



## HELLO PARENTS,

Loose parts are materials that can be moved all around the room and used in endless ways. Some examples include: collections of buttons, pine cones, stones, sand, pieces of fabric, recycled materials, etc. They encourage self-directed, independent play, and motivate children to observe closely, enquire, investigate, construct, deconstruct and engage with others. There is no right or wrong way to play with loose parts, and children can use them on their own terms and in their own unique ways. In this newsletter, you will find activities that will encourage your child to explore and create with loose parts.

## ACTIVITIES INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

### WHAT CAN I DO WITH LIDS?

#### MATERIALS:

- Jar lids (different colours, sizes and material)
- Container

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Invite your child to explore the lids.
- Observe what your child is doing and what grabs their attention. Is it the shape and texture of the lids or the sound they make? Or is it the quantity that your child finds interesting?
- Play along and comment on what your child is doing.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

## TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

### LOOSE PARTS TREASURE HUNT

#### MATERIALS:

- Two containers or baskets

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Invite your child to go on a treasure hunt.
- Take your baskets and walk around the house, checking out cupboards, drawers and closets.
- Gather up random objects like: newspapers, straws, blocks, rolling pins, socks, cups, etc.
- Follow your child's lead and see what interests them.
- When your baskets are full, sit down and inspect what you have collected and what you could do with your treasures.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

## PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

### ROCK MOSAIC

#### MATERIALS:

- Collection of rocks in different shapes and colours

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Invite your child to look at the rocks and talk about their shapes, sizes and colours.
- Encourage your child to create designs using rocks.
- Ask your child what other natural or found materials could be added to their creation and search for them together.
- As an extension to this activity, your child can create patterns using the materials.

[Click here](#) for more activities.

## JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

### ESTIMATION GAME

#### MATERIALS:

- Tray
- Loose parts, multiple in each category. Examples: beads, buttons, paper towel rolls, straw cleaners, etc.

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Have your child take a handful of loose parts from one category and place them on the tray.
- Ask your child to estimate the number of objects on the tray without counting.
- After your child has made their guess, ask them count the objects to see if their estimate was correct.
- Continue the game with different loose parts.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

## SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

### EDITABLE ARTWORK

#### MATERIALS:

- Loose parts of your choice
- Piece of cardboard

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Choose a theme or subject for your artwork.
- Collect various loose parts which you think will be appropriate for your art piece. For example, you can use small wooden pieces, leaves, playdough, rocks, scrap paper, etc.
- Arrange the loose parts on a board to create editable artwork.
- Reflect on your artwork. Over time, continue adding or taking away pieces, and making changes to it (editing it).

[Click here](#) for more ideas.



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### A TIP FOR TODAY

- Use boxes, milk jugs, wipes containers, etc. as blocks.
- Engage your child in sorting loose parts into containers.
- Use large objects with younger children to prevent choking.
- Encourage your child to explore various loose parts freely and follow their ideas.