

STEM starts now

Nature Exploration

Recommended Age: 31–36 Months

STEM concepts: Science (nature the senses), Technology (taking photos), Math (counting)

Materials: A device to take pictures (could be a phone, tablet, or camera)

What to do: Go on a nature walk with your child! Walk around your neighborhood or a local nature trail. Encourage her to use her five senses when exploring: sight, touch, smell, hear, and taste (although taste might not want to be encouraged). Have her pick up pine cones, branches, and leaves and describe them to you. Are they hard or soft? Pointy or round?

As you explore, have your child take pictures of what he finds. If he has never taken a picture before, walk him through the steps of pointing the camera at the object and pressing the capture button. Photographs are a great way to document exploration and learning, especially if your child can not write yet!

Language and Communication: Ask questions during your walk to encourage observation, such as “What do you hear?”, “What do you see?”, “What do you smell?”, and “How does that leaf feel?”. Asking questions like these will familiarize her with using senses to make scientific observations.

Expand the Activity: Create a scavenger hunt out of your nature walk by trying to find as many of one object as possible! At the end of the nature walk, you can print out all the pictures taken and create a collage of the things your child found. He can draw or talk to someone about his adventure as well.

