

Things to do with younger to older children in nature.

1. Head out on a bug safari

We're going on a bug hunt, we're going to catch a big one. Turn over logs and peep underneath for worms, centipedes, woodlice. Look for sleepy bumblebees in heather and crocuses (they might even sleep there at night). Spy ladybirds awakening on leaves and branches.

2. Colour wheel

Find flowers to match all the colours of the rainbow. Spring flowers are coming out and there's plenty of colour on show. If it's your garden, you could press the flowers between heavy books or make a rainbow picture with petals.

3. Look for signs of spring

Get out on a walk and look for frogspawn, the earliest lime green leaves peeping out, long yellow catkins, birds singing and making their nests, the first bright yellow brimstone butterflies, daffodils, crocuses, wild garlic (you could take some home to make a soup).

4. Witch's potion

Grab a bucket or bowl and head out on an adventure to find ingredients for a 'witch's potion': grass, leaves, pine cones, petals, fallen feathers, beech seeds, lingering acorns. Don't forget to mix with a big stick.

6. Move and shake

[Cosmic Kids Yoga](#) on YouTube instills mindfulness and focus in 10 minute segments aimed at children ages 3 and up.

Things to do with primary aged children

7. Loo roll tube Koinobori

These are colourful, carp-like Japanese windsocks. Paint with a fish scale pattern, then cut a dozen strips of tissue paper to glue around the base. Punch two holes in the opposite end and thread string for hanging in the breeze.

8. Egg box caterpillars

Cut a row of cups from the carton, to make its body. Paint, then draw eyes and glue on pipe cleaner antennae.

9. Jam jar lanterns

Stick shapes of coloured tissue paper to the outside of your jar with a mix of glue and water. Wait to dry, then pop a tealight inside.

10. Cereal box puppet theatre

Cut the back panel from your box, leaving the top, bottom, sides and front intact. Cut a large, square window into the front panel. You've made your proscenium arch. Now paint your theatre.

11. Lolly stick finger puppets

You will need these for your theatre. Use the discarded cereal box card to cut out characters and then glue lolly sticks to their heads (they will be lowered in from the top of your theatre).

12. Tin can planters

Glue goggly eyes, a pipe-cleaner mouth and bottle-top nose to your can (being careful of sharp edges). Then fill with compost, plant seeds, and water on a windowsill.

13. Newspaper fort

Lay three sheets of this paper on top of each other. Starting at a corner, roll tightly into a long tube. Tape securely and repeat till you run out. Take three tubes, and staple into a triangle. Repeat. These triangles are surprisingly tough structures. Add them together with tape and/or staples to build forts and more.

14. History tours

The archaeologist [Darius Arya](#) is doing a daily insta-live discussion for kids about Ancient Rome. Film your own archaeological dig!

15. The Literacy Shed

The [Literacy Shed](#) is a resource beloved by KS2 teachers, with animations and suggested questions for sparking literacy lessons. Give the films a quick viewing to check for content beforehand, and then use this as a jumping-off point for writing projects.

16. Writers & their work

Poet and former child laureate [Michael Rosen](#), has lots of poetry readings online, and [Oliver Jeffers](#) (Lost & Found, the Way Back Home) is reading a daily story daily live on Instagram at 2pm. If your child has a favourite author, there's bound to be activities and readings of their work online; for example Tom Gates has daily challenges and ideas to make, bake and doodle.

17. Write a letter or email to your favourite author

Think of an author, look at their books, and think about what you'd like to ask them. Find the contact details and write to them about their books and why you like them so much.

18. Geography

[Scholastic](#) has created a 20-day learn-from-home programme about subjects from place-names to eating bugs, with questions to provoke discussion. The content is America-focussed but there's lots of interesting topics of use for literacy lessons. Research a country or a geographical feature and present on paper or film.

19. Stem challenges

[Crest](#) offers challenging real-world projects for young people aged 5-19 in the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths). Choose a level and receive a challenge pack for children to work through (eg, 8 x 1-hour challenges); fees start at only £1. , The [Royal Institution](#) has science lectures online for older kids.

20. Science mysteries

US site [Mystery Science](#) supplies lessons featuring short films and fun activities on science for a range of different ages, such as: Why does a woodpecker peck or how do germs get inside the body? (extra points for being rather topical). Film your own teaching video or make a poster to teach other children.

21. Garden tasks

At [Pawprint](#), you can download free challenge packs on a variety of subjects, from VE Day to Gardening, with plenty of information and suggested activities. Children can work towards bronze, silver and gold badges.

22. Be a detective

Get out in the garden or a nearby woodlands to create your own forest school with the Woodland Trust's [Nature Detectives](#). These activities are especially good for the early years age group, with activities such as maths with conkers and handprint art.

23. Maths fun

[Oxford Owl](#) is superb for KS1 maths, with materials from early years (age 3 and up) to age 11 SATs, including games and challenges and simple 'how to' videos, plus ideas for combining cooking with maths. A

24. Get physics-cal

Excellent for all subjects at secondary level, [Khan Academy](#) also has maths and computing for all levels. Again, it's US-based material, but with crossover, such as in Physics, topics such as motion and energy, followed by practice questions.

25. Foreign tongues

Learning must go on when schools are closed. [Duolingo](#) is a really first-class way to learn a language. See this is a great preparation for when you're able to travel again.

26. Travel from your sofa

Virtual reality headsets such as the [Samsung Gear VR](#) or [Oculus Go](#) are finally worth using. [Google Earth VR](#) or [Realities.io](#) for tourism and flying are spectacular, but the sense of space is what you'll really appreciate after about day 10.

27. Accentuate the positive

When I was growing up, the neighbours had a "Joy and Think" board, onto which they pinned inspirational messages and cheery clippings from newspapers and magazines. I mocked it at the time, but I'm thinking of stealing the idea and passing it off as my own.

29. Recipe books

Based on whatever food is left at the shops, everyone can learn a new recipe for each week of isolation. Freeze portions for elderly neighbours.

30. Signs of life

The garden is just coming back to life – we have bulbs to plant in the beds that were destroyed by the storms. The vegetable patch may hold longer-term significance.

31. Cards

Poker is a great mental workout; [Texas Hold 'Em](#) is easiest to learn. For younger kids, [Spoons](#) is brilliant. Wipe the spoons down afterwards, obviously.

34. Make music

Buy a guitar. A Fender Squier Stratocaster is a great beginner's guitar. There are dozens of free tutorials online; the weekly Fender Play series costs £9.59 per month.

36. Nurture your young Spielberg

Make screen time about creativity, rather than passivity: apps like Procreate, Auxe and iMovie can be used to make art, music and short films. (We're devising a script around a haunted hotel and creepy self-playing piano.)

37. Junior bake-off

Turn mealtimes into a cooking club, of sorts, with kids responsible for the creation of the menu, as well as the prep and clearing up. It's not a bad time for them to develop some life skills (and for you to have a break from being Chief Caterer!)

38. Prove their mettle

Get kids to be responsible for their own revision as much as possible, with the help of online resources, where necessary. Parents can step in with quizzes and testing along the way, but this is an opportunity for kids to learn some self-discipline.

42. Keep a diary...

These are strange times. They will inevitably prompt a series of dystopian novels. Make sure your kids - and you - have notes to refer back to.

43. ...and a visual record

Set up a still life and paint. Like the diary, this is a great way of keeping a log of what on earth goes on during a lockdown. [Google Arts and Culture](#) is a treasure trove of inspiration. My family is working on a patchwork quilt using scraps of the children's old play clothes.

44. Party!

Singing and dancing are great mood boosts. Download [Just Dance](#) for the Nintendo Switch and [Lucky Voice Karaoke](#) for iOS or Android and belt it out together for the good of your mental health.

45. Read out loud

Reading aloud is calming and makes you focus on words in a novel way. Choose a chapter book to read and film on a video for other children.