



Children's Corner

GO ON A NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

There is always something interesting to find outside in a yard, on a playground, or in the neighborhood. Go on a hunt to find treasures. Children all of ages can go on a nature scavenger hunt that designed just for their age. Scavenger hunts give children opportunities to increase their language skills, to practice their ability to focus on their environment, and to use problem solving and creative thinking skills.

Be safe: Don't include berries on your list and supervise children so that there is no tasting while they are hunting.

So go outside and find something that:

An open-ended scavenger hunt:

- Is a certain color
- Is dry or wet
- Is shiny
- Is beautiful
- Is tiny or big
- Is a flower
- Is fuzzy
- Is soft or hard
- Is rough or smooth
- Is flat or raised
- Is alive
- The wind blows
- Different shapes
- Crawls or moves
- Has no legs, four legs, or six legs
- Makes a sound
- Is sticky
- Has a smell
- Releases an aroma when crushed, such as sage
- Is a good hiding place
- Is an animal's home

A more specific list:

Things to See

- Insects, such as a butterfly, dragonfly, grasshopper, and beetle.
- A spider web.
- Leaves from different trees
- Frogs, toads, and lizards.
- Wildflowers.
- Find feathers or abandoned birds' nests.

Things to Collect

- Pinecones, dandelions, seeds.

- Encourage identification skills by having the kids find different types of leaves or flowers native to your area. (Look for regional field guides in your local library or on enature.com, or do an internet search for the 'native plants' of your state.)
- Collect ferns, moss, pinecones, seeds, thorns, and other botanical specimens.
- Colored rocks, quartz, or flat skipping stones.
- Find a temporary 'pet,' such as a frog, snail, or grasshopper. (You should let them go after you've observed them.)
- Look carefully for something 'camouflaged,' such as a walking stick insect or a moth that blends in with its surroundings.

Scavenger Hunt Tools

Before setting out on a nature expedition, gather a few important tools from around the house:

- Plastic bags - collect specimens without making a mess.
- Camera - take pictures of what can't be collected with a digital camera.
- Notebook and pens or colored pencils - make notes and drawings so you can remember what you see.
- Jars - transport insects and other small critters, or use to display rocks and shells
- Baby wipes or hand sanitizer - clean up when you get grimy.
- Insect net - catch butterflies and other flying insects.
- Binoculars - observe birds and squirrels up close.
- Magnifying glass - see the intricate details on insects, flowers, leaves, and more.
- Field guides - get help identifying trees, flowers, rocks, birds, etc.
- Snack - hunting can work up an appetite!

Resources:

Home Science tools – <http://www.hometrainingtools.com/a/nature-scavenger-hunt/>
 Honey's Life – <http://honeyslife.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Nature-Scavenger-Hunt-List-for-kids-by-Honey-of-Honeys-Life.pdf>
 NAEYC for Families – <http://families.naeyc.org>
 Scavenger Hunt Guru – <http://www.scavenger-hunt-guru.com/nature-scavenger-hunt-1.html>