

# Bear Park from Home

Dear Parents of Bear Park,

We hope that you have all had a wonderful long weekend with your families and that you were able to participate in some way in acknowledgement of Anzac Day.

Again we hope you are all keeping safe and well  
**Sue & the Bear Park Team**

## Create your own Soundscape

**Items needed:** Smartphone  
Tablet/iPad.

**App:** Keezy Classic (iOS)  
Beatbox (Android)

Sound is such a rich sensory landscape to explore. Taking time to tune into what we hear stimulates the imagination and can inspire some amazing ideas. Often children can tune in and notice sounds that might otherwise go unnoticed. Today's suggestion provides a way to extend on children's innate curiosity for the sounds that intrigue them, by offering a way to collect, organize and create with these sounds. The above apps offer a simple sampling interface. A sound can be recorded and then stored as one of the coloured 'keys', allowing for easy playback.

Encourage your child/ren to record the sounds they find intriguing, perhaps the crunch of the autumn leaves beneath their feet, or the way grass blades can be rustled by their fingertips.



Maybe you have a squeaky floorboard or door hinge that creates a humorous sound? These sounds can be recorded as each 'key' on the app, once each key has a designated sound recorded; children can play the keys as they record, creating their very own soundscape. After experimenting with the app, children's learning can be extended by suggesting that they create a theme for their sounds.

For example, on a sunny day you may create a keyboard of sounds from the garden, whereas a challenge for an inside day could be to discover unusual sounds that can be made inside. These soundscapes can be saved and stored for later use, or to share with friends. A suggestion could be to use these as the soundtracks for your stop-motion films, or for a real challenge, try creating a collection of soft sounds that could be used to set the tone for rest time.

We hope you enjoy the fun of seeking out sounds, and enjoy observing how children can create compositions based on their developing ideas of the pitch, volume and tempo.



## Tools for Textures and Patterns

Usually, in an artist's atelier, we find an array of tools to create. For example a painter will have a large repertoire of different brushes at hand. So today I would like to inspire you as to how you can enrich your child's atelier tools for painting from around the home such as the office, kitchen, garden, garden shed, tool box, toy box, bathroom etc...

The basic purpose of a painting tool is simply to apply paint and make marks. Whilst the house painter is mainly concerned with a smooth and even application of paint the artist is looking for contrast and a variety of marks that can be applied to evoke associations and representations.

In modern art, from impressionism to expressionism, the mark became the focus of the painting and the artist started to ditch the brush and use unconventional tools. Ed Clark (American Abstract Expressionist) for example used a broom instead of a brush.

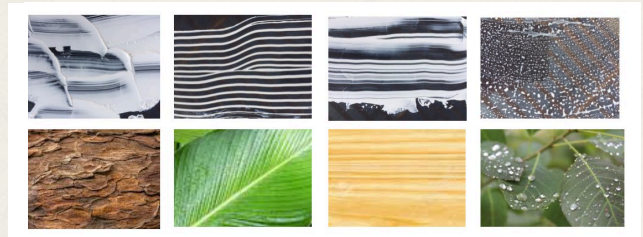
So have a look around your home and perhaps you could go on a 'brush hunt' with your child. A few examples of what you may find maybe -  
Cleaning brushes, toothbrushes, small hearth brushes, pastry brush ....  
Spatula, fork, spoon ....  
Sticks, leaves, shells ....  
String, wool, ribbon, tape ....  
Cardboard plain edge or different cut out serrated patterns

Start by selecting a few tools to begin with (perhaps your child could choose) and let them explore how many possibilities these tools may offer them by using it with different strokes and movements.

Later you may add more and more tools, with some perhaps being similar but slightly different such as differently serrated tools and later adding in some contrasting tools, such as tools that create smooth or bumpy textures.

I recommend starting with a neutral colour acrylic paint if possible, such as white or black so as the focus is on the texture and patterns rather than the colour. Just see what materials you have available, but I suggest strong paper so it will sustain some manual abrasion, or if your child is happy to create non-permanent work, tiles or laminated boards are great, because the paint can be moved smoothly on the surface and can be wiped off and re-used over and over again.

There are so many possibilities with these tools to create patterns and textures and I feel sure that your child/ren will spend a long time experimenting and being excited about the wondrous effects of paint.



## Online Resources

Auckland Zoo have made learning at home resources and there are packs for Early Childhood aged children too! Parents can download these from this link:

<https://www.aucklandzoo.co.nz/visit/education-resources>

There is some cool ideas on there based on an animal and new themes are created each Monday and Wednesday.



[www.bearpark.co.nz](http://www.bearpark.co.nz)



## Recycled Materials Exploration

As part of our Bear Park philosophy, we understand that children have more than a hundred ways of expressing themselves through their many different languages. One of the ways in which we support our children with this idea is through offering them the opportunity to explore the endless open-ended possibilities of recycled materials.

We strongly promote this idea that waste materials can be valuable and meaningful, so we offer these in different contexts so the children are able to give new purpose and a new identity to these materials, which would otherwise be thrown away.

We know that our infants and toddlers learn about the world around them through sensory exploration so offering them recycled materials fits well within this form of explorative learning.

At home consider what textured materials you have that could provide a rich and aesthetic sensory surface for your young child to explore. Perhaps you might have some bubble wrap, non-slip surface grip pads, corrugated cardboard, wool felt paper sheets, plastic food containers, cellophane, white tissue paper or even baking paper.

To begin with, cut the materials to a similar size, preferably A4. Place the materials on a flat surface and observe how your child interacts with them.



*What do they notice? How do they engage with the materials?  
Do they use a finger or their whole hand? Do they use their toes, or their whole foot?  
Are they aware of the different textures of the materials?  
Do they feel different when using a hand than when using a foot?  
Do the materials make a sound?*

Explore these materials alongside your child and mimic and verbalize what your child is doing to enhance this experience. What stories are they telling you? What ideas are they creating? What combinations of materials are they using?

Once your child/ren have familiarized themselves with the materials, perhaps allow them the possibility to explore them on a larger scale so they can use their whole body to explore and discover the richness and potential that these items hold.



*We aim to support our children to develop - "strategies for actively exploring and making sense of the world by using their body, including active exploration with all the senses, and materials."  
(Te Whaariki, Early Childhood Curriculum)*

## Southern Cheese Rolls

A South Island delicacy, arguably the best South snack in the country!

½ red onion, very finely diced  
250g cheese, grated  
1 can reduced cream  
1 Tbsp onion powder  
1 Tbsp onion flakes  
2 tsp corn flour  
1 tsp celery salt  
½ tsp yellow mustard powder  
1 loaf bread  
4 Tbsp butter, melted  
16 toothpicks, soaked in water

1. Preheat oven to 210°C. Line an oven tray with baking paper.
2. Very finely dice onion and grate cheese. In a large bowl, combine onion, cheese, reduced cream and spices. Stir until well combined.
3. Use a pastry brush to brush one side of each piece of bread with melted butter. Flip over and spread each piece of bread with 2 tablespoons of filling, leaving a 2cm gap on one edge.
4. Roll up bread, starting from the end with cheese mixture. Place seam side down on prepared tray and secure with a toothpick.
5. Bake for 10-12 minutes, until golden. The filling will start to ooze out a little. Allow to cool slightly before serving.



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