

When summer holidays finally arrive, take time to get outdoors in the bright sunny weather and enjoy meaningful play with your kids! This summer, introduce your little learners to natural science through fun and engaging STEM activities for elementary kids! Using minimal supplies and the great outdoors, your child will be delighted to explore their natural surroundings while they complete the following fun-filled activities!



Build a Stick Maze

One of the most intriguing [science activities for preschoolers](#), building a stick maze is a great way to get your child started playing and learning outdoors!

What You'll Need:

- Backyard space, or an open park
- Long tree sticks, preferably sticks of a similar size
- Paper and markers or crayons to plan the maze

How to Make It:

First, help your child plan a basic maze shape using paper and markers. Guide your child to build a challenging, yet realistic maze, considering the size of your yard and the amount of sticks available. Second, get in on the fun! Help your child gather sticks in the back yard or park space you and your child will be using to create the maze.

Now for a limited time: [get our Talented and Gifted app at a huge 60% discount! No matter what STEM projects your child is working on, Kids Academy will prime your child for meaningful learning with exciting STEM activities!](#)

Your child will need to find plenty of sticks, so make a collection before you begin building the maze. Using the map you created with your child, create the maze shape on the ground using the sticks! When finished, let loose and run through the maze together!

Make a DIY Sundial

How can we use the sun to tell the time? Using this activity, your child will [learn to tell time](#) like our ancestors. Teach your child how to use the sun to create the coolest clock they'll ever use!

What You'll Need:

- A paper plate
- Pencil
- Free printable clock face, available online

How to Make It:

To get started, print out a free clock face, available online. Be sure to find one that doesn't have minute or hour hands! Next, help your child cut the printable clock face and paste it to the back of the paper plate. Punch a hole in the center of the plate, and place a pencil in the hole. Head outdoors on a sunny day!

Positioning the clock with the 12 facing north, set the paper plate down on the ground. The shadow created by the pencil will tell your child the current time to the hour! Your child will be fascinated to know that they can tell the time simply by the position of the sun!



Sandbox Volcano Eruptions

Science is more fun outdoors where we can feel free to get messy! Head to the nearest sandbox to complete this next fun STEM activity!

What You'll Need:

- A sandbox with sand
- Baking soda
- Water
- Vinegar
- Small 16 oz. water bottle
- Dish soap
- Food coloring

How to Make It:

Fill the water bottle about a third full, and add food coloring to make the lava color of your child's choice! Add a drop or two of dish soap, and then add about 5 teaspoons of baking soda. Tightly cap the bottle until your child is ready to make it erupt! Build up the sand around the bottle to make a mountain or volcano.

Be sure to cover the bottle so it looks like a real volcano! Uncap the bottle and pour about a cup of vinegar into the bottle and watch the volcano erupt! Afterwards, talk about the different ingredients and encourage your little learner to think about which ingredient set off the volcano!

Nature Containers

Your little scientist will love finding and collecting and examining new and intriguing plants and objects outside by creating nature containers!

What You'll Need:

- Bottles with caps- glass water bottles work great for this activity
- A magnifying glass
- Small baking sheets
- Plant identification guides

How to Make It:

Let's take a hike in the back yard! Once outside, help your child look high and low for anything that interests them. They can collect leaves, sticks, pine cones, acorns, dirt, flowers, weeds, rocks, or anything that intrigues your child. Be sure to steer clear of insects, animals, or their droppings!

Encourage your child to collect their favorite items to keep in the containers. Examine each item collected with a magnifying glass, and identify different types of weeds, flowers, leaves, and more!

Using the above ideas, your child will have a blast exploring science outside, while building lifelong skills for future success! Need more ideas for intriguing exploration at home? Check out these [STEM activities for your soon-to-be scientist!](#)

