

Nature Paintbrushes – A Creative STEAM Exploration

This activity blends STEM with art. It encourages curiosity about the natural world, supports fine motor coordination, and invites experimentation all at a level perfect for little explorers.

What you need:

- Child-safe sized sticks
- Natural items: leaves, pine needles, grass, feathers, flower petals, etc.
- String, rubber bands, or tape
- Washable paint
- Paper roll, oversized paper, construction paper
- Paper plates/paper cups for the paint
- Apron or paint smock



What to do:

1. Take the children on a nature walk (backyard, park, outdoor play area) and encourage them to collect different natural materials.
2. Set out the painting materials on a hard surface (inside or outside)
3. Help attach the materials to the end of a stick to create their own unique "paintbrush."
4. Let the children explore how each brush paints differently.
5. Talk about textures and patterns as they paint ("this one makes dots!" "The leaves feel scratchy, look at the marks they make.")

Activity extension: make a gallery wall of art created with different materials and let the children look at each other's work. You can ask questions like "which brush was your favourite and why?"

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