



## Handout 3

### Life Science Ideas

Life science involves encouraging young children to investigate the characteristics of living things

#### Science Tip

Focused science-related topics of study/projects let children achieve deeper understandings of science concepts than do isolated activities.

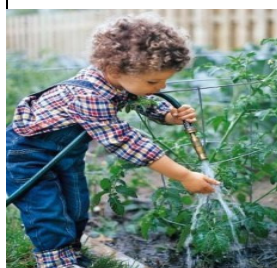


#### Ideas for Infants



- ❖ When you take infants out in nature – point out specific nature sounds (example dog barking, crow cawing, etc.).
- ❖ Introduce infants to a variety of textures in nature; touch the grass, pinecones, & soft flower petals.
- ❖ Walk through a flower garden and highlight the different colors and smells of the flowers.
- ❖ Watch fish swimming in an aquarium together and point out their colors and movements.
- ❖ Point out and label the infant's body parts – “Where's your nose?” “Where are your eyes?” Point out animal parts too and label them.

#### Ideas for Toddlers



- ❖ Involve toddlers in spraying outside plants with water.
- ❖ Select a tree near the playground and observe it daily; discuss the changes that happen to the tree.
- ❖ Try tasting different types of fruits and vegetables; compare them (color, texture, size, flavor, etc.)
- ❖ Collect and observe some tadpoles.
- ❖ Imitate the sounds and movements of different types of animals.
- ❖ Help set up a birdfeeder and observe the different types of birds that visit.
- ❖ Make footprints in snow or mud; look for animal tracks outside.

#### Ideas for Preschoolers



- ❖ Do an investigation about insects and have the preschoolers observe live insects (example: have a class ant farm, catch fireflies, visit a butterfly garden/house, obtain crickets at a local pet shop, raise caterpillars to watch them change into butterflies, etc.)
- ❖ Talk about seeds. Bring in different seeds to sort. Bring in a sunflower and tweezers; let children pick the seeds out of the sunflower with tweezers. Put wet cotton balls in a Styrofoam cup and sprinkle with grass seed (put plastic wrap tightly over the top and put on a sunny windowsill); when the grass grows tall have the children draw a face on the cup and remove the plastic wrap.

**Be mindful of safety for young children. They often love to explore nature with hands, eyes, AND mouths. Young children also need to learn how to safely handle living creatures.**

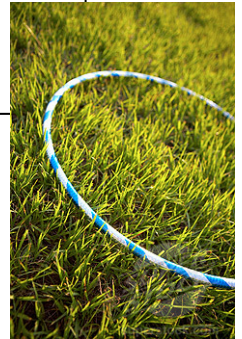


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### Life Science Ideas

#### Hula Hoop Observations

Place a large hula hoop on the ground and have the children lie on their stomachs all around the outsides of the hula hoop (facing inward). Have them say what they are observing inside the hula hoop and record their observations (weeds, acorn, grasshopper, candy wrapper, etc.).



#### Nature Scavenger Hunt

List nature words on index cards (from child's environment) and put them in a bag. Have children select a card from the bag and find something outside in nature that matches the card (example: ant, dandelion going to seed, daisy, ladybug, pine tree, etc.).



#### Celery and Food Coloring

- A. You will need 2 celery stalks, 2 glasses, food coloring, and water.
- B. 1) Carefully trim the end of each stalk of celery 2) Fill the 2 glasses with water and add a couple drops of food coloring to each glass (different color in each glass) 3) Put one celery stalk into each glass of colored water and 4) Observe how the water will travel up the inside (veins) of the celery and the stalk will change to the same color as the water it was in. Note: Carnations can also be used for this activity.

#### Investigating & Sorting Seeds

