

Outdoor learning for early years and elementary: Language Arts

While at school children have access to a huge variety of amazing resources to assist them in learning. However, there are so many objects that you can use in your house and garden to aid their learning. This document provides some ideas of how to use recycled and natural materials in some fun, hands-on language arts activities.

Suitable for ages: pre-school to grade 6

Curriculum links:

Links can be made throughout the language arts curriculum. The language arts curriculum can be accessed here: <https://education.alberta.ca/english-language-arts-k-6/program-of-studies/?searchMode=3>

Instructions

What you will need checklist:

- Natural or recycled materials such as stones, corks, bottle tops, leaves, sticks
- Your favourite book

Activity 1: Letters and phonics games

Suitable for pre-school to grade 2

1. Choose a letter or phoneme to focus on for a day/few days
2. Write letters and graphemes on a variety of natural or recycled materials – such as stones, corks or shells. You can use these individual pieces to spell words or for sound recognition games
3. Go outside and practice writing your chosen letter or grapheme in the mud or snow using sticks. You could also use natural materials found outdoors to create your letter
4. Challenge your children to make a letter using their bodies. They could work individually or in teams



Activity 2: Turn your favourite book into an outdoor adventure

Suitable for pre-school to grade 4

1. Choose your favourite book, or maybe a story you have not read with your children before
2. Turn the story into an adventure by acting out the story in an outdoor space
3. Remember to take the book with you, or you could print the story and display it throughout your garden so you discover it while on your adventure
4. This activity works very well for books centered around an adventure – ‘*We’re going on a bear hunt*’ or ‘*the Gruffalo*’
5. You might wish to hide some objects relevant to the story throughout the journey. For example, if reading ‘*We’re going on a bear hunt*’ you could hide a teddy at the end of the journey.

Activity 3: Write your own story!

Suitable for grades 2-6

1. Go on an adventure to choose a stone
2. Decorate your stone – this is now your magic stone!
3. The magic stone can take you anywhere you wish to go on an adventure. Encourage your child to think creatively and plan out a storyboard. Where will they go? Who else is there? What does this place look like? What does it smell like?
4. Once you have acted out your story and put this onto a story board begin writing!
5. Type the story to develop computer skills, or hand write it and add your own pictures.



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Share with us!

We would love to see photos of your low-waste crafts and activities at home. Feel free to tag us or hashtag #GreenCalgary in your social media posts! Find us here:

