

O – OBSERVATION

- Put some sticky buds into a jar or vase indoors. Growth will be triggered by the warmth, so watch the buds unfurling and fresh green leaves appearing.
- Blow dandelion heads (clocks). Talk about seed dispersal and why and how it happens.
- Look under a stone or log to see what life is there. Draw what you can see and identify it or fill in an insect 'tick' sheet. Replace the stone or log.
- Divide the girls into pairs. Cut out various suitable colours from a paint chart and stick them onto a piece of card. They search the area for natural objects that will match the colours. If the object cannot be picked e.g., bark, the leader can be taken to the object instead.
- Try cloud watching. Identify the type of cloud (cumulus, cirrus). Do any look like animals or shapes?
- Go pond dipping. Identify anything collected.
- Look for bird or animal footprints in damp sand, soft mud, or snow. Make plaster casts of them and identify whose they are.
- Using a piece of foil, make a boat and float it in a bowl of water or local pond or stream. Which boat floats the best? Is there a difference in which shape they are?
- How many different natural shades of green can you find?
- Find the largest specimen that you can of the following:

An oak leaf

A stalk of bracken

A fir cone

A piece of grass

A piece of wood lying on the ground

- Invite a local beekeeper to your meeting. Can you spot the difference between a Queen and worker bee?
- Watch boats on a river; can you tell what they are carrying?
- Try orienteering or geo-caching at a local park or activity centre.
- Learn the "Red sky at night, shepherds delight" rhyme and its meaning, perhaps draw a picture or make a collage. Why not watch a sunset?
- your own idea



U – UNIT

- Go to the local park and feed the ducks!
- Hold a unit picnic outdoors.
- Visit a local place of interest.
- Visit a city farm, nature trail, animal sanctuary, nature reserve etc.
- Join other sections/units at an outdoor event.
- Walk part of the Green Chain Walk, Coastal Path, or local path. Record what you see and find.
- Visit a local wildlife sanctuary, RSPCA, or Blue Cross centre. Learn something about its origin, the work it does, and fund raise to support its future projects.
- Show the girls 3 different leaves e.g. horse chestnut, beech and oak. The girls form a large circle and are numbered 1-3. Put the leaves into the middle of the circle. The leader calls out the name of a leaf. The girls with that number run around the circle, back to their place and into the centre to collect a leaf. Award a counter if correct. Can play either with enough leaves for each girl or just one – so the quickest gains the counter.
- Have an 'insect' theme meeting.
- Have a theme meeting around 'Jack and the beanstalk'. Plant a bean between some kitchen roll, curled up inside a jam jar.
- Try some maypole or country dancing.
- 'Blessing the waters' is a ceremony that has taken place at Whitstable in Kent for over 100 years. Make a collage of fish, crabs, lobsters, shells etc.
- Holi is a famous and very popular Hindu spring festival in Northern India. It celebrates the arrival of spring flowers and when the main crops are almost ready for the spring harvest. Have a Holi meeting.
- Grow potatoes in a black sack or strawberries in pots and use to make potato salad or strawberry smoothie.
- your own idea



T – THE ENVIRONMENT

- Hold a meeting based on “the environment”. Discuss the opportunities that exist for recycling at home and at the unit meeting. Think about how the girls can play their part in looking after the environment e.g., not leaving lights on, turning off taps etc.
- Follow a trail laid with crushed eggshells, flour, or dried milk powder. These things are all environmentally friendly.
- Take part in a “rubbish clean up” to tidy a riverbank or patch of land.
- Make a wormy.
- Try as many forms of transport as possible that don't use petrol or diesel fuel e.g. walking, roller skating, cycling. Talk about the effect of fossil fuels on the environment.
- Make a poster (individually or as a unit) showing how you can recycle, save water when brushing teeth and save energy by turning lights off when leaving a room.
- Challenge another Patrol to do some fun challenges using no energy from electricity, fuels, or other petrochemicals. Things to try could include heating a cup of water, friction powered toys or making a light to read by.
- Hold an Earth Hour meeting. What activities could you do for one hour in the dark.
- Grow a herb garden in an area easy to maintain. Donate herbs to food banks or sell them for a cause.
- your own idea



A – ACTION

- Find out about the Countryside Code. Draw a poster showing how to behave in the countryside. Devise a new rule.
- Make a weather chart and record the weather for a week.
- Learn about the work of the RSPB or Wildlife Trusts. Visit one of their reserves or raise some money to support their work.
- Collect tree seeds such as acorns, chestnuts. Plant them and watch them grow. When large enough transplant them to an open space. Keep watch as the tree grows.
- Join the Woodland Trust and become a nature detective.
- Take part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch.
- your own idea



N – NATURAL WORLD

- Make and dress a doll from sticks. Lash two sticks into a cross for the body and arms, then decorate with fabric scraps for clothes and wool for hair, belts etc.
- Make a decoration out of natural materials.
- Make a miniature flower arrangement in a bottle top.
- If you have an area with lots of twigs, leaves etc that can be collected, ask the girls (in pairs or individually) to build a house for a fairy. How about some furniture? This could either be done outside or the nature bits could be brought inside.
- How many different natural things can you fit into a matchbox?
- Make a daisy chain.
- Try growing vegetable tops. Slice 1cm from the top of the carrots, swedes, turnips, beetroots, or parsnips. Trim off any existing leaves and stand the slices in a tray on the windowsill in just enough water to cover the bottom of the tray. The girls can arrange the tops in a tray and add the water when they get home. The tray could be brought back to the meeting in the subsequent weeks to compare the growths.
- Try stick weaving. Use a forked stick and wind wool or string in a zig zag from one side to another. Weave leaves and winged seeds into this.
- Collect fresh leaves or flowers. Mount onto card and laminate or cover with sticky-backed plastic. You can make bookmarks, coasters, or place mats.
- Balance on a tree stump or log.
- Collect natural items and play 'Kim's Game'. Girls look at the items and try to remember them. The leader removes one item whilst the girls have their eyes closed. Girl then calls out the item missing.
- Grow sunflowers – award a prize to the tallest. Save the seeds and use to feed birds.
- Try making leaf prints with a wax crayon.
- your own idea



A –ACTIVITIES

- Play some parachute games.
- Spend time in a playground having fun.
- Go outside and play with bubbles.
- Fly a kite or play with a frisbee.
- Wear wellies – walk through snow, mud or water.
- Divide the girls into groups. Ask them to go outside to collect several items. Each group must hold hands in a chain throughout and not let go! The girls on the ends can collect the items and put them into a bag. This will hopefully encourage some co-operation. You can repeat the activity with different girls on the ends.
- Lay or follow a trail using woodcraft signs.
- The girls take it in turns to balance a fir cone on 2 sticks and walk from the start to the finish (like an egg and spoon race).
- Make a grass head.
- Collect different leaves and make a leaf collage e.g., a face, fish tank, tree.
- Visit a beach and see what can be found in rock pools at low tide.
- Cook dampers or sausages on sticks over an open fire. Try chocolate bananas wrapped in foil and cooked in the embers.
- Create a picture map of the area near your meeting place. Use photos, drawings, rubbings, leaves etc.
- Go sledging in the winter or grass sledging in the summer.
- Have an Easter egg hunt or roll eggs down a hill.
- Print out a suitable nature poem or saying and decorate around the edge with drawings or pictures e.g., March brings breezes sharp and chill, shakes the dancing daffodil – or – ‘Please to remember the fifth of November’ etc.
- Fingerprint insects – using ink pads, put fingerprints onto a piece of card. Add wings, feet etc with pens to turn your fingerprints into beetles, ladybirds, caterpillars, butterflies etc.
- Try a water activity that is new to you e.g., pooh-sticks, pond dipping, scuba diving or another water sport.
- Go on a local water walk e.g., around a lake, pier, canal, along the beach, or maybe even a welly walk in the rain.
- your own idea



B – BE PREPARED

- Identify the 8 points of the compass. Play a game using these.
- Practice running at Scout's pace for ten minutes. Measure how far you travel. Compare it with the distance you travel if you run five minutes and walk five minutes. How do you feel at the end of each? Now use to deliver a message.
- Discuss suitable clothing and footwear to wear to go out in different weathers.
- Test well known weather sayings e.g., red sky at night
- Go for a walk and make a journey stick to tell the story of the journey to others. Tie objects and wool of different colours to the stick to represent different experiences, feelings or parts of the journey.
- Know the items in a simple first aid kit to use outdoors and learn how to treat grazes and stings.
- Learn to recognise the symbols used on an Ordnance Survey map e.g. church, post office, and railway. Make a map of where you live using these symbols.
- Cook on a fire without utensils.
- Learn 5 tracking signs and play a game using them or lay or follow a tracking sign trail.
- your own idea



O – ORGANISE

- Hold a mini-Olympics.
- Have a silly sports day perhaps with another unit – throw the bean bag through a hoop, throw 3 balls into a bucket, skip backwards, who can throw a wellie the furthest, do a standing jump with both feet together – how far can you jump?
- Do a tree survey of a local park to show type of tree, how many, size. Can you estimate their age/height?
- Hold a snail race, which vegetation entices the snails to move, how far do they move in a set time – remember to put them back where they were found.
- Hold a campfire and learn some new songs.
- Hold a sponsored walk and give the money raised to a wildlife charity.
- your own idea



U – UNIQUE OR UNUSUAL

- A Sensory walk: go for a short walk and ask the girls to concentrate on their senses. Can they feel the wind? Is it warm or cool? What sounds can they hear? What can they smell? Feel some of the surfaces around them e.g., a brick wall or tree bark. Look at the sky. What shapes are the clouds? What colour is the sky? Can you see anything around you that is unusual, strange, or funny?
- Look at a variety of unusual fruits and / or vegetables.
- Learn 2 or 3 different constellations by sticking either white dots or stars onto black card in the correct positions. Look at stars on a clear night or visit a planetarium.
- Go on a 'Tick not pick' walk. Have a list of things to tick off when spotted.
- At dusk join a bat watch.
- Visit somewhere unusual e.g., sewage works.
- Sock Walk – Pull on an unmatched sock over a shoe and go for a walk through a field. Count the varieties of seeds collected, look at how they attach to the sock and decide which method is most efficient. You can plant the seeds and sock as one or pick off the seeds to plant if you want.
- One of a kind – Give each girl a particular kind of leaf or cone. Tell them to examine it so carefully they would be able to pick it out of a whole pile. During the next five minutes, have the girls look at their leaf, feel it, hold it at different angles, etc. Then put all the objects together – with a few others no one has explored – and have them find theirs. It's one of a kind! Afterward, ask the girls in the unit to share with the others what makes each of them unique.
- Sound Maps – Sit quietly in a circle with eyes closed. Use blindfolds if girls are young to increase concentration. Focus on the sounds around you. What sound is farthest away? The closest? What sound was the most pleasant? The most irritating? The softest? The loudest?
- your own idea



T – THOUGHTFUL

- Put out some food on a bird table or feeder. List the birds that come to visit.
- Plant bulbs in the autumn. These could be for the girls to keep or to give away to e.g., people in the local old people's home.
- Find an area which needs smartening up (inside or outside), make a plan, get permission and do it.
- Make a wildlife garden in an unused patch of earth. Use plants to encourage butterflies, bees, and birds. Don't forget decaying wood for insects and minibeasts.
- Look through your shelves and cupboards and find some unwanted toys and / or books to donate to your local charity shop.
- your own idea

