

A springboard to inspire student investigation and/or teacher planning !

| Ways to be Smart | Knowing | Understanding | Applying | Analysing | Creating | Evaluating |
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| Word Smart I learn best by reading, writing & speaking | Read your favourite book about nature or watch Extraordinary about the wonders of being outside. | Sit in nature and write a poem or description about a tree, an insect, the weather, a flower. Use interesting adjectives to describe the feel, look, smell, and sound of your subject. | Play I Spy outside. Or can you find and name an object for every letter? Can you add an adjective? E.g. rough rock. | Choose a plant or animal to research and present some facts about it as a poster, quiz, slideshow or video. Share it with family, friends, class mates, teachers, etc | Make up a crossword or find-a-word of natural objects in your backyard or local park. | Write a persuasive piece about why it is vital that all kids have nature in their lives. Provide three reasons. |
| Number Smart I learn best by working with numbers/science | Collect sticks, rocks and other natural objects. Order them from lightest to heaviest, shortest to longest just by sight/feel. Can you measure them in grams/cm? | Collect, list or draw natural objects that are symmetrical and those that are not symmetrical. | Use a hoop/string to make a circle on the ground. Make a prediction then count, sketch, list, classify everything you see in your circle. Try again in a different spot. | Learn about and record the different types of Wild Pollinators in your backyard or local park. | Create 3D shapes out of sticks using string to bind them together | Can you predict the height of a tree, the circumference of a log, the length of a leaf, the width of a creek? How could you measure it? |
| Picture Smart I learn best by drawing and visualising | Use a magnifying glass or take a close up photo to study a flower, leaf or bug then sketch, colour and label it. | Draw what it might look like underground in an ant colony, the birds eye view of your backyard or what a garden might look like to a ladybird. Or do a nature mindful colouring sheet. | Do Step 4 of the Wild Pollinators activity and create an artwork of your favourite wild pollinator. | Look at two examples of a seasonal calendar and start creating your own with pictures/words of the changes you notice each season. Add to it throughout the year. | Make a map of your favourite natural place. Add colour and captions to detail how you use the space, what grows where, how animals use the space, interesting features. | Choose a colour and take photos of objects to capture a spectrum of one colour. Eg. Order green plants from darkest to lightest. |
| Body Smart I learn best by being active and hands on | Collect leaves and flowers and press them between the pages of a heavy book. Use them to make greeting cards. | Go on a sensory walk. Close your eyes, feel natural objects, describe how they feel and how they make you feel. | Learn about how ochre was used in traditional life. Find some rocks to grind up and make your own paint? | Collect natural objects to represent the 7 colours of the rainbow. Are there any other colours you can include? | Research the symbolism of mandalas. Mandalas are circular and use symmetry. Make a nature mandala from objects in nature and explain why you chose your design. | Make an outdoor obstacle course, document instructions and health tips. Make it as natural as possible – balance on a log, climb a tree, stomp in mud, use rocks as weights . . |
| Music Smart I learn best by making and listening to music | Play bird calls and frog calls from the Field Guide to Victorian Fauna free App and enjoy nature's music. Identify calls at your place. | Lie on your back outside and listen to a piece of relaxing music. Breathe deeply, be mindful. Feel every sensation and be grateful for nature. | Traditional Custodians believe the land/water is not healthy unless it sings. Try these 10 things to do to discover nature's music . | Watch videos about brolgas and then enjoy watching how they are represented in Aboriginal dance . Can you move or dance like an animal? | Use sticks, rocks, leaves, bark, water, etc to make music. Play slow, fast. Find low notes and high notes. Can you use your bush instruments to make up your own song? | Choose a piece of music that represents how you feel when you are in nature and explain why – is it the lyrics, melody, instruments? Choose a contrasting piece of music 🎵 |
| People Smart I learn best by working with others | Go birdwatching and see if you can identify birds in your backyard. Use the free Birddata App and be a citizen scientist. | Watch the clouds or stars with your family. Can you find shapes? How do traditional custodians understand the stars ? | Interview people about their favourite place in nature. Discuss where it is, why they love it, their memories of it, how it makes them feel. Add it to your bucket list of places. | Debate with a family member why children should be allowed to climb trees . . | Do a treasure hunt OR write clues for your own unique hunt to challenge family and friends. | Choose outdoor activities from this checklist , do them with your family then rate them in order of enjoyment or convince others why they should do them too! |
| Self Smart I learn best by myself | Start a nature journal – spend time outdoors and document your findings with notes, sketches, collage. | We don't often think about our own habitat. Use this worksheet to Observe and record what's in YOUR habitat | Collect a variety of natural objects that you love and use them to create a weaving . Hang it somewhere special to connect you with nature. | Crush and smell different types of flowers/leaves. Classify the smells. Use them to make your own potions/perfumes. Add them to mud pies. | Generate research questions about nature eg. How do ants know when it's going to rain? Why are summer days longer? | Use a device to capture creatures in slow motion. Compare them. Evaluate how and why they move that way. |

For students; Choose activities that interest you or follow your teacher's directions. We'd love to see what you create. Share your work (with permission from teachers) at riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au
For teachers; This matrix is a springboard of inspiration to engage students of all ages, abilities and learning styles. Feel free to simplify, extend or adapt the activities in any way to suit your unique situation.