

# *Nature*

A guide to nature themed activities and learning opportunities  
that are aimed at 3-7 years (EYFS/KS1)

Aimed at encouraging children to observe, explore and engage in  
the natural world around, these activities and ideas are  
designed to promote development across multiple areas of  
learning.



## *Key Words to Understand:*

**Resources:** The resources in this pack are designed to be easily accessible within the home

**Learning Outcome:** When using trackers, these activities are marked with the type of learning that should evolve and the learning outcomes that you can track from them. Within this pack the following learning outcomes are listed:

**CLL:** Communication, Language and Literacy

**Maths**

**UW:** Understanding of the world, which includes science, history and geography

**Application:** This means what you do during the activity

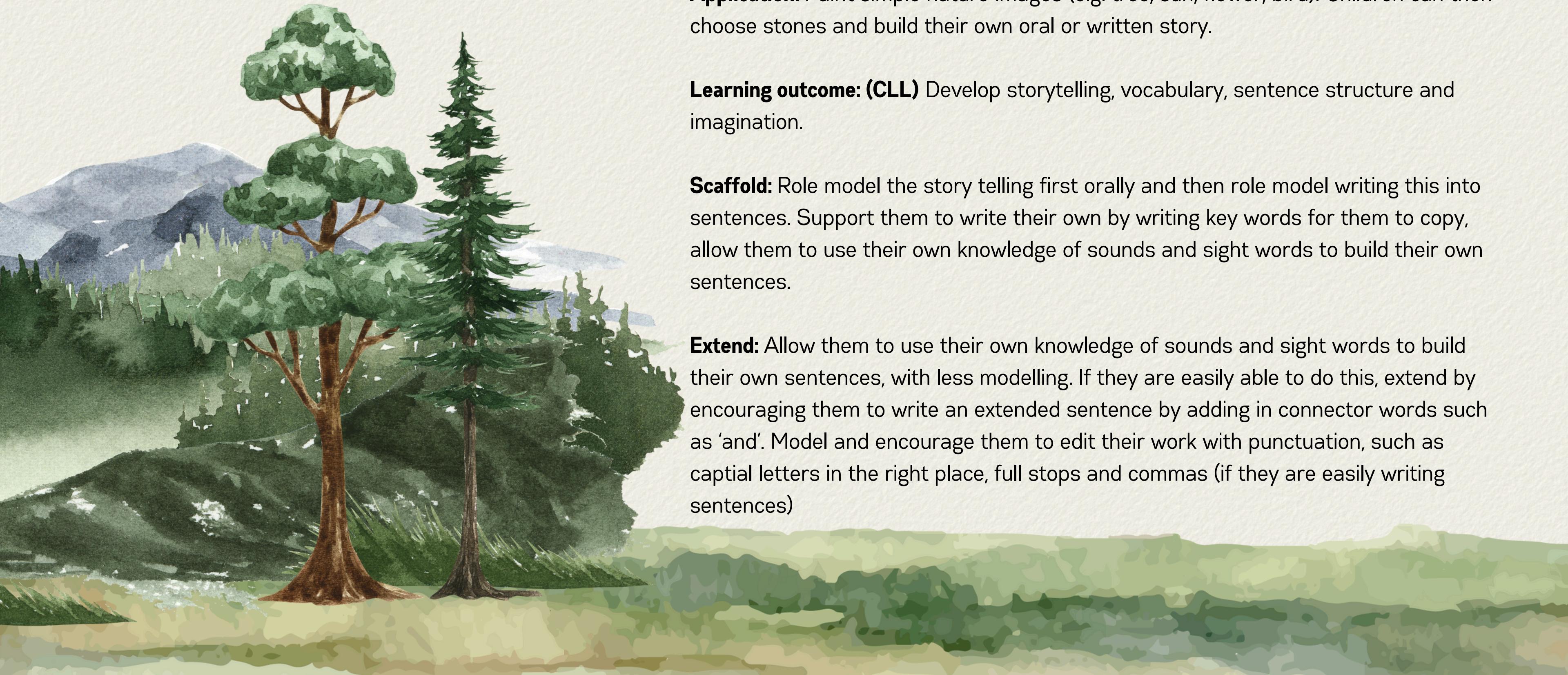
**Scaffold:** This is the way in which, you as the adult, support the child within their learning through the activities to maximise the learning outcome.

**Extend:** If your child achieves the activity easily and you have the time, extend it by building new challenges into what they are doing. Don't push them too quickly, as to not put them off learning, follow your child's lead.

**Model:** Children learn through observation, discussion and hands on experience, so these activities are designed for the adult to model much of what is happening for the child to observe and then to continue independently.

### Tip!

Make common mistakes in your own writing when modelling, so you can also model going back and editing your work. Making it a natural part of the writing process, that we read back and edit what we do. Eventually you can get them to spot your mistakes.



# Nature Story Stones

**Resources:** Medium/large stones, paints or markers

**Application:** Paint simple nature images (e.g. tree, sun, flower, bird). Children can then choose stones and build their own oral or written story.

**Learning outcome: (CLL)** Develop storytelling, vocabulary, sentence structure and imagination.

**Scaffold:** Role model the story telling first orally and then role model writing this into sentences. Support them to write their own by writing key words for them to copy, allow them to use their own knowledge of sounds and sight words to build their own sentences.

**Extend:** Allow them to use their own knowledge of sounds and sight words to build their own sentences, with less modelling. If they are easily able to do this, extend by encouraging them to write an extended sentence by adding in connector words such as 'and'. Model and encourage them to edit their work with punctuation, such as capital letters in the right place, full stops and commas (if they are easily writing sentences)

# My Senses Poem

**Resources:** Note pad, pencil and a walk outside.

**Application:** Use your senses to describe nature, what do you hear, see, smell? Turn these ideas into a group or individual poems.

**Learning Outcome: (CLL)** Enhances descriptive language, phonological awareness and creative writing

**Scaffold:** Role model by saying what you can sense. Encourage them to come up with their own variations. Use discussion to work towards a collective poem and model writing it down. Make mistakes that your child needs to identify as group work.

**Extend:** Encourage your child to be the one to write a second poem, individually or together, with you doing less modelling than before.



# Nature Word Hunt

**Resources:** Word cards (you can write these yourself on paper/card) with key words on (leaf, stick, worm) clipboard

**Application:** Hide the cards in the garden or park, children find them and use them to create a sentence.

**Learning Outcome: (CLL)** Builds vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension

**Scaffold:** Role model a sentence with the key words your child finds, as you read the sentence, leave out connecting words for them to 'fill in' i.e. The caterpillar \_\_\_\_ over the leaf. The worm tunneled \_\_\_\_ the mud.

**Extend:** Encourage your child to write the missing words on cards to add into the key words they have found. You can support them to write the words, by modelling this for them and getting them to copy or encouraging them to do it independently, if they are able. If they are interested still, get them to think of how they can extend a sentence.



**Tip!**

Praise often, but not in such an obvious way that it becomes unnatural.. keep it simple and subtle, "O, I like the way you thought about putting that leaf with that one, I wouldn't have thought of that". Studies indicate consistent positive encouragement, positively influences learning by up to 80%!



# Leaf Sorting and Classification

**Resources:** Leaves from a walk

**Application:** Explore the area and collect as many different looking leaves as possible.

**Learning outcome: (CLL/Maths/UW)** Developing comparison vocabulary, using identifiers and exploring different ways of writing things. Science observation skills.

**Scaffold:** Identify similarities and differences between the leaves, looking at colour, shapes, sizes and patterns. Introduce what a table looks like, creating labels for them to sort them into different categories. Encourage them to count how many leaves are in each and collate this into a written table. You can even introduce tally charts here.

**Extend:** Encourage them to think of as many different categories and then begin to match the leaves to the tree they come from using online references to help identify which trees are from.

# Nature themed Number Hunt

**Resources:** Number cards (hidden in the area)

**Application:** Children find and order numbers to solve simple sums linked to found objects (e.g. "I found 3 sticks and 2 stones, how many in total?" OR "I found card number 1 and I have 1 stick")

**Learning Outcome: (Maths)** Counting, number recognition, addition

**Scaffold:** Encourage them to extend themselves based on their current knowledge. If they are learning numbers 1-10, then simply allow them to match 1 stick, to the number 1 and so on. Generally work on number recognition first, then 1 more, or 1 less and then addition to 5 and so on. Scaffold the learning by gently encouraging them to move onto the next step (Use the progress checkers for reference). Encourage them to say it out loud, as they do it.

**Extend:** Simply extend by encouraging them to move onto the next step. When moving onto the next step, model what you are doing, it keep it as simple as possible, get them to do it until they are confident and then move on for as long as they are interested.



# Bug Hotel Construction

**Resources:** Twigs, toilet rolls, cardboard, string, some bricks or large stones can also be helpful

**Application:** Find a quiet corner and build a bug hotel. Go on a bug hunt to introduce the bugs to the bug hotel. Research the bugs you find and what habitats they prefer

**Learning Outcome: (CLL, Maths, UW)** Builds vocabulary, supports creativity, scientific enquiry and fine motor skills

**Scaffold:** Introduce vocabulary such as *habitat, minibeast, shelter, tunnel, camouflage* and repeat them often. Support thinking through open ended questions, such as "What could we use to make a dark, cosy place for a beetle?". Model techniques such as how to thread the string and layer the twigs to help the structure stay stable. Encourage talk such as "Why did you choose leaves for the tops?"

**Extend:** Extend by encouraging your child to keep a scientific journal where they can draw or write about what they have built. Encourage them to predict who they think will visit the and then encourage them to add to the journal at a later date to see what they can observe. Encourage them count how many bugs and help categorise the different bugs they see using tally charts or written tables.

## Tip!

Creating a commentary of what you are doing, as you go along allows natural conversation to take place and this will develop your child's observational skills, build their vocabulary and allow them to take on the information without being spoken at.





The most important thing to remember is that learning is fun and interesting. Always be ready to move on and be flexible, if an activity isn't working. It doesn't mean you cannot come back to it! We can always come back, try again, adapt and change. Learning is best when it is in context to the child's lived experiences!

*Have Fun!*