Design Your Own Park Activity

**DAY ONE:** Start a Nature Journal & Explore Your Neighborhood

**Materials:**
- blank piece of paper
- pencil
- scissors (optional)
- a small bag (to collect leaves and nature “bits”)

**Step One:** Fold a blank piece of paper by following the instructions below. The result will be your very own nature journal. If you don’t have scissors on hand, you can tear along the dotted line - very carefully!

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**One-Sheet Book**

*Traditional Model ~ Diagrams by Mary Ellen Palmeri*

Use any rectangle; 8.5 x 11” paper works well to begin with, then experiment with other sizes

1. Fold in half lengthwise, crease and unfold
2. Fold in half again, this time bringing short ends together; crease well
3. Fold raw edge of top layer over to meet folded edge
4. TURN OVER entire model...
5. Fold remaining raw edge over to folded edge
6. Unfold last 2 steps and arrange like a tent; see next step...
7. This is how your paper should now look
8. Cut through both layers of the ‘tent’ center, following crease line carefully; stop cutting when you get a hair past the next crease lines
9. Hold each side at the “X”s - lift and gently pull your hands apart & down so the sides separate & the flat bottoms fold together...see next step for results
10. This is how your model should look; bring the two sides towards the front, then fold section in back to either side... & flatten all layers. See next step for results.

11. Your finished book will have eight sides, including a front & back cover and 6 pages to write or draw on inside.

**Paper Sizes & Results:** The finished size will be 1/8th of your original rectangle. Here are proportions from some standard papers:
- 8.5 x 11” paper ~ 4.25 x 2.75” Book
- 8.5 x 14” paper ~ 4.25 x 3.5” Book
- 11 x 17” paper ~ 5.5 x 4.25” Book
Design Your Own Park Activity

**DAY ONE:** Start a Nature Journal & Explore Your Neighborhood

- **Step Two:** Write your name on the front of your journal.

- **Step Three:** Explore your neighborhood! Grab your nature journal, a hard surface to write on (a book or magazine), and a pencil (or a pen if you prefer). Then head out to a nearby park, green space, empty lot, playground (if open), arroyo, or just a nice spot under a shady tree.

  While you’re walking, snap a photo of a plant, leaf, or flower. Then take a zoomed-in picture of the same plant. Finally, find a shady spot. Sit and relax for a while.

- **Step Four:** Pull out your nature journal. In your journal, respond to the following questions:
  
  * **Prompt 1** - Look around. What do you notice? Use your senses to make observations - smell, touch. You can make lists, draw a picture, write your observations - get creative!
  
  * **Prompt 2** - Write about your favorite memory of being outside in nature. What did you do? What was around you?

- **Step Five:** Tomorrow you’ll be designing a 3-D park - using ONLY items you find in nature. As you walk home collect some leaves, twigs, seeds, and other nature “bits”. Put them in the bag you brought with you. Save it somewhere safe for tomorrow’s adventure!

  **Extra:** In your nature journal, draw out a map from your house to the place you explored today.

  **Extra:** Share a photo from your walk or of your nature journal on social media - be sure to tag Railyard Park Conservancy so we can see your awesome work!
Design Your Own Park Activity

DAY TWO: Create a Creature Park

Materials:
- Nature journal from yesterday
- Nature “bits” from yesterday
- Pencil

☐ Step One: Pick a wild beast. The wild beast can be either a real animal or a fantasy creature - your choice!

Write down the name of your creature at the top of a blank page in your nature journal.

☐ Step Two: Imagine you are working at a state-of-the-art zoo. Your job is to create habitat for all the animals. You are a professional “Creature Park Designer”! The creature that you picked in step one, (or made up), is the newest arrival to your zoo. Your job is to create the perfect living conditions for this animal!

In your nature journal, below your creature’s name, make a list of the important features that your creature needs in their habitat. Water? A place to sleep? What does your creature eat?

☐ Step Three: Grab the bag of nature bits you collected yesterday and go outside to a shady spot. Lay your materials out in front of you. Begin building your creature park using ONLY items collected from nature. (Feel free to collect more material if you need it.)

Make sure that your Creature Park has all the things your creature needs to survive! Take your time with this. You should put in a solid 30 minutes before you move on. Put some music on and have fun!

Vocabulary:
Habitat - the natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.

Extra: Take photos of your Creature Park from different angles so we can really see all the components. Share your work on social media - be sure to tag Railyard Park Conservancy and tell us about your Creature!

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@railyardpark
Design Your Own Park Activity

DAY THREE: Identify Your "Big Idea" and Sketch Your Design

Materials:
- Nature journal
- Blank sheet of paper (In case your journal is filled up already, you can make a new one!)

☐ Step One: Identify the “Big Idea” for your park. The “Big Idea” will be the theme that will guide the design of your 3-D park model. Every feature in your park will reflect this theme. The “Big Idea” can be anything - A shape, an idea (like water conservation), a movie you love, etc.

To get your creative juices flowing, reflect on the following questions in your nature journal and let them guide you in planning your “Big Idea”:

1 - What would be in a park that everyone in your family would like - from a 3 year old little sister to your great grandma? Maybe it is something new that they don’t know they would like.

2 - What was the last book, movie, or song that really rocked your world? What was it about the piece that really moved you?

☐ Step Two: Based on your answers to the questions, brainstorm a list of potential “Big Ideas” for your park. You should aim for a list of 10 potential “Big Ideas.” Get creative! Then circle the one theme from your list that you want to pick as your “Big Idea.”

☐ Step Three: What are you going to name your park? Think of a name that conveys the purpose of your park. What would people come there for?

☐ Step Four: Now it’s time to sketch out a rough plan of your park in your journal. While you sketch, think about the following questions: How do I incorporate my “Big Idea” into my design? What would the different areas of your park look like? A picnic area? Are there both natural and man-made elements? Trees and plants? Pathways?

☐ Step Five: Once your park begins to take shape on paper, consider how the different elements interact with one another. Are the paths easily accessible? Where do they lead? How about shady areas, are there enough to satisfy the park’s occupants? Adjust your initial designs accordingly.

Extra: Share a photo of your sketch! For this photo, take a birds-eye-view picture - be sure to tag Railyard Park Conservancy so we can see your awesome work!
Design Your Own Park Activity

**DAY FOUR:** Begin Your 3-D Park

### Materials:
- Tissue paper
- Art straws
- Toothpicks
- Elmer's glue
- Construction Paper
- Cardboard piece
- Nature “bits”
- Anything you can find around the house - bottle caps, cereal boxes, etc
- Scissors (optional)

### Step One:
Gather your materials and set-up your work area. If inside, at a table, be sure to protect the surface you’re working on. Glue and other materials may spill over onto the table. If you’re outside, make sure you have some rocks or heavy items to hold down your materials in case the wind picks up.

### Step Two:
Look around your house for other materials. Do you have a recycle bin that could be picked through? Empty toilet paper or paper towel rolls? Go ahead and grab anything that you could use for your 3-D Park.

### Step Three:
Using your sketch from yesterday as a guide, begin creating your Dream Park as a 3-D design! Use the piece of cardboard as your base. Remember that glue will need time to dry and you don’t have to finish your 3-D model today.

### Step Four:
Clean-up. Put your model in a safe place to dry overnight. Cap all markers, pens, glue sticks, and put into a bag that you can easily grab tomorrow. Take any scraps from your work and add them to the bag. Put your materials near your 3-D model. Reflect on what you want to add to the design tomorrow and begin thinking of making a sign for your park.

**Extra:** Today’s photo challenge is to take two pictures - one with bright lighting and one with dark lighting. Share your work on social media - be sure to tag Railyard Park Conservancy so we can see your awesome work!
Design Your Own Park Activity

DAY FIVE: Finalize Your 3-D Park

Materials:
- Tissue paper
- Art straws
- Toothpicks
- Elmer’s glue
- Construction Paper
- Cardboard piece
- Nature “bits”
- Anything you can find around the house - bottle caps, cereal boxes, etc
- Scissors (optional)

☐ Step One: Set-up your workspace again. (Remember to protect the surface you’re working on). Grab your materials and your 3-D model from yesterday. Begin putting the final touches on your 3-D model. Here at the Railyard, we like to listen to music while we work ;)

☐ Step Two: Make a sign for your park and add it to your model. If you’d like, you can label the features of your park.

Congratulations! You completed this week’s activity!

Extra: Snap a picture of your 3-D Park and send it to kyork@railyardpark.org or share it on social media and tag Railyard Park Conservancy. We’ll share your creations on our website!

Extra: Go hang out in the same spot from Day One and take some pictures or write in your nature journal! Have fun, it’s Summer!!

For Access to These Digital Materials (and More!):

1. Visit Summer Santa Fe: https://summersantafe.weebly.com
2. Select Grade Level (Grades K-2, 3-5 or 6-9)
3. Explore new program materials each week from June 1 - August 7, 2020!

Special Thanks To:

Railyard Park Conservancy
@ralyardparkconservancy
https://ralyardpark.org/

Santa Fe City Youth and Family Services
https://www.santafenm.gov/youth_and_family_services_division

Santa Fe Community Educators Network
https://www.sfcommunityeducators.org/