

Bear Park from Home

Dear Parents,

It has been wonderful to see so many of our friends returning to Bear Park today and to hear all of the exciting conversations and news that they wish to share with us.

Also to welcome back our youngest friends who have grown soooooo much over this time and are now showing us all of their new milestones.

A HUGE WARM WELCOME BACK TO YOU ALL!

Wishing you well and keep safe
Sue & the Bear Park Team

Entomological Exploration

Entomology is the branch of zoology that is related to the study of insects. We all know that exploring the garden is a fun and intriguing activity that is enticing for any age group. By searching for insects in your garden you are introducing the early concepts of scientific exploration.

Perhaps you could start by inviting your child to create a map of your garden, and in that map, they might like to consider places in which they think the insects might be hiding.



Ask your child to consider what insects they may find on their expedition and perhaps they could create a list that they could mark off when they discover those insects they have listed.

What insects might we find?	How many?
Ants	I
Bees	III
Worms	I
Beetles	IIIII
Lady Bugs	
Centipedes	
Spiders	

Invite your child to really consider where the insects are and what they might be doing in the garden? Do they have a specific purpose and what might that purpose be? - For example, a bee looking for pollen or a worm fertilizing soil.

Whatever it may be, create a map or make a list and let the entomological expedition begin!



In the Forest 3: Ephemeral Patterns with Ferns

Today we would like to invite you and your child/ren to get creative and to further sharpen your senses about textures and form. It also involves mathematical concepts such as comparing, sorting, organization and symmetry.

If you have followed our previous suggestion to collect and identifying ferns on your walks through the forest or park, you might have already collected different types of ferns. If not, I'm sure you can easily find some species in the park or in your garden today.

Choose a fern that catches your child's interest and take a very close look at it. Ferns can be very complex in terms of the division (pinnation) of their fronds (leaves). Some of them are divided two times or maybe more (pinnatifid 2-pinnate). To create your patterns I would like you to separate carefully the main pinnation from the stem and work with the smaller segments of the leaf.

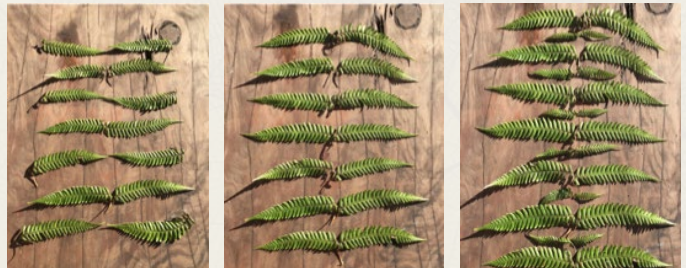
This is what we did so as to be able to create the patterns that you can see in the photos below. Compare these segments.

*What do you notice? Do you notice if there are different sizes?
Which one is the widest? Which one is the thinnest?
Which one is the longest? Which one is the shortest?
Which one is the smallest?*

Perhaps invite you child/ren to organize these special fern segments into 3 or 4 different piles of different sizes and then start choosing a few leaves and organize them into a shape or a sequence.

What patterns can you create with these leaves?

A pattern could be linear in its organization and in a sequence such as: small-big, small big, small big etc... or perhaps it could be mixed such as 2x big, 2x small, 2x big etc....



If you and your child/ren choose a circular shape also pay attention to the size. Perhaps arrange the leaves from large on the outside to small in the Centre and or vice versa.



We hope you and your child/ren will enjoy how in this process creativity and mathematics Interlink.



Lockdown Through a Child's Eyes Poem

This is a wonderful poem that one of our teachers at Bear Park has written in regards to the recent lockdown seen through her child's eyes. We hope you enjoy!

Do you remember?

Do you remember that day?

We couldn't go to Bear Park, we had to stay away.

We couldn't see our friends, or our teachers too,

Something across the world was happening, to people like me and you.

There were so many people affected, we had to stay at home,

A lockdown they called it, we weren't allowed to roam.

We couldn't go on car rides, to visit the shops or park,

We had to stay around the house, especially after dark.

The first few days were scary, all so different to me,

With only certain people that I was able to see.

I was with my Mum and Dad, some lived with extended families too,

We played games and arts and crafts, just to name a few.

Every day we went walking, just along our street,

I saw lots of other people, but we weren't allowed to meet.

It was all so very strange, I missed Bear Park each day,

I couldn't wait to go back there, but I had to stay away.

Dad and I built a hut, and on the deck we made a slide,

I did some yoga with my Mum & ran around the garden, finding places to hide.

Every day was different, but we'd always find things to do,

On our walks we saw teddy bears and even poppies too.

I did lots of drawing, I drew pictures for my friends,

I wished I could see them all, when this lock down finally ends.

I didn't fully understand it all, as I sat with my Dad,

He gave me a cuddle and I knew the world had become so sad.

I may only be little, but I'm curious I see,

What was happening around us, and how it would later effect me.

How the earth was hurting, I wish I could hold it tight,

Hold it in my arms and make everything alright.

The time I was in lockdown it really wasn't so bad,

The happy days, the sometimes tears, the laughter and the fun times that we had.

The days will go on and things will get better,

I will remember it all and how the world stood together

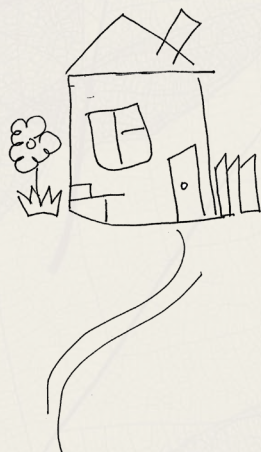
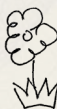
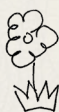
I will keep all my memories, because they are stories of my time,

Safe in my heart, because these are stories that are mine.

Do you remember?

Do you remember that day?

I do, I will, because it's a memory that will stay.



Written By Kristi Ballinger



Sharpening imagination and associations with form

This is an invitation for you and your child/ren to extend upon your creative imagination in context with the shape of the fern. This process could also be used with other natural materials such as leaves, flowers, feathers, lichen, moss, however if you and your child/ren have already collected some fern and built a relationship with it, I suggest to stay with these.

Choose a fern that has caught your child's interest and take a very close look. Fern leaves (fronds) are very complex in terms of their pinnation, so to create your drawings I would like you to separate the main pinnation from the stem and work with the smaller segments of the leaf.



Look at this segment and ask - *What do you notice? Look at the shape of the leaf, is it round/oval, arrow-shaped, fan, tall and linear? What colour is it? Has it the same colour on the top as on the underside? Is it glossy or mat?*

Invite you child/ren to run their finger over the surface of the leaf. - *How does it feel? Does it feel smooth, soft, even, dimpled, bumpy, hairy?*

Turn the leaf over and compare the other side. - *How does this side feel? Can you feel any difference?*

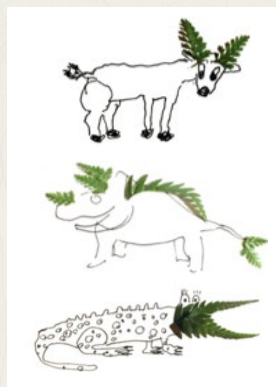
Then run your fingers around and on the blade of the leaf. - *What does this feel like? Is it sharp, soft, bumpy or perhaps tickling? What does it remind you of?*

If your discussion doesn't flow easily perhaps give your child/ren some suggestions in context with what they may have already expressed.

For example: Remember, you said it feels tickling, what else can be tickling?

Could this remind you of a feather perhaps? Or - You noticed the edges were going up and down, up and down like a zigzag, this reminds me of something sharp. Can you think of something that is sharp?

The idea with this discussion is to encourage your child/ren's imagination and associations with form. Once they have verbalized their ideas, invite them to draw these ideas using one or a few leaf segments.



What could this be part of? If it reminds you of a feather what animal could a feather be part of? A bird perhaps and if so what kind of bird?

You said it looks like wings? - Wings of what - a butterfly, a cicada, a bat, a bird?

Thinking of sharp teeth, I wonder what has these sharpest teeth? A shark or a dinosaur? What kind of dinosaur?

