



Activity Idea

Activity	Comparison
Main Focus	Sorting and classifying with nature

Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Access to the outdoors ➤ Containers for collecting natural materials ➤ A space or area for children to sort items
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Activity Outline	<p>Provide the children with containers and ask them to go into the garden or outdoor area and collect a range of natural items such as: pine cones, twigs, leaves and stones.</p> <p>Find a place where children can empty all of the items they have collected and encourage them to work together to put what they have found into groups of things that are the same.</p> <p>Engage children in meaningful conversation as they sort and classify, finding out their reasoning behind why they are grouping things together. Perhaps it is colour, shape, size or properties such as being smooth or pointy.</p> <p>Comment and provide rich descriptive language as you problem-solve with the children. Are there any items which don't fit into any category and why?</p> <p>Once children have sorted the items into groups talk about what they notice about the groups. Which has the most, which has the least and how do they know? Perhaps they can visually predict which has more from experience or perhaps they think one group has more because the items in that group are larger and take up more space. Don't correct children, encourage them to test out their theories by lining the items up or counting them to see which group does actually have more.</p>
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Extension Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide a range of different shaped and sized containers and pose additional problems to solve such as: 'I wonder if we can fit all of the stones we have found into this egg cup?' or 'if we line up all of the stones I wonder how far they would go?' Note children's response to your challenge, listen to their conversations and discuss with them the reasoning behind their predictions. Don't forget to always let children carry out the task so they can prove or disprove their theory. ✓ Let children create something with their found items. Do they include pattern, size and order into their creations?
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