

Nature Play

13 kid-friendly things to do while exploring outdoors



Go on a scavenger hunt!

Get active and explore on a “hunt” for nature’s treasures. Download our printer-friendly list of treasures to look for at vaughan.ca/GreatWalks



Take Pictures

While you’re walking give children an old camera or help them use yours. When you get home, you can take those pictures and make them into a simple photobook.



Nature Rubbings

A leaf, tree trunk or rock can all be great ways to talk about the textures in the world around us. Simply place a thin sheet of paper on top of the item and gently rub a crayon over it and see what takes shape!



Flower painting

Collect fallen flowers and leaves while you explore the Great Walks and use them to create colourful artwork. Use what you collected as stamps with watercolour paint-pads and paper to make unique pieces of art.



Go on a bug hunt

Bring a magnifying glass along while you are on your nature walk and take a closer look at the ants, spiders, beetles and other bugs you see outside. Try feeding ants little crumbs of food to see what happens.



I spy ...

One of the best and simplest ways to keep children actively involved in a walk is to play the I spy game. “I spy the letter S. I spy something green. I spy something round.” The possibilities are endless.



Gather “treasures” for an art project

A walk is a great way to gather free art supplies. Go out and gather “treasures” then come home and let children start their art project with glue, paint, and lots of creativity.



Draw a Map

Get children entertained by asking them to draw a map of the area you’re exploring; especially, when you are resting along your walk. This supports spatial thinking by helping children visualize the locations of objects.

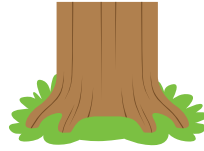
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What does that sign mean?

Along your walk you will encounter many different signs. Ask kids what they think the sign means. This can help develop critical thinking skills as well as familiarize children with the world around them.



Turn your walk into an obstacle course

Hop over those tree roots along the trail. Run around that tree. Touch that rock. Run fast, STOP! These are all ways to turn a simple stroll into a listening and lively activity.



Create a Journey Stick

Use double sided sticky tape or string on a walking stick. During your walk collect different items like rocks, leaves or feathers and tie or stick them onto their journey stick!



Collect and Dissect

Go out and collect acorns, flowers, ferns and leaves. Then bring them home and look inside them. Did you find seeds or pollen?



Create clay leaf prints and pendants

While walking, keep small fallen leaves and ferns you find and place them on wax paper at home. Use a small piece of air-drying clay, roll it into a ball and press it firmly against a leaf. Peel the leaf away and see what takes shape. You can also use a straw to add a hole and make it into a pendant. Once fully dry (may take a day or two), colour the prints with watercolour paint.