

Forest School For All

Forest Discoverers

12-Week Warm Weather Curriculum

S.T.E.A.M.-inspired activities designed for ages 5-10, adaptable for children big and small





Hello, forest friends!



We're thrilled you'll be incorporating our Forest Discoverers Warm Weather Curriculum as part of your family's warmer 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 warmer months discovering the natural world around you.

In this comprehensive curriculum packet, you'll receive an introduction, 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 warm seasons, similar to you. We invite you, as we invite all of our families, to share your unique 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@forestschoolforall.com) or with the hashtag #ForestDiscoverers on any social media platform.

We welcome you to the exciting warm seasons ahead.
Happy Discoveries!

Your Forest School For All Team



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Thank you!



Introduction



A note about the Forest Discoverers Curriculum

The Forest Discoverers Curriculum is specifically designed so young children can creatively discover the natural world around them, in a variety of hands-on ways. Spread across 12 weeks, but easily adaptable to the timeframe of your interest, each week of the curriculum introduces a theme to the children. Within each theme, you will find resources for readings (a book list will be given each week), individual exploration, various activities, and Q&A discussion questions.

Each session will begin in the forest by introducing that week's theme. This helps the children begin thinking about its connection to the natural world. Following this, there is an opportunity to explore the forest and collect any natural materials the children wish to explore further. This may be playful and exploratory, depending on the child and their level of comfortability in the forest. At this point, you will come back together to combine any natural materials with the activities you've laid out. This is often where the discovery process dives deep. You can incorporate the discussion questions throughout your time, at the end of the session or as a followup back home.

For the activities, there will be different "stations" set up to provide the children with various options to participate, 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. 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 who like to explore many different areas, or children who may be new to forest exploration, a good match for discovery.

The flow of each week may vary. Often, the sessions bounce between free play and activities. And sometimes they are one in the same. Respect for a child's interests and ability to guide themselves through their experiences is very important. It is magical when children can learn and grow through open-ended free play and self-direction. Usually, the materials and the activities provided find their way into a child's play in ways we least expect it. We are endlessly reminded that children open our minds to a new way of thinking and seeing the world. As such, these activities are 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! You may find your child takes the prompt and materials and goes in a completely different direction. That creativity is welcome and encouraged. We invite you to allow children to come and go into the various activities freely and participate in their own unique ways. This is exactly why we like to say this program is parent-facilitated, but child-led. With the Forest Discoverers Curriculum, children are given the opportunity to take the lead in their discoveries, in their engagement with nature and in their play.



Week 3: Land Art



This week we will be honing in on the children's gross motor, balancing, and problem solving skills by creating big pieces and utilizing the natural landscape.

Activities

01. Nature Clay Sculptures (Art)

Give each child a chunk of clay. Start to create some logs with some of the remaining clay and offer to any child that wants it. Encourage the children to make use of any found objects around them with which to build and sculpt.

02. Rock Sculptures (STEAM - science, technology, engineering, art, math)

As an excellent practice in patience, hand-eye coordination, and balance, challenge the children to create rock sculptures by vertically stacking assorted sizes of rocks. This can be competitive if the atmosphere is playful and invites it, otherwise keep it light and fun and encourage them to challenge themselves.

03. 9 Stick Challenge (Math)

In this geometry-focused challenge, first have the children each gather a total of nine sticks, size doesn't matter. Then ask them to see how many triangles they can make with the nine sticks. Encourage them to think outside the box a bit to create more than just three!



Week 3: Land Art



Supplies Needed

- Clay (about 1/2 lb per child)
- Paper plate (1 per child)

Closing

- Ask the children if they feel the clay and rock sculptures fall under the “leave no trace” idea. This is a great opportunity for a bit of a healthy debate, as arguments could be made for either side.
- Have the children talk about the art that they created today using nature. Then look around and have the children identify “art” that they see in nature that has been created BY nature. Discuss the beauty and art that we see in nature.

Book List Suggestions

- Building on Nature: The Life of Antoni Gaudi by Rachel Victoria Rodriguez and Julie Paschkis
- If You Find a Rock by Peggy Christian
- Growing Patterns by Sarah C. Campbell

Continue at Home

This week, your child utilized a lot of creative problem solving skills to perform several challenges in Art, Geometry, and STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) skills. Your child focused on engineering, balance and hand-eye coordination with the clay and rock sculptures. Ask your child to lead you through the 9 Stick Challenge to see if you and your child have the same process and thoughts!





Full List of Supplies*



bucket	glue
twine	googly eyes
scissors	thick paper
drop cloth	pencils
paint	crayons
plates	clay
glue sticks	foil wrappers
butcher paper	construction paper
paint brushes	masking tape
pipe cleaners	16oz+ recycled plastic / glass bottles
painter's tape	Recycled shopping bags

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

Thank you, Forest Discoverers!

We hope you enjoy your time discovering the forest in the warmth.
Here's where can connect with the FSFA community every season:

website www.forestschoolforall.com

email info@forestschoolforall.com

facebook www.facebook.com/forestschool4all

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