

# Science and Art: Fun with Nature Objects

This fun, simple activity helps to sharpen your little one's observation skills, helping them form questions, and in turn leading to discovery and self-directed, meaningful learning.

Head outside and collect some interesting specimens, take a closer look with a simple home-made microscope, and create a nature print.

## Supplies

- something to collect specimens (egg cartons are fantastic as they make fantastic sorting trays, too)

For the microscope:

- small bowl or glass
- clear plastic wrap
- water

For the nature prints:

- spray bottle with water (optional: food coloring)
- cardboard or paper

## Instructions

### 1. Go on a collection walk.

Go outside and look for a variety of nature specimens. Allow your little one to set the pace as you take a walk around the neighborhood, a park, or the forest to find objects of different colors, shapes, and consistencies. Make sure at least some of your objects fit inside your cup or egg carton. The printing activity works best with flat objects, so be on the lookout for some interestingly shaped leaves or flowers, too.

### 2. Take a good look at your treasures.

Talk about your finds. Can you sort or create patterns with them? Color, size, and feel are just some ways to categorize your objects. Sorting and patterning are important early math skills and are so much fun!



### 3. Make a super simple microscope.

- Put the first object you'd like to see up close into your bowl.
- Cover the bowl with some plastic wrap (not too tight).
- Carefully pour a little water on top of the plastic wrap.
- Look! The water is your microscope's lens.



#### Curious about the science behind this mini microscope?

The water drop works as a magnifying glass by refracting light. A magnifying glass is a single convex (curved outward) lens that is used to produce a larger image of an object.

(<https://www.state.nj.us/education/21cclc/casp/lsc/unit1/Lesson3.pdf>)

*Make some simple nature prints to explore your treasures' shapes!*

### 4. Put your flat objects on a piece of cardboard or paper (absorbent paper works best).

Gently spray the paper and objects with water, then carefully remove your objects.



Optional: Add some food coloring for even more fun (and mess).

*Send a photo of your project to [mycreation@skokielibrary.info](mailto:mycreation@skokielibrary.info) and we may feature it on social media.*