor then curl up into a ball like a woodlouse.

**6. Make an animal or forest out of Lego**

Many families will have Lego, wooden blocks or other building toys at home. So challenge your kids to make something inspired by nature. You could all work together to make one big scene, like a springtime woodland or a giant tree. Or you could have a contest to see who can build the best minibeast, mammal or bird.

**7. Butterfly symmetry art**

This craft has the wow factor! All you need is paint and some paper. Simply splodge paint on one half of your paper and fold it in half so the paint spreads on both sides. Carefully open it up to reveal a beautiful butterfly.

It's a great way to teach youngsters about butterflies and how their wings are symmetrical.

Once dry, your butterfly will make a cheerful decoration for your home. Or you could even turn it into a card to send to a grandparent you won't see for a while.

Use items from the garden to add antennae and a body to your butterfly.

**8. Write a story inspired by woods and trees**

If your kids love writing, then get those creative juices flowing with a story challenge. Kick things off by giving them the first sentence and encouraging them to write the rest of the story.

You could also jot ideas on scraps of paper, then get kids to choose some at random that they have to incorporate into their story. These could include:

A tree has fallen in the woods

A character has gone missing

An animal is shouting an alarm call

There are some mysterious footprints to follow.

Gather together as a family and share the stories you've written. They'll make great bedtime stories too when you've read all the books you have at home.

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Gather up fallen leaves and get creative!

# Leaf masks

## You'll need:

Ask your grown-up for some help!

- Card
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Ribbon, wool or string
- Glue
- Paintbrush
- Leaves



1. Cut the card into a mask shape and cut out eye holes.



2. Using the hole punch, make two holes on either side of the mask.



3. Measure out two lengths of ribbon that are long enough to tie around your head. Pop them through the holes and tie them in place.



4. Cut the stems off the leaves and use the paintbrush to cover them in glue.




5. Stick each leaf to your mask.

Remember – don't stick leaves over the eye holes!

**Make sure your mask is dry before you try it on!**

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**Make a muddy mugshot**
Get stuck in and create a funny face

# Leaf faces and muddy smiles

## Shape some mud into a face and look for...

- Leafy peepers
- Nuts for a nose
- Bark for a beard
- Grassy glasses





**Wow!**

Create a face peeping up from the woodland floor or peering down from a tree trunk.

Make a leafy portrait of your own face, or a whole family of weird and wonderful faces.

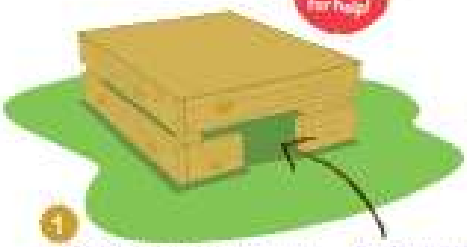
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**Hedgehog home**
Create a cosy hogitat

# Hedgehog home

## You will need:

- A wooden crate
- Lots of sticks
- Fallen leaves
- Old bricks




1. Find a quiet, sheltered spot for your wooden crate. Make sure the entrance faces away from the wind.

Don't forget to make a gap so the hedgehog can get in!



2. Cover the crate with sticks. If you place them in a tepee shape, they'll be nice and sturdy.



3. Pile all the leaves over your sticks. Make sure you tuck them into any little gaps and fill every nook and cranny.




4. Create an entrance. Stand two bricks on their sides and place another over the top of them to make an archway.

5. Add extra leaves to the top of the house to make it extra cosy.

**Don't forget to put a few leaves inside the hogitat, so the hedgehog can make a comfy bed.**

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**Giant nature letters**
Get creative with sticks, seeds and leaves.

Let's make

# giant nature letters

Make the first letter of your name using twigs, fallen leaves, berries and nuts.



1. Make the outline on the ground using sticks. Ask a grown-up if you need some help.

2. Fill in the shape with natural treasures.

Can you spell out the rest of your name?

**This is a fun activity for autumn, when lots of leaves and seeds fall from the trees.**

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**Journey stick**
Keep track of your travels

# Journey stick

**People in countries all over the world use journey sticks to tell the story of their travels.**

Take different coloured wool or thread next time you head to the woods.



Find a short stick and attach objects to it with pieces of wool. Use a different colour for each sight, sound, feeling and smell.

And there you have it – your very own journey stick!

**This is a great way to share your adventures with your friends!**

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**Magic potions**
Weave a little woodland magic

# Magic woodland potions

**Take a beaker or a small bowl out on your adventure. Add a splash of water and find a special stick for stirring.**

As you explore the wood, gather bits and pieces that catch your eye.



A brightly coloured leaf



A fluffy feather



Glossy berries



Some scented pine needles...

Make up a rhyme about each ingredient you add:

Next a skinny acorn goes in, big trees grow from this tiny thing!




Use your stick to stir everything up, then find a special spot to pour out your potion and make a wish.

**If you go down to the woods today you'll find heaps of ingredients for a magic potion.**

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**Terrifying twig skeleton**

Create a creepy twig skeleton and spook your friends!

## Spooky!

Next time you're in the woods, use fallen leaves, twigs, seeds and bits of bark to make the bones of your own terrifying twig skeleton.

**What will you find for the:**




**Did you know that the human body has 206 bones?**

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**Twig rafts**
Use twigs, grass, fallen petals and leaves to build your raft

# Twig rafts

## You will need:

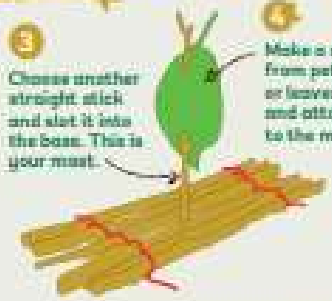
- Twigs
- Long grass or string
- Fallen petals
- Leaves



1. Collect some twigs that are about the same length.



2. Place them in a line and secure them together using the string (or long grass).



3. Choose another straight stick and slot it into the base. This is your mast.

4. Make a sail from petals or leaves and attach it to the mast.



5. Try your raft out on a puddle or pond. Does it float?

**Try adding pebbles to your raft – how many can it carry before it sinks?**

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