



Inclusive library event activity ideas from RNIB

Activity 1: Nature art

Description: A piece of art created entirely or partially from objects you might find in a garden.

These could include:

- stones, pebbles, twigs or other 'hard' objects
- grass, leaves, flowers or other 'soft' objects

Create a piece of art that is meaningful to the child/children, asking them to focus on the properties of each item, comparing textures and exploring differences.

If the activity involves going outside to collect materials, ensure that every child is supported to do this in a safe way.

To personalise this session to children with vision impairment, include items with different textures, scents and high contrast colours.

Encourage children to talk about their art and why they created it.

Aims:

- Concept and language development: Children explore the different properties of natural items, describe them using new vocabulary and explain their choices when creating a piece of art.
- Sensory exploration: Children use a range of senses to learn about the properties of natural items and how they can be used in different ways.

Important note: Be wary of choking hazards and potential allergens.



Activity 2: Write a nature-inspired story

Description: write or tell a story inspired by nature.

Encourage the development of storytelling skills with one of the following challenges (or use your own):

- Describe a magical woodland using all five senses.
- Find an object from the garden and tell the story of its life.
- Write a story that involves at least two of the following:
 - a magnifying glass
 - an oak tree
 - a beehive
 - a bear
 - a kingfisher
 - a spider

Always make sure children feel safe to ask if they don't understand any new or unusual concepts.

Once everyone has finished, encourage children to share the stories with the group.

Aims:

- Imagination: Children are encouraged to imagine new places and experiences.
- Literacy and communication: Children develop vocabulary and communication skills when describing new and unusual scenarios.

Activity 3: Sensory Treasure Hunt

Description: Take the children on a walk and encourage them to search for items that appeal to the five senses.

Whether the activity takes place indoors or outdoors, ensure each child has the appropriate support to participate fully and safely.

Encourage independent discovery by giving children open-ended instructions such as:

Find something that:

- Is green
- Feels soft or hard
- Makes a noise
- Can be eaten
- Smells horrible

Draw attention to points of interest with description as you walk. Allow children to explore objects with their hands if appropriate. Take some time together to investigate each item in the collection using different senses, asking questions such as:

- What does it look like?
- Can it make a sound?
- How does it feel?
- What does the smell remind you of?
- If you could eat it, what might it taste like?

Encourage children to explore and describe similarities and differences and to relate items to their own experiences as well as imagined ones.

Aims:

- Sensory exploration: Children use a range of senses to identify and explore objects.
- Mobility and independence: Children develop confidence when exploring new environments.
- Communication: Children develop their language skills when describing objects and scenes.

4. Sensory Story Walk

Description: Create a living story, involving movement and exploration of the different properties of natural objects found in the garden.

The activity suits an outdoor space but if none is available/accessible, plan a route around the library, placing different items at key locations. Ensure all children are supported appropriately and can access all parts of the walk safely.

Objects to use on the story walk might include:

- Flowers in bloom (or freshly picked if indoors)
- Leaves – perhaps at various stages of life
- Stones/pebbles/gravel
- A patch of freshly turned earth (or a pot of soil if indoors)
- A locked gate/door
- Signs of animal life (pawprints/scraps of faux fur) or an audio recording of animal sounds
- Windchimes
- Freshly cut grass
- Edible berries

Before the walk, ask children to choose (or provide them with) a theme for a story (pirate adventure, space exploration, time travel and so on). Explain that they will be creating a living story which changes and develops with each new object they encounter on their walk. The children must work together to decide on the best, most interesting way to incorporate each object into the story.

Aims:

- Sensory exploration: Children use a range of senses to identify and explore objects.
- Mobility and independence: Children develop confidence when exploring new environments.
- Communication: Children develop their language skills when describing objects and scenes.

Important note: Be wary of choking hazards and potential allergens.