

Outdoor Learning Opportunity: Nature Jewelry: Masking Tape Bracelets and Seed/Nature Necklaces

Key Learning Skills: Creative expression, fine motor skills, awareness of the environment, hand - eye coordination

Suggested Materials: Masking Tape, construction paper or cardboard, hole puncher, yarn, glue, beans, seeds, moss, vegetation such as leaves, flowers, grass, clippings exc.

Resources: "Leaf Man" by Lois Ehlert (you can also find this story read on YouTube)

Directions:

Masking Tape Bracelets:

- Masking Tape bracelets can be made by wrapping a piece of tape around the child's arm, sticky side up.
- Next, the child will explore their backyard area looking for materials that have fallen on to the ground (have a discussion about leaving living things on the plants). For younger kids you can gather up some materials ahead of time. These materials will stick right onto the tape. This is a great time to talk about a plant life cycle and the difference between living and non-living materials. Give specific directions around what materials are for use. Ideas include leaves, grass, flower petals, etc.

Seed/Nature Necklaces:

- Start by precutting shapes out of paper or cardboard for the necklaces, punching holes in each and adding string.
- Let the children go on a nature walk around the yard to collect materials that can be added to their necklaces with glue. Leaves, grass, dirt, small twigs.
- Either the child or caregiver can add glue to the necklace and then begin adding their natural materials to the necklace.

Helpful Hints: For the younger children, we suggest having the necklaces pre made and doing the glue for them. The fun activity will be the nature hunt and adding materials they find to their bracelets or necklaces.

Older children can make their own necklaces either before you head outside or after. Instead of cardstock, think outside the box for necklaces. Cut old folders or cardboard.

Extension:

- Older children can make patterns with the materials
- You can have a discussion about a plant's life cycle and living vs. non-living materials
- Think about the different seasons and what different types of natural materials you would find in the spring vs. winter.
- Make a necklace as a gift for someone else for a holiday!
- Make a "nature art necklace" and an "indoor materials" necklace (made of materials from inside the home) - discuss the differences you notice
- Make people out of leaves found on the ground

What extensions can you think of? Add your own!

- _____

