

# SENSORY PLAY Starter Kit

## 4 EASY BIN IDEAS

OCEAN • BARNYARD • INSECT • GARDENING

Bring the wonders of the ocean, the excitement of the farm, the curiosity of bug hunting, and the joy of gardening right into your child's hands, simple sensory fun for preschoolers at home or in the classroom.

# Ocean Dive Sensory Bin

**Skills:** Fine motor control, language development, early science (sink/float).



INVITE THE CHILD TO SCOOP, POUR, AND RESCUE SEA CREATURES FROM THE "OCEAN." ENCOURAGE THEM TO NARRATE WHAT THEY'RE DOING AND THE SOUNDS THE ANIMALS MAKE.

## Learning Prompts:

- "CAN YOU COUNT HOW MANY FISH YOU CATCH?"
- "WHICH ANIMALS SWIM AND WHICH CRAWL?"
- "WHAT KIND OF HOME COULD WE MAKE FOR THE ANIMALS IN THE OCEAN?"

## Materials:

- BLUE WATER (ADD A DROP OF FOOD COLORING TO WATER) OR BLUE DYED RICE
- PLASTIC OCEAN ANIMALS OR FISH TOYS
- SMALL CUPS, SPOONS, OR TONGS

# Barnyard Sensory Bin

**Skills:** Storytelling and imaginative play, sorting and categorization, fine motor skills, and vocabulary building.



INVITE THE CHILD TO SCOOP, POUR, AND MOVE ANIMALS AROUND THE "FARM." ENCOURAGE THEM TO NARRATE WHAT THE ANIMALS ARE DOING AND THE SOUNDS THEY MAKE.

## Learning Prompts:

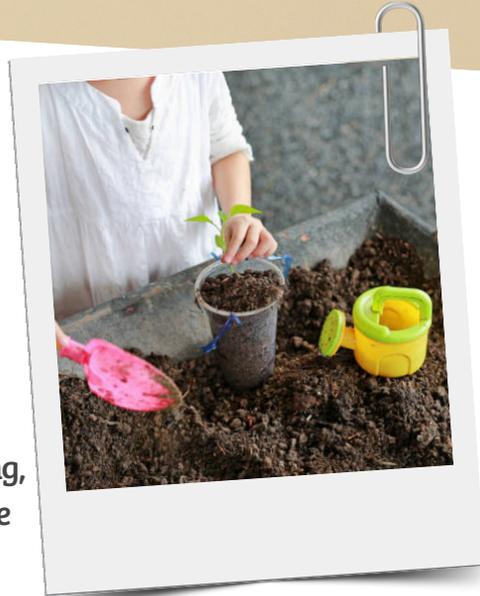
- "CAN YOU GROUP THE ANIMALS BY TYPE?"
- "WHAT SOUNDS DO THEY MAKE?"
- "WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENS ON THE FARM DURING THE DAY?"
- "WHERE DO YOU THINK EACH ANIMAL SHOULD SLEEP ON THE FARM?"

## Materials:

- DRY CORN KERNELS
- SMALL FARM ANIMALS (COWS, PIGS, CHICKENS, ETC.)
- TOY TRACTORS
- MINI FENCES OR BUILDING BLOCKS TO CREATE ENCLOSURES

# Gardening Sensory Bin

**Skills:** Fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, color recognition and patterning, early science concepts (plant needs), language and vocabulary development



INVITE THE CHILD TO SCOOP "SOIL" INTO POTS, PLANT FLOWERS, AND ARRANGE THEIR OWN GARDEN. ENCOURAGE THEM TO TALK ABOUT THE COLORS, SIZES, AND TYPES OF FLOWERS THEY ARE "GROWING."

## Learning Prompts:

- "CAN YOU SORT THE FLOWERS BY COLOR?"
- "WHAT DO PLANTS NEED TO GROW?"
- "CAN YOU MAKE A PATTERN WITH THE FLOWERS?"
- "CAN YOU LINE THE FLOWERS UP FROM TALLEST TO SHORTEST?"
- "WHERE SHOULD WE PUT EACH FLOWER SO THEY ALL GET ENOUGH SUNLIGHT?"

## Materials:

- DRY BLACK BEANS (AS "SOIL")
- SMALL PLASTIC FLOWERS OR ARTIFICIAL GREENERY
- MINI FLOWERPOTS OR CUPS
- CHILD-SAFE SCOOPS AND SPOONS

# Insects Sensory Bin

**Skills:** Observation and classification, fine motor skills (using tweezers, grasping), counting and size comparison, vocabulary expansion (insect names and traits)



INVITE THE CHILD TO SEARCH THROUGH THE GRASS TO FIND AND COLLECT BUGS. ENCOURAGE THEM TO DESCRIBE EACH INSECT'S COLOR, SHAPE, AND HOW IT MIGHT MOVE IN REAL LIFE.

## Learning Prompts:

- "CAN YOU SORT THE BUGS BY HOW MANY LEGS THEY HAVE?"
- "WHICH INSECTS CAN FLY AND WHICH STAY ON THE GROUND?"
- "CAN YOU LINE THE INSECTS UP FROM SMALLEST TO LARGEST?"

## Materials:

- DRY GREEN SPLIT PEAS OR SHREDDED GREEN PAPER (AS "GRASS")
- PLASTIC INSECTS (LADYBUGS, ANTS, BUTTERFLIES, BEETLES, ETC.)
- SMALL MAGNIFYING GLASS
- TWEEZERS OR TONGS
- MINI CONTAINERS OR JARS FOR "COLLECTING"