

Let's go on a Sense-ational nature walk!

Section: Rainbows and Brownies

Time needed: 30 minutes to two hours

Equipment needed

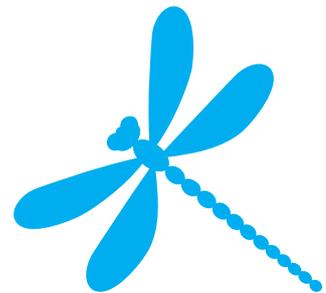
- Marbles – one each
- Plain paper and pens
- Bags or envelopes
- Coloured objects or cards (or download a [colour sheet](#))



Nature connection means feeling part of the natural world, loving nature and caring for the environment. Connecting to nature makes us happier and healthier and inspires us to take action to help save our planet.

Use the ideas below to help your unit connect with nature through the five pathways, developed by the University of Derby¹:

- Using our **senses** to experience nature.
- Noticing and welcoming the **emotions** which nature inspires.
- Appreciating the **beauty** of the natural world.
- Celebrating and sharing the **meaning** we find in nature.
- **Compassion** in helping and caring for nature.



Listening marbles – senses

The aim of this session is for the girls to listen, really listen, and start to hear the sounds of nature. There will be many sounds, possibly of the other groups having fun, planes, and cars so they will need to concentrate to hear past that.

- Get the children to sit down in a large circle on a rug or tarp.
- Give each child a 'listening marble', this will help them focus. You may want to tell them that this is a magical marble which makes their ears work better and whilst they hold it, they cannot make a sound themselves.
- When every child is sitting comfortably and has their marble, they will need to be very quiet and not make any sounds themselves.

¹ The Nature Connection Handbook, University of Derby [the-nature-connection-handbook.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.wordpress.com/the-nature-connection-handbook.pdf)

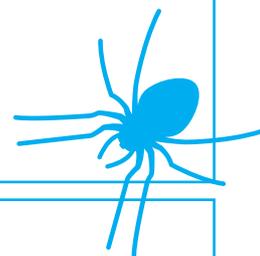
- Ask them to hold the marble in their hand, close their eyes, switch off their voices and just listen. Try and get them to do this for 30 seconds for the first go.
- Tell them to open their eyes, ask them what they heard.
- Try it again, but ask the children to ignore the obvious sounds – what else can they hear? Can they hear birds singing, the wind in the trees, the cricket chirping, the squirrels scuttling? Challenge them to listen for a whole minute.
- For the last go ask the children to listen specifically for bird song or chatter, can they hear different birds, can they pick up any conversations? How different would the bird song/chatter be in different seasons?

Emotional scavenger hunt – emotions

- Print out the last page of this pack and cut it up into individual cards.
- Split the group into smaller teams – these could be sixes, or smaller, depending on the group dynamics. Hand a card to each small group, ask them to discuss among themselves what they think it means, and then go and find something in nature that represents this emotion, e.g. a tree, plant, bird or bug. Younger children may need help from an adult or young leader to interpret the card. Remember that the emotions might be complicated – for example, ‘this tree makes me feel awestruck, so the idea of someone cutting it down makes me feel angry or sad.’
- Give each group a few minutes to find something in nature to match their card, then either give them another card or ask them to swap with another group.
- At the end of the activity reassemble the group and ask them to feed back on what they found. Remember that there is no right or wrong answer here – one group may decide that a slug is ‘yuck’, while another may think it’s beautiful! Make sure all the girls feel supported by the group, whatever their emotional response may be.

Secret colours of nature – beauty

- The aim of this session is to get the children to really look to spot the different colours of nature.
- Prepare in advance a bag or envelope for each group containing seven coloured objects or cards.²
- Take one colour out and work together to find that colour. It must be a natural colour and not the colour of their friend’s coat or bag. Look small, large, high and low to find the match.
- Once they have found the colour put the card or object back and get the next one out.
- Continue this process till you have found all seven colours.
- Gather the children round and ask them, did they find all the colours and if not why? Would some be easier to find in different seasons?



Take it further:

- Extend this activity by looking for shades on a paint colour card, or girls can use all their senses in an outdoor scavenger hunt, using a pack of Go Find It cards: [gofindit card game \(sensorytrust.org.uk\)](http://gofinditcardgame(sensorytrust.org.uk))

² [Sensing the world \(rspb.org.uk\)](http://Sensing the world (rspb.org.uk))

Nature poem – meaning



- Now that you have spent some time looking and listening it's time to write a poem.
- Spend a few minutes looking around. What can you see? Birds, insects, trees? What can you hear? Chattering, birds' song, bees buzzing or the wind in the trees?
- Work with a partner or by yourself. Choose a word that sums up your day and write it vertically down the left-hand side of your page.
- Use each letter in turn to write a word or short statement about that thing, to create an acrostic poem, like the examples below or be inspired by the book *Lost Spells* by [Robert Macfarlane](#)

Dazzling yellow
And white petals
I love daisies
Smiling in the sun.
You do?

Tremendously tall
Red, yellow, brown
leaves
Every autumn they fall.
Exciting!

Red-breasted robin
On the fence
Brings joy
Into my life
No one can be sad!

Grow your own – compassion

Now that you have taken some time to connect with nature, why not undertake a project to help restore or create your own little patch of wild? Here are some ideas:

- Grow your own flowers: [How to Grow Sunflowers \(rspb.org.uk\)](#) or [Grow wildlife-friendly flowers \(rspb.org.uk\)](#)
- Build a bug hotel: [Build a minibeast hotel \(rspb.org.uk\)](#)
- Create a mini pond: [How to create a mini pond | The Wildlife Trusts](#)



Please take a few minutes to tell us how you got on with this challenge: <https://forms.office.com/e/w49a9b2w39>



Stay connected

Keep up to date with the latest thinking, news, events, and information from the RSPB in your local community.



Head Office

RSPB The Lodge
Potton Road
Sandy
SG19 2DL



Working in partnership

Chair of Council: Kevin Cox **President:** Dr Amir Khan **Chief Executive:** Becky Speight
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Emotions scavenger hunt cards

Something that makes you feel: EXCITED	Something that makes you feel: CURIOUS	Something that makes you feel: SILLY
Something that makes you feel: SAD	Something that makes you feel: FRUSTRATED	Something that makes you feel: SCARED
Something that makes you feel: HAPPY	Something that makes you feel: AWESTRUCK	Something that makes you feel: SURPRISED
Something that makes you feel: YUCK!	Something that makes you feel: ANGRY	Something that makes you feel: LIKE DANCING

Don't forget:

To protect nature, only pick up fallen items that you find on the ground. Don't pull things off living plants or trees. To protect yourself, remember not to touch rubbish or dog mess. Have a look for any nettles or brambles in the area, and make sure everyone knows what these look like before you start.