

# Bear Park from Home

## Dear Parents of Bear Park,

Whilst browsing through a magazine during the weekend I came across a New Zealand photographer called John Johns who took many distinct and beautiful pictures throughout his lifetime.

The main message that he wished to convey was to make the viewer aware of what nature had to offer and for us to be more aware of our responsibilities in the care and conservation of this. His work relates well with our belief that we and our children hold the role of Kaitiaki meaning that we are the guardians of the land, sea and sky and we endeavor to practice this within our daily life.

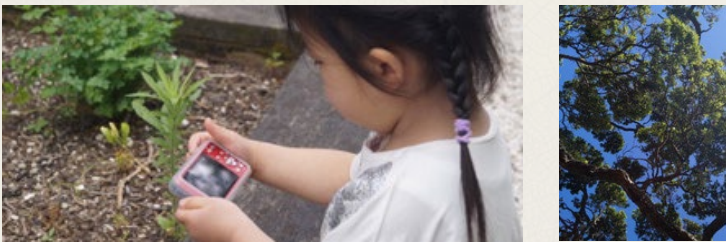
In this Bear Park at Home edition see what further suggestions we offer in regards to the language of photography as well as many more ideas.

Keep safe

Sue & the Bear Park Team

## Phone-tography

Young children usually already have some foundational knowledge about how phone cameras work and as each new phone is released, their inbuilt cameras have become far more capable of creating interesting and powerful photographs.



Having supported preschoolers to refine their 'eye' for an image using point and shoot digital cameras, it is abundantly clear that photography is an incredible tool for children to share the world from their perspective. Our challenge as adults is to shift the perspective of phones as 'selfie-cams' to a tool for the art of photography.

My suggestion would be to invite your child to use the phone as a 'real camera', whilst posing thought provoking questions but letting their photographs be the answers –

*"What is the most beautiful part of our garden?"*  
*"Can you capture something that reminds you of Grandma?"*  
*"Show me a photo of something you are curious about?"*  
*"Can you take a picture of happiness?"*

By guiding this experience and thinking outside the box, children can begin to understand photography as a tool for expressing emotion and communicating ideas, as well as a way to capture memories.

Another way of introducing photography is perhaps by talking together with your child/ren to find an idea about what he/she would like to take photos of and to set a 'goal'. This may allow you to delve deeper into the experience -

For example you could decide to take a photo of a specific flower or a tree. See how many different photos they could take of one plant choosing different angles, different close ups, different compositions. Perhaps encourage him/her to move around and change his/her body position.

*"What does the tree look like from up here? What happens if we lie down?"*  
Then have a look at the series of photos and reflect upon these.  
*"Which photo do you find most interesting and why?"*  
*"What do you notice about the flower/tree?"*  
*"How does this photo make you feel?"*

By guiding this experience in a way of thinking outside the box, children can begin to understand photography as a tool for expressing emotion and communicating ideas, as well as a way to capture memories.

## Hot Cross Bun Recipe

It's nearly time for the Easter Bunny to arrive, so let's try making some hot cross buns.

3 teaspoons yeast  
3 C flour - 1 1/2 white and 1 1/2 brown  
3 Tablespoons brown sugar  
6 Tablespoons of butter softened  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3 teaspoons of allspice  
1 egg  
200 mls of water  
3/4 C sultanas

Firstly place all ingredients in a bowl and hand knead this till well mixed. Put the bowl in a warm place, cover with a tea towel and leave to rise till the mixture has doubled in size.

If you want to plump up your sultanas, add these to a microwave safe bowl, add water to cover them and place in the microwave for 5 minutes. The sultanas will plump up and become juicy as they absorb some of the water.

Divide the dough mix into 10 pieces and place on a baking tray in a warm oven and let this rise for 30min.

Then bake at 200 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

Cross Mixture - 1/4 C Flour, 2 Tablespoons oil and water to mix into a stiff paste. Roll out and place on top of the buns before baking to create your cross.

Glaze - After they are cooked mix 3 Tablespoons of milk and 3 Tablespoons of sugar, warm in a saucepan till the sugar has dissolved then brush on top of the buns.

Happy Easter Baking Bear Park Bakers.



## Online Resources

David Attenborough's Planet Earth ([on Netflix](#)) provides realistic second hand encounters with the natural world. The high definition of colour and movement makes for a captivating watch for children and adults as well.

Playball Video ([click here](#))

## Texture & Pattern Treasure Hunt

Capture a series of close up photographs of different items either inside or outside of the home. Print these onto a photo contact sheet, or show your child/ren a gallery of photos on your laptop and send them off to find where these patterns are hidden.

To extend on this you could also invite your child/ren to describe how the texture feels once they have found it.



This activity can be easily adapted to suit a range of ages and is something that parents can enjoy as well. Pre-school to school aged children, who have had experience using a camera, might even like to create their own Texture and Pattern Treasure hunt for you to do.



## Nature Bracelets

Create bracelets and also anklets from the garden with this fun and simple activity!

Source some tape - electrical, duct or masking tape. Make sure it is sturdy enough to sit on the wrist or ankle with the garden treasures attached.

Attach the tape to your child's wrist or ankle with the sticky side up.

Collect natural treasures: walk around the garden to find flowers (can use the whole flower or just the petals), leaves, twigs - anything fun and colourful the children would like to add to their bracelet!

Attach each treasure to the sticky bracelet to create pretty jewelry from the garden.



## Creative Potentials

*"The child is made of one hundred. The child has a hundred languages a hundred hands a hundred thoughts a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking. A hundred always a hundred ways of listening of marveling of loving a hundred joys for singing and understanding a hundred worlds to discover a hundred worlds to invent a hundred worlds to dream. The child has a hundred languages (and a hundred, hundred, hundred more)"*

- Loris Malaguzzi

One avenue for children to communicate their feelings and be expressive is through the creative arts. As Loris Malaguzzi affirms "children have a hundred languages" which they use to express themselves. To support children in their endeavors to be communicative and expressive we provide a wide range of materials and resources for them to explore in their own way, at their own time.

Often we will replace paint brushes with sticks or feathers and on other occasions we might offer bottle caps or cardboard reels. Perhaps while you are outside exploring your garden or the local park you could collect some treasures and see what patterns your child can create when using these items with paint. Perhaps you could consider different surfaces also for your child to paint on such as on stones, woodcuts or a shell.

### Loose Materials may include:

- Pine cones
- Shells
- Leaves
- Feathers
- Sticks
- Flowers
- Bottle caps
- Buttons
- Cardboard reels
- Fabrics



### Create your own water coloured paint from home.

In a mixing bowl, mix 4 tablespoons baking soda with 2 tablespoons vinegar until the fizzing stops.

1. Add 1/2 teaspoon corn syrup and 2 tablespoons cornstarch. Mix until you have a uniform consistency.
2. Pour the mixture into individual egg carton cups, filling each about a third to halfway up.
3. Add five to ten drops of food colouring to each cup, mixing in thoroughly, to reach the desired depth of colour.
4. Allow paints to set overnight.
5. The following day you are ready for painting!!!!!!

## At home with Reggio

As you will be aware Bear Park's educational approach to learning is greatly inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach from Italy and so it is with great pleasure that we attached to this newsletter a link to one of Reggio Children's initiatives at this unprecedented time in the world. Please click and enjoy this link:

<https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/athomewiththeregioapproach/>

