



Exploring the Neighbor-wood

Indoor/Outdoor • 5–25 minutes • Limited materials

Overview

Explore a nearby outdoor space, looking closely for signs of how trees are used by animals and plants.

Get Ready

Suggested Supplies

Nature provides all you need for this activity, though you can also use:

- ✓ Exploration tools like a magnifying glass, phone, or camera
- ✓ A towel or blanket for sitting comfortably
- ✓ Small container for collecting nature treasures

Set up the Topic

Today we're going to look closely at the trees in our neighborhood to see if we notice plants or animals using the trees. I want you to use your eyes, ears, and gentle hands to explore trees for clues about plants and animals.

At a Glance Steps

Step 1:

Choose a spot to explore—like a yard, park, sidewalk, or playground—where there are at least a few trees.

Step 2:

Pause to notice the ways plants and animals use the trees in that space. You can collect natural items like leaves or seeds, or take photos to remember what you observed.

Step 3:

Look for clues that plants or animals leave behind like nests, scratch marks, droppings, nibbled nuts and seeds, or vines.



Step 4:

Reflect on what you discovered, appreciating what trees provide us and sharing ways to care for trees. What area can you explore next?

Children Are Working On

Exploring and observing using their senses—touch, listening, and looking

Asking questions and telling stories

Investigating and making predictions

Patience and quiet listening

Care and curiosity about living things

Try This!



Visit the same tree every week or month throughout the year and notice how it changes over time. Watching through different seasons helps children see patterns in nature and builds a deeper connection with their local environment.