

Forest School For All

Forest Discoverers

12-Week Summer Curriculum





Hello, forest friends!



We're thrilled you'll be incorporating our Forest Discoverers Summer Curriculum as part of your family's summer days. To bring you this program, we at Forest School For All have partnered with Leah McDermott, Educator and Owner of Your Natural Learner. Her background and experience gives this program both an expanded scope and depth we hope your family will benefit from as you spend the summer discovering the natural world around you.

In this comprehensive curriculum packet, you'll receive an introduction from Leah, a 12-week overview, guidance for each week's programming and a full list of supplies, complete with links for online purchasing.

You'll be in good company as you move through the curriculum. Families and groups of families will be using the same curriculum to discover the summer season, same as you. We invite you, as we invite all of our families, to share your experiences with us. We'd love to hear about your discoveries - from all that makes you jump for joy, smile with contentment and squeal with surprise. You can share your stories, photographs, quotes, questions, and feedback with us via email (info@forestschoolorall.com) or with the hashtag #ForestDiscoverers on any social media platform.

We welcome you to the exciting summer in nature ahead.
Happy Discoveries!

Claudine, Kerri + Sabrina
Your Forest School For All Team





Introduction



A note from curriculum creator, Leah

This program was designed specifically for Forest School For All to be used as a 12-week Summer program. It is not to be resold in part or in its entirety. Rights are reserved to the creator.

In keeping with the vision of FSFA, to allow children of all ages the freedom and flexibility to explore their natural world around them, I have designed this 12-week program to be as open-ended as possible - allowing the children to come and go into the various activities freely and participate in their own unique ways. This will allow them to explore the natural world, participate in family, individual and if applicable, group projects creating a sense of community and connection, as well as giving the leader various options that bring a somewhat “academic” feel to the meeting.

Each week will center around a particular theme. Each session offers resources for a themed reading (a book list with multiple options will be given each week), individual exploration and various activities, and a Q&A. These discussion prompts can help children put their ideas and thoughts from the day into words and feelings, which promotes healthy language development and builds personal connections with others. The Q&A, as well as the reading, may be done with parents at home as a followup to the session.

For the activities within each week, there will be different activities that can be set up like “stations” to allow the children to have various options to participate in, and allow older children the ability to use their unique interests and gifts to express themselves in a variety of ways. Each station will offer an activity in a different subject area - such as art, music, science, storytelling, mathematics, etc. Once again, this gives children the opportunity to explore what they are most interested in learning and investigating each week. By offering multiple options for activities, this also helps children with shorter attention spans, or children who may be new to the forest school exploration and aren’t quite sure how to explore and free play.

Above all, a child’s individual interests and autonomy should be respected. These activities are a structure to be used as a guideline, but open-ended free play should always be made available to the children when out in the forest. After all, play is a child’s greatest work!



Meet Leah



12-week overview



week 01	team building + intention	○	art, nature exploration, engineering
week 02	sun	○	art, health, science
week 03	land art	○	STEAM (science, tech, engineering, art, math)
week 04	bugs	○	art, movement, science
week 05	small parts	○	art, literacy, nature exploration, science
week 06	nature games	○	nature exploration, movement, STEM
week 07	reading in nature	○	art, literacy, nature exploration, science
week 08	color in nature	○	art, nature exploration
week 09	patterns	○	art, math, nature exploration
week 10	trees	○	art, science
week 11	nature art	○	nature art
week 12	sustainability	○	art, science



Week 2: Sun



Nothing quite says “Summer” like bright and brilliant sunshine! This week, the children will be investigating the impact the sun has on the planet and its species, as well as playing with some fun shadow activities.

Activities

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01. Sunscreen Protection (Science/Health/Art)

For this experiment use some sunscreen and a piece of black or dark colored construction paper for each child (and sunshine, of course). Fold the construction paper in half, squirt some sunscreen on one half and let the children rub it into only that side. Make sure not to cover the entire page. Explain that the paper is like your skin. Some of it you've put sunscreen on and some of it is unprotected. Set the paper out in direct sunlight for the remainder of your time in the forest. After some time, you should see a noticeable difference in the halves of the paper. The side with sunscreen is still dark and normal, while the side that was unprotected faded and isn't as bright. This is just like what happens to your skin, only your skin can burn if it's in the sun for too long without protection. This activity can be extended by taking the paper home and placing it in the sunlight for even longer to see what happens to the paper.



Week 2: Sun



Nothing quite says “Summer” like bright and brilliant sunshine! This week, the children will be investigating the impact the sun has on the planet and its species, as well as playing with some fun shadow activities.

Activities

(continued)

02. Sunography Prints (Art/Science)

Extending the sunscreen activity into something a bit more creative, the children will be using the sun to create images on paper. Each child should get a piece of paper and some sunscreen. Allow the child to get creative making an image on their paper. They can be encouraged to use natural pieces (maybe coat a leaf in sunscreen and stick it to the paper, for example), or just create with their fingers, paint the sunscreen on with sticks, etc. Then allow these papers to set in the bright sunlight to allow the design to “print” onto the paper.

03. Tree Shadow Team Painting (Art/Science)

This is a team or small group project. Find a sunny spot where a tree is casting a shadow on the ground. Roll out the long sheet of butcher paper and have the children use paints to trace the tree’s shadow, and paint it in. The entire group can create this together, or small groups can do several different tree shadow pieces.



Week 2: Sun



Supplies Needed

- One bottle of sunscreen (one per group)
- Assorted color construction paper (a few pieces per child)
- Butcher paper (one long sheet per group - maybe 4-5 feet in length)
- Paints (1 set per child or a few colors per group)
- Paintbrushes (1 per child)

Closing

- Discuss with the children how the Sun impacts the Earth and the creatures on it. How can we protect our skin and eyes from the harshness of the Sun's rays? Do they feel that it is important to do so?
- Allow for open share time, to allow children to share freely what they discovered and found interesting about the time spent together.

Book List Suggestions

- Summer Days and Nights by Wong Herbert Yee
- Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky by Elphinstone Dayrell and Blair Lent
- Lookin' for Light by Eric Braun

Continue at Home

This week, we focused on the Sun, it's effects on the Earth and the creatures living on it, how to protect ourselves from the Sun's harsh rays, etc. Your child also explored shadows and how they are cast by the Sun on objects large and small. Time was spent this week in Science, Health, and Art. To continue this exploration at home, determine with your child if the members of your family are adequately prepared for Summertime - do you have appropriate sunscreen and clothing to protect from the Sun? Your child saw in an experiment what the Sun can do to unprotected skin, so you could continue that conversation by talking about how to heal a sunburn (this is a great time to get an Aloe plant if you don't have one). If your child shows continued interest in light and casting shadows, a handheld mirror and a flashlight will give your child hours of play and exploration on the topic!



List of Books*



The Curious Garden	The Lorax
This is Our Earth	Nature's Paintbrush
Brambleheart	Color Me a Rhyme
Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky	Sky Color
Looking for Light	Recognizing Patterns in Nature
Building on Nature	Mysterious Patterns
If You Find a Rock	Swirl by Swirl
Growing Patterns	We Planted a Tree
Ace Lacewing	Who Will Plant a Tree
The Best Book of Bugs	A Tree is a Plant
Bugs!	Summer Walk
Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt	Stick Man
The Busy Tree	This is Our Earth
Least Things	Compost Stew
Why Should I Protect Nature	Oil Spill
What Does It Mean To Be Green?	One Plastic Bag

*Note: You can find these items linked to Forest School For All's Amazon Affiliate Account on the webpage: <http://forestschoolorall.com/curriculum/>. By purchasing items via these links, you further support FSFA and our mission. Thanks!