



# Garden Yoga

## Outdoor Learning Environments Activity Leaflet

**Setting:** Designated play area or outdoor learning environment (OLE)

**Activity:** Practice yoga in the OLE

**Focus of Activity:** Promote physical development

### Curricular Areas:

- Health and physical development: climbing, balancing, motor control, muscle development
- Problem-solving
- Cognitive development
- Language development
- Conceptual development of the natural and physical world
- Imitating

Physical exercise is a great way to promote growth and development. By engaging in whole-body movement, children can express themselves and develop crucial motor control skills. This simple but captivating activity nurtures children's physical capabilities and increases their awareness of the natural world around them.

### Materials:

A children's book about yoga (see recommended list); fixed outdoor elements for poses such as stumps, boulders, hay bales, etc.

### Suggestions:


1. Explain to the children they are going on a garden yoga walk.
2. Read the story *Rachel's Day in the Garden: A Kids Yoga Spring Colors Book* by Giselle Shardlow and Hazel



Quintanilla, or show a book with yoga poses. Invite the children to role-play the story and/or try yoga poses to make sure they understand basic yoga movements.

3. During outside time, demonstrate different yoga poses while walking around the garden and OLE, encouraging children to follow the lead. Utilize different outdoor elements such as boulders, tree logs, stepping stones, straw bales, and tree stumps for different poses.
4. During the garden walk, encourage children to smell and touch various garden plants and nature-related materials. During yoga poses, encourage them to listen to nature and identify the different sounds they hear.
5. Expand this activity by having children pose/walk like animals or elements they see outside ("walk like a squirrel" or "pose like a pine tree").



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6. Create additional activities to expand children's learning process.
  7. FOR INFANT & TODDLERS: Modify activity to best fit children's developmental and physical level. For infants, try simple stretching exercises to stimulate physical development. For toddlers, try simple poses before nap-time to help muscle development and encourage restful sleep. Incorporate open dialogue to stimulate language and social/emotional development for both infants and toddlers.



## Engaging Parents:

1. Take a picture of the children during their yoga walk. Post the picture in a readily-accessible place and/or include it in a parent newsletter.
2. Have children draw a picture of their garden yoga experience. Have them share their picture and story with parents.
3. Invite parents to do this activity at home with their child(ren) and share photographs.

## Book Recommendations:

1. *Jenny's Winter Walk* by Giselle Shardlow and Vicky Bowes
2. *You Are a Lion!: And Other Fun Yoga Poses* by Tae-eun Yoo
3. *Little Yoga: A Toddler's First Book of Yoga* by Rebecca Whitford and Martina Selway
4. *Yoga Bunny* by Brian Russo
5. *ABC Yoga* by Christiane Engel
6. *Yoga Bugs: Simple Poses for Little Ones* by Sarah Jane Hinder