



6-10 YEAR-OLDS

**SUNNY
IDEAS
FOR A
RAINY
DAY 2**

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How To Use These Books

There is a *Sunny Ideas for a Rainy (or any other) Day* for each of these age groups: 2-6, 6-10, and 10-14. AND, there are multiple installments so that you can add a new age group or new activities to your collection. This is installment 2.

What will you get?

- ♥ A few general developmental attributes of a typically developing child for each age year
- A new activity for each age group (feel free to mix and match)
- Instructions for each activity and a list of materials (supplies are easy to find)
- A parent key for:
 - Prep/set up time (1- 4 clocks) 
 - Messy /clean up (1- 4 sponges) 
 - Level of supervision (green, yellow, red)   
 - Why do this activity (besides fun, of course) ?
 - Ideas for extending or adding on +
- Templates for activities when needed
- A list of resources for further reading

Get Out! Yes, Even in the Rain

You may have noticed that your child, the one who used to beg to go outside, is spending more and more time indoors. “Screens” have a good deal to do with it.

As our children become more interested in and skilled at electronic media, they can be seduced into disconnecting from their bodies and from their relationship to the natural world. Getting older often means a busier afterschool schedule with homework and activities like lessons, sports, and other responsibilities. These factors can contribute to a slow decline of interest in the outdoors.

I’m not bashing screens, they are a fact of our lives and quite useful, but I *am* advocating for more time in the 3D world of our senses. Spending time in nature and with natural objects is by far the best way to do this.

We are creatures that live in our bodies- seems obvious, I know. But we do forget. Our bodies are our source of experience and the more time we spend finely tuning them to be receptive, the more connected we become to ourselves and to each other.

An added benefit to spending time in nature is that listening to the sounds, observing the colors, smelling the aromas and feeling the textures can help children, and adults, relax. As we spend more and more time in nature, our receptivity increases, and this can affect us in ways we might not expect, like seeing beauty in the most common things.

Unlike the Wicked Witch of the West, we won’t melt in the rain. One cherished family memory is one I share with my daughter. While walking outside we got caught in one of those downpours that soaks right through clothes in mere seconds. Rather than run for cover, we decided to jump in puddles singing the Mexican Hat Dance. My daughter still talks about it, I don’t think we ever laughed so hard. We were soaked and incredibly happy. That was ten years ago.

It isn’t necessary to know anything about nature in order to investigate your natural surroundings, be it a yard, the park, one tree, or a patch of grass. Encouraging your child to make discoveries and exploring with him or her is a wonderful way to reaffirm your [parent/child connection](#). And, there’s so much you’ll learn about the natural world too.

Enjoy,

Judy

Six - Seven

- ♥ Can learn 20 new words per day!
- ♥ Teeth are changing continuously.
- ♥ Industrious, enthusiastic, receptive, love surprises.
- ♥ Still asks questions for reassurance from adult.
- ♥ Willing to ask open-ended questions.
- ♥ The process of discovery is more important than the outcome.
- ♥ Can generate and respond to Who, What, Where, When & Why questions.
- ♥ They can be active in reading and writing stories.
- ♥ Friendships are not yet based on appreciating the qualities of another.
- ♥ Can follow 3 step directions in sequence.
- ♥ Easily upset when there are changes in plans.
- ♥ It's easier to learn rules for a game, but change them to win, or suit needs – competitive.



Activity: Pebbles and a Map



You'll need:

Part A

1. A jar filled $\frac{1}{2}$ way with water
2. About 20 very small stones or pebbles (use natural ones you've gathered on walk with your child)
3. A piece of paper & writing utensil

Part B

1. Paper
2. Drawing utensils: crayons, markers, colored pencils

What to do:

Part A: Pebble practice

1. Tell your child you want to practice listening for small sounds.
2. Have him stand about 10 feet away from you and turn your back away from him so you can't see.
3. Ask him to drop 1 pebble at a time into the jar ½ filled with water.
4. Mark on the paper every time you hear the sound of one.
5. Switch.

Part B: Making a map

1. If it's not raining, do this outside or on a porch. Otherwise do it inside.
2. Put an X in the middle of your paper that represents you.
3. For 5 minutes, you and your child will listen for sounds in your environment. When you hear one, indicate on the paper/map where you hear it in relation to you (x) and make a quick drawing to represent it, e.g. fan, bird, airplane, music, child crying etc.

? This is a good age to introduce mapping skills in simple form. This is an experiential way to learn about making a visual representation of where things are located in relationship to one another.

? In this activity you are practicing auditory awareness and tuning into your environment.

? Staying quiet with wide but sustained attention develops concentration skills. It has some of the benefits of meditation.

- + Try doing this in different spots (either outside or in) and compare maps.
- + If you did it inside, and enjoyed it, try doing it outside on a good weather day.
- + Use it on family trips, waiting in line, in new locations.

Seven - Eight

- ♥ Can learn 20 new words per day!
- ♥ Fidgety. Need physical activity.
- ♥ Can plan the steps to complete a project.
- ♥ Being read to is enjoyable: books beyond their reading level.
- ♥ Defines a friend as someone who is like them in some way and shares similar interests.
- ♥ Can follow complex 3 to 4 step directions.
- ♥ Serious and can be moody, intense, hypersensitive, & self conscious – doesn't like making mistakes.
- ♥ May imitate peers to feel like part of the group, but prefers to work alone to completion.
- ♥ Interested in the world around them, curious, inventive.



Activity: Get Cracking



What's inside the rock?

You'll need:

1. Rocks
2. Safety Goggles
3. Hammer or Rock Pick
4. An Old Sock
5. A very hard (like concrete) surface – basement floor, patio, or use padding to protect your floor.

What to do:

1. No matter what the weather, you can gather rocks with your child, though it's probably more fun on a sunny day. Look for rocks that seem mysterious. You can save cracking them open for a rainy day.
2. It's optional to wash the rocks, though interesting to observe color changes.
3. Place a rock inside the sock. Put on goggles.
4. Place rock on very hard surface (make sure to protect the floor if it's wood or porcelain tile)
5. Hit the rock with the hammer.
6. Observe what's inside – you might get lucky and find crystals. Ask your child to use as many different ways as she can to describe what is inside.

? This is all about curiosity and discovery and – smashing in controlled settings is safe and exhilarating. There's hand/eye skill and strength development involved too.

? Describing the rocks contributes to language skills. Your child's writing teacher will love you for encouraging descriptive language.

+ Make a Rock Book: Take pictures of the rock before and after. Describe the inside of the rock and write captions for the pictures, including where you found it.

+ Research the type of rock you might have based on the pictures and your observations.

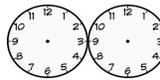
+ Start a collection: glue rocks, one each to an index card. Add to the collection when you travel.

Eight - Nine

- ♥ Can learn 20 new words per day!
- ♥ Adjusts better to change.
- ♥ Enjoys humor, cooperation and sociability while working.
- ♥ Industrious, in a hurry, tends to underestimate size of projects.
- ♥ Needs a good deal of physical activity, but tires easily, needs short breaks.
- ♥ Tends to exaggerate.
- ♥ Identifies a best friend, having (at least) one is very important at this age.
- ♥ Recognizes what characterizes a “good” friend.
- ♥ More balanced when coping with frustration and failure.
- ♥ Recognizes mixtures and blends of feelings.
- ♥ Can work cooperatively toward a shared goal.



Activity: Smell It Like It Is
Make your own Perfume/Cologne



You'll need:

1. Bowls
2. Measuring cup
3. Water
4. Coffee filters
5. A variety of natural ingredients with strong aroma like: vanilla extract, cloves, cinnamon, rosemary, pine needle, oregano, cloves, orange peel, lemon peel, flowers, basil, mint, cardamom, anise, etc.
6. Index cards
7. Optional - mortar and pestle

What to do:

1. Have fun gathering the natural ingredients. Weather permitting; gather flowers, leaves, etc., which have pleasing or interesting smells from outside. Use kitchen ingredients too.
2. Put one cup of water in a bowl.
3. Smell all the ingredients and decide which ones you'd like to combine – I advise starting with 3.
4. You can pulverize them with a mortar and pestle if you'd like.
5. You can make several variations in different bowls of water.
6. Keep track of what you put in each bowl on the index cards.
7. Let the mixture sit overnight. Make some guesses about whether you will like the final smell.
8. Pour through the coffee filter. Smell the water and if you like it – which smell is the strongest. It's now perfume for you to use.
9. Or, add more ingredients, if necessary and repeat steps 5 & 6.

? This is a great way to engage in scientific inquiry and experimentation.

? A mortar and pestle is a wonderful tool to learn how to use. Some children love the physical effort and satisfaction from grinding things up by hand. It takes quite a bit of strength and perseverance to use this tool.

+ Buy small, inexpensive bottles and give the 'perfume' as gifts.

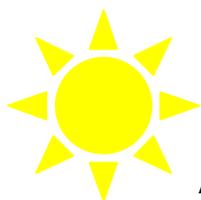
+ Use a visit to the grocery store as an opportunity to smell the wide variety of fruits and vegetables in the produce section. You might get ideas for more perfumes.

+ See if you can guess what's in the bowls without looking at the cards.

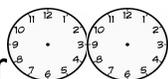
✦ Go on a trip to a spice shop or to a grocery store that caters to a different culture to look for interesting smells.

Nine – Ten

- ♥ Looks for explanations of how things work, why things happen the way they do.
- ♥ Issues of fairness and justice become important and interesting.
- ♥ Complains about aches and pains.
- ♥ Can be critical of self and others, anxious and easily worried.
- ♥ Wants to “make deals” with adults and peers.
- ♥ Can manage two concepts simultaneously.
- ♥ Keeping it light, laughing, and good-natured humor go a long way.
- ♥ Increased sense of truthfulness and trustworthiness.
- ♥ Often outspoken and critical of adults, although still dependent on adult approval.
- ♥ Values the process and the outcome.



Activity: Leaf Preserver



While most children of this age will have had their fill of Autumn-themed activities, this one is great because it results in a beautiful decoration and involves using an iron!

You'll need:

1. Leaves
2. Wax paper
3. Plastic wrap
4. An iron
5. Newspaper- about 24 pieces

6. Rolling pin
7. Board
8. Scissors

What to do:

1. On a nice day go for a short walk and pick some leaves that strike you as particularly colorful, shapely and worth preserving.
2. Ask your child to describe the attributes that most appeal to him. Keep asking for more detail. Either save the leaves covered in water in a closed plastic container until another day, or do the following:
3. Set your iron on medium to heat up while you place about 12 pieces of newspaper on the board.
4. Place one piece of waxed paper on the newspaper.
5. Choose one leaf. Remove the stem.
6. Put the leaf on the waxed paper and cover with another piece.
7. Iron the newspaper over the leaf for about 10 seconds.
8. Peel back the pieces of wax paper and remove the leaf. Check to be sure the leaf is waxy on both sides.
9. Repeat if necessary.

Now put a new piece of waxed paper on the newspaper and put your leaf on top.

Put a piece of plastic scrap on top of the leaf making it as smooth as possible (you can use the rolling pin to help).

Put more newspaper on top and then iron, slowly with even pressure.

Peel off the newspaper. Cut around the edges, let dry and you can put it in your window. Notice what happens when the light shines through it.

? Activities that involve the senses lend themselves to descriptive words and this vocabulary is great for writing assignments and poetry.

? The responsibility of using an iron (you'll be there) and the skill involved (managing it safely, using the correct amount of pressure and glide) may take some practice.

- + Use indoor plant leaves, or flowers.
- + Identify the leaf and add a label to step #10.
- + Make a series.

Additional Resources

(See *Sunny Ideas For A Rainy Day* for more)

Websites for Child Development

<http://www.education.com/reference/article/school-age-children-six-ten/>

<http://www.healthychildren.org>

Resources and articles for ages 5-12

<http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>

Developmental assets: what kids need to succeed

Websites for Nature:

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/>

<http://www.backyardbiology.net>

Good Books for Parents to Read

[Listening to Nature: How to Deepen Your Awareness of Nature](#) by Joseph Bharat Cornell and John Hendrickson

[Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder](#) by Richard Louv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The information in this book is culled from years of experience in the classroom, from readings (see Resources), attending conferences and working in collaboration with inventive, interesting and extraordinary teachers. I cannot name them all, but some contributed so much to my understanding of children, child development, teaching and creating curriculum that I must name them.

So thank you to:

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Marcia Zimmerman, who thought up the original “Block Recipes” (See *Sunny Ideas* for 2-6 year-olds) and whose compelling and inventive activities supported the learning of so many Pre-K and Kindergarten students.

Chris Mutolo, whose passion for reaching every child and whose skills at breaking down complicated procedures into small steps helped me do the same.

Unfortunately, I can’t identify where all of the activities in this book come from. I’m guessing that it was a teacher, one of my sisters, or a camp counselor that showed me some of them.

Thank you,

Judy