

Outdoor Learning Experience (5 and 6 years old)

Learning Experience: Elves' Garden	Shared by: Tan Khee Huan, Moon
Environment: Resident Committee Community Garden	Estimated time: 45 minutes
Children's prior knowledge: Playground for Elves	
What children will experience (NEL Learning Areas): Aesthetics and Creative Expression: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children will create different types of playground equipment for elves, using their imagination and creativity. Discovery of the World: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children will experiment with loose parts and nature materials to create an elves' garden. 	Suitable for: 5 - 6 years old <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 years old ● 6 years old
What you will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Natural materials such as twigs, branches, flowers, rocks, shells, leaves ● Camera 	Benefit-Risk Assessment: <u>Benefit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhance children's creativity by encouraging them to create different miniature play equipment with natural materials and loose parts they can find in the garden. ● Outdoor learning through gardening activities encourage children to focus on different types of play. ● Through play, children develop social relationships with peers, as they negotiate, learn how to

respectfully accept one another's suggestions and collaborate in play.

- Children's participation enables them to appreciate nature in a more meaningful manner.
- The elves' garden will alleviate children's imagination to a new level, as they co-construct mini gardening tools and play equipment for the elves. Teachers can encourage children to use different types of material to create mini slides, swings and see-saws for the elves' garden.

Risk:

- Work with the resident committee gardener to arrange for a visit to assess its suitability for children.
- Assess if harmful chemicals, gardening tools and equipment are stacked in a proper storage, and out of bounds for children.
- Find out from the gardener if there is any harmful insects or garden pests.
- Determine a suitable timing for children to visit the garden to avoid excessive heat.

Management:

- Centre to collaborate closely with the resident committee gardener in making sure the harmful chemical, gardening tools and equipment are stored properly, which is out of reach for children.

- Remind children to bring insect repellent, a sun hat and water bottle along for the activity.
- Educate children not to taste any flowers or plants.
- Align parents' expectations by updating them in advance on the upcoming outdoor play activity. Prepare parents that children may sustain mosquito bites or cuts due to unforeseen circumstances.

How to make it happen:

1. Contact the Resident committee gardener and request for a visit.
2. Recheck the garden to ensure there are no garden pests where children will be constructing the elves' garden.
3. Share stories about elves to prepare children for the elves' garden activity.
4. Share photos of playground equipment, so that children will have prior knowledge and discuss among themselves the types of playground they want to construct for the elves' garden.
5. On the day of the activity, divide children in groups of five.
6. Upon arrival in the garden, reinforce outdoor rules and regulations to the children.
7. In their groups, children are given 10 minutes to collect twigs, branches, leaves and shells.
8. Facilitate children to co-construct their elves' gardens with the natural materials gathered.
9. Encourage children to imagine how the elves would play in the garden.
10. When children have completed their elves' garden, invite each group to conduct a show and tell with friends.
11. Take photos of their creation for display later.
12. Back in the classroom, encourage children to create their indoor version of the elves' garden using loose parts such as buttons, recycled bottles of different sizes, etc.