



Touch Table

There are so many ways to do this activity which means it's never the same twice and can be done so many times with your kids. It all starts with a nature walk to collect items. You are going to want to give your kids clear boundaries on what they can collect and how. For example, they should not pick anything (because it's all living and once you pick it, it is not anymore) but rather should collect things already fallen to the ground. Also giving them a zip lock bag and explaining they can only collect what fits inside the bag is helpful, so they don't try to bring home sticks bigger than they are. Keep in mind that you know where you are going to be collecting items and that you are aware of any potential hazards such as poison ivy, glass, and so forth and you have spoken to your child about not picking anything like glass up.

Once you have your items it's time to explore what you found. Lay them all out on a table or a blanket on the ground and start looking at them all. If you have magnifying lenses use them. Let your child explore freely and then start asking some questions that focus on using their senses and building vocabulary.

Some examples are:

What is the biggest object? The smallest?

Can you find a blue object? Red?

Can you find something hard? Soft? Rough? Smooth? Fuzzy? Shiny? Bumpy? Spiky?

Can you find something from people not from nature? (This would work if you found a bottle cap or other item a person dropped) How do you think it got outside and onto the ground?

Can you find something that grows?

What is your favorite object? Why?

Have your child group the objects into piles that are similar. All the leaves/plants in one pile and all the rocks in another for example. Maybe make a group and see if your child can guess what the objects have in common. (These are classification techniques!) Let them make a group and try to guess what they have in common.

To clean up you can place all the green items back in the bag, then place all the rocks back in the bag... and so on until all the items have been returned to the bag. You can either return them outside or use them for crafts, maybe make a painted rock.