
POD Wake Co Newsletter- October 2018

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Natural Materials for Play and Learning



Adding a natural building play area to an outdoor learning environment is an easy way to diversify free play. Natural materials, or natural loose parts, afford an array of open-ended play and learning opportunities, such as building, sorting, counting, and dramatic play. The availability of some

natural loose parts, such as acorns and flowers, change with the seasons, while others, such as stones and branches, are available year round. Some outdoor learning environments are rich with natural loose parts, while others may require teachers and children to gather and bring in natural loose parts to supplement their outdoor learning environments. Simply add an assortment of natural materials to support imaginative play area for children to enjoy.



A list of natural loose parts:

- bamboo poles
- bark wedges
- straw bales
- small stones
- log stumps
- tree cookies
- trimmed branches
- pine cones
- leaves
- seeds
- nuts
- flowers
- wood chips

Find additional information on [Natural Materials for Play and Learning](#)

Natural Learning Initiative's [Green Desk](#) has great resources on outdoor learning environments for children. Find information at naturalearning.org

October Activity



Leaf Rubbing

Collect leaves of different shapes and sizes from the outdoor learning environment. Using paper and any form of writing utensil such as pastels, crayons, or colored pencils to complete the activity. Put the leaf under the paper and lightly use your utensil to rub against the paper, encourage your child to be careful not to rip the paper. During this fun activity, investigate leaves shape, size, texture and colors, to celebrate the fall season.

Plant of the Month

Pumpkin, Cucurbita pepo

Used by Native Americans and early settlers for food and decoration, pumpkins have become a staple in American household and culture during the month of October due to Halloween. For best results, grow from seed, providing 110-120 days to reach full maturity. Pumpkins should be harvested only after the shell has hardened completely. Create a fun activity or even celebrate Halloween by making a recipe or craving jack-o-lanterns using pumpkins.



To learn more about pumpkins...

[Click Here](#)

Learn more about radishes or other plants from your local cooperative extension agent.

Recipe

Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Prep time: 15mins **Cook time:** 1hrs **Total time:** 1hrs & 15mins **Serving:** 4-6

INGREDIENTS:

2 to 3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled

1 tablespoon olive oil

1/2 teaspoon curry powder

1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425F.
2. Cut sweet potatoes in half lengthwise; cut each half into six wedges.
3. Combine sweet potato wedges, olive oil, and spices in a bowl.
4. Toss gently to coat.
5. Place wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet.
6. Bake until very tender.
7. Serve warm.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DONATE TO NLI?

We support outdoor learning environments for vulnerable population.

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Questions? Contact us today at 1-919-515-8345 or
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