



# PROGRAM OUTLINE

## *Growth - Seeds, Leaves, Trees*

*How do I use this program outline?*

1. Choose the activities and experiences you would like to add to your blank program template to compile a weekly, fortnightly or monthly plan.
2. Add chosen activities & experiences to the Empowered Ed **blank program template** (print or save to your computer) *or your own preferred template/app/form*. Make sure to fill in the dates when you compile your program to indicate if your plan is covering weekly, fortnightly or monthly.
3. Match the **numbered activities on your plan** to the corresponding activity guides (Playful Learning Page). **Click on the text links below the activity guide numbers for additional suggested activities and experiences relating to the program theme in each learning area.** If using the member Hub blank program template, I've made it easy for you by matching the learning areas in this program outline to the activity boxes on the template!
4. Fill out the separate **organisation planner** each week if you wish to help you keep up to date with all documentation requirements including reflection, prep, observations and forward planning (optional).
5. You **DO NOT** need to include every activity included in this program outline. Take what you need from the suggestions and tips to make planning a quicker and easier process for you. You know your children's needs best so always modify as needed (age ranges are suggestions only – children may be developing at different paces in your setting) and don't try to add too much each week – aim for a balance of spontaneous and intentional moments!

# HOW TO USE THE MONTHLY PROGRAM OUTLINES & PLANNERS

Using the program outlines will give you more time back with the children, and help you better understand how to simplify your weekly planning and get into a rhythm so you never fall behind again!

Following the program outlines and adding to a blank planner template will give you a system that takes out the confusion and ensures you are confident about meeting the planning cycle steps and how they link together to show clear evidence you are recording ongoing information about the progress of a child's individual learning journey.

- All activities on the program outlines have already been placed into specific learning areas with outcomes. Refer to the learning areas/outcomes guide at the end of this document for more information.
- You can choose to use all of the activities in the monthly outline, or just the ones you need, and add to your blank program template to save or print. Your blank planner can be a weekly, fortnightly or monthly program so just choose the number of activities you need from the monthly program outline you have chosen.
- All numbered activities in the outline are linked to an activity guide, recommended age group, and learning area.
- The majority of the suggested activities have a corresponding activity guide number beside them. Write these numbers down on the front page of your weekly organisation planner for quick reference.
- Take note of the icons beside each learning area on the planners, on the program outlines and also at the top of each activity guide to help you save time.

This guide includes all the information you need to use the monthly program outlines and planner templates, but for even more in depth guidance around how to use the planners and outlines [please watch the tutorial video](#) on the Planning Made Simple page.

# WHAT DO THE BOXES MEAN?

Use this guide to help you understand what each box on the planner is used for and what you might add if creating your own plan using the blank template.

 **EXPLORING OUR WORLD**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials, investigation of the plant and animal life in the care area, sustainability and respect for the environment, sensory experiences and more.

 **INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for gross & fine motor muscles, use of real life materials for props, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, communication, role play, group play, problem solving and more.

 **LET'S GET MOVING**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for gross & fine motor muscles, use of recycled and natural materials for obstacles, sensory experiences, opportunities for problem solving & teamwork, communication, role play, group play and musical discovery

 **CREATIVE & SENSORY PLAY**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative self expression, communication, use of senses, discovery, problem solving and more!

 **FINE MOTOR/ MANIPULATIVE PLAY**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, challenges for fine motor muscles, use of natural materials, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and cognitive self expression, communication, investigation, problem solving and more!

 **CONNECTING THROUGH COMMUNICATION**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of natural materials for conversation prompts, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, music, language & communication, role play, group play, problem solving and more

 **ENCOURAGING IDENTITY & INDEPENDENCE**

Activities in this section include indoor and outdoor play, use of real life materials for props, sensory experiences, opportunities for creative and dramatic self expression, communication, exploring of emotions & senses , role play, group play, problem solving and more.

 **EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS**

On your blank program add the toys, materials etc. that will you have available everyday for regular self selection here.

**INTENTIONAL TEACHING FOCUS**

Jot down a few intentional teaching ideas that you would like to incorporate into the activities you have planned for the current week. keep them simple, use information from observations and modify to suit group needs.

**SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS & LEARNING**

Use this box to add to your completed program template as the week goes on. Note those activities, emerging interests, or moments that you feel were special or meaningful for some reason – or just something you would like to extend on or do again another week.

**FEEDBACK / VOICES**

Use this box to add in any parent/community or educator feedback during the week so you always know where to find it! You could also add the children's voices/input here.

# PLANNER LEARNING AREAS & OUTCOMES GUIDE

With all of the Member Hub Monthly Program Outlines you simply choose a few activities from each interest area and add to your blank planner template, confident in the knowledge that you are covering all areas of a learning framework without needing to add time consuming codes, numbers or colours to your program. You choose whether to make your planner template cover a week, fortnight or month of planning.

## HOW DO I USE THE LEARNING AREAS?

There are 7 learning areas to choose your activities from. Each program area corresponds to an Australian Early Years Learning Framework Outcome.

I've created the learning areas to also correspond with many other common early childhood learning goals worldwide so no matter where you live you will find this planner helpful to your role!

The 7 learning areas have been added to your blank planner as box headings. As you begin using the monthly outlines and plans they should help you to begin easily identifying additional learning areas and outcomes.

Always work your planner as a flexible document. Be open to spontaneous moments, children leading the play, weather changes, behaviour and illness changing the direction or focus of your learning areas and outcomes. Activities have many learning possibilities - please keep in mind that just because I have added one activity to a certain learning area it doesn't mean it cannot also be included in other areas you might be focusing on. Be flexible in your planning and enjoy thinking about the possibilities your experiences will provide as children travel their individual learning paths.

### **The 7 Empowered Educator learning areas are:**

1. Exploring our World
2. Creative & Sensory
3. Fine Motor/Manipulative
4. Inviting the Imagination in
5. Let's Get Moving
6. Connecting with Communication
7. Independence & Identity

# HOW DO THE LEARNING AREAS CORRESPOND WITH THE EYLF OUTCOMES?

## Exploring our world

Outcomes 1,2,4

- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children have a strong sense of identity.

## Creative & Sensory

Outcomes 2,4,5

- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators

## Fine Motor Fun

Outcomes 3,4,5

- Children have a strong sense of well-being.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

## Inviting Imagination In

Outcomes 1,2,4,5

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

## Let's Get Moving

Outcomes 2,3,4,5

- Children have a strong sense of well-being
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world

## Connecting with Communication

Outcomes 1,2,4,5

- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of identity.

## Identity and Independence

Outcomes 1,2,3,4,5

- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators
- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children have a strong sense of well-being
- Children are connected & contribute to their world.

Please refer to the 'what do the boxes mean' section on the page 2 to help you better understand the purpose of all boxes on the planners and what you might add if creating your own plan using the blank template.

## A WORD ABOUT ACTIVITY MATERIALS USED IN THE OUTLINES

There is no need for expensive equipment or resources to keep children engaged, nurtured and challenged.

The activities in this planner use simple everyday items that you probably already have in the cupboard, or that can be brought cheaply from the \$2 shop and other discount stores. It just takes a little creativity to save money and provide the types of experiences that are easy to setup and allow educators to actually spend time focusing on the children and their play.

As you use the suggested activities from the planners please keep in mind that all children develop at different paces and it is up to you as the educator to make an informed decision on the materials and experiences that best suit the children you have in care, and your own level of comfort with certain materials. Common sense and close supervision is always required with young children, so please act accordingly.

I believe the activities and materials I have shared in this planner are all safe and I have personally tried every single one out over the years with all age groups including babies and toddlers, 3-5's and school age children in my care, but ultimately you must take your own environment, level of experience, children's allergies, service requirements, philosophy and capacity to supervise into account.

If you can't source the specified materials needed for an activity you have chosen, it should be easy to simply swap for something you do have. There are no rules and I'm all for sustainability and not buying resources if you don't have to, so try and think outside the box a little and use something similar on the 'resource cupboard essentials' list you can find below, or just reuse a resource you already have in a different way.

You can use the 'extending the play' section in the activity guides to not only help with forward planning, but to also give you suggestions for using the same materials in different ways to save time and money.

Create, Modify, Play!

# EMPOWERED EDUCATOR RESOURCE CUPBOARD ESSENTIALS

You can collect or buy most of these resource cupboard essential items for very little money or for free! Look for resources at your local supermarket, discount shop, op shop, or in the recycling. If you have these items in your cupboard you'll always have the essential resources you need for lots of play and education.

- Recycle Bin filled with paper, cardboard, plastic containers, lids, tins, jars, cardboard rolls, newspaper, old wrapping paper.
- Plastic plates, cups, bowls—real sizes.
- Baby bowls, cups, bottles, spoons suitable for play.
- Scarves, silks, gauzy light fabrics.
- Old net curtains (no large holes).
- Large appliance or moving boxes.
- Wool, string, twine, elastic, rubber bands, ribbons, netting.
- Big and small baskets, shoe-boxes.
- Cushions, pillows, mats, towels.
- Balls of different shapes and sizes.
- Soft and hard blocks—different sizes.
- ESSENTIAL - [Cornflour Paint base](#).
- ESSENTIAL- Cellmix Powder/Mix-a-paste
- ESSENTIAL - Edicol vegetable powder paint dyes. They can be used to colour play dough, cornflour paint base, pasta, sand, added to water and you only need a pinch! Most educational supply stores sell in small and large tubs.
- Bubble Wrap
- Saucepans, saucepan lids, cake tins.
- Cellophane, tissue paper, paper towel.
- Microwave play dough - Find my easy recipe [on the blog HERE](#).
- Leaves, twigs, greenery, flowers.
- Socks - adult and child size.
- Fruit & Vegetables.
- Stones, pebbles, gems.
- Material and felt remnants.
- [Soapy Slime](#)
- Recycled water & juice bottles.
- Kitchen utensils and gadgets.
- Spoons of different sizes & textures.
- Real kitchen items from op shops.
- Adult and child sized shoes for play.
- Handbags, sunglasses, hats.
- Baby clothes.
- Cotton buds, large straws, cotton balls.
- Dry beans, rice, spaghetti, pasta (optional for those who prefer not to use food based materials).
- Toothbrushes, dish mops, scourer pads, shaving brushes, combs, squeegees.
- Cars, trucks, animals.

# OUR CURRENT PROGRAM OF PLAY AND LEARNING

6-12 Years

Dates:

 EXPLORING OUR WORLD

 INVITING THE IMAGINATION IN

 LET'S GET MOVING

 CREATIVE & SENSORY PLAY

 FINE MOTOR/  
MANIPULATIVE PLAY

 CONNECTING THROUGH  
COMMUNICATION

 ENCOURAGING IDENTITY  
& INDEPENDENCE

 EVERY DAY ESSENTIALS

INTENTIONAL TEACHING FOCUS  
SUGGESTIONS

SPONTANEOUS MOMENTS & LEARNING

FEEDBACK / VOICES

# MY WEEKLY ORGANISATION PLANNER (6 -12 Years)

Week Beginning :

<p>THIS WEEK'S EARLY LEARNING FOCUS OR THEME</p>	<p>THIS WEEK'S REFLECTIONS &amp; OBSERVATIONS THAT MAY GUIDE PLANNING THIS WEEK. Is there something you need to try again, do differently, observe, extend upon or introduce?</p>
<p>SPECIAL INCURSIONS, EXCURSIONS OR COMMUNITY VISITS THIS WEEK</p>	<p>ACTIVITY GUIDES NEEDED FOR THIS PLAN Add numbers of the activity plans required for quick reference</p>
<p>INDOOR ENVIRONMENT SETUP What do I need to add, change, modify or remove this week?</p>	<p>OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT SETUP What do I need to add, change, modify or remove this week?</p>
<p>THIS WEEK'S SHOPPING LIST</p> <p>CURRENT BUDGET:</p>	

# WEEKLY ADMINISTRATION & PLANNING CYCLE CHECKLIST

Week Beginning :

Number of Individual Child or group observations documented this week	
Analysis of Learning (of documented observations) completed.	
Forward Planning ideas/activities/suggestions recorded for next week's planning	
Brief weekly (or daily) reflections and critical reflection notes have been completed..	
Home Daycare/ Family Day care time-sheets/invoices/accounts/admin completed (if applicable)	
Early Learning centre/room/group (if applicable) administration paperwork completed and filed (as required weekly).	
Toy rotation organised for next week (if applicable)	
Environment changes required due to group dynamics, changes in development or this week's reflections and observations have been identified	
Notes/Letters/Newsletters to parents sent to parents (as required)	
Weekly Planner completed, saved or filed.	

# REFLECTIONS ON MY PLANNING AND WORK WITH THE CHILDREN THIS WEEK

Week Beginning :

## WHAT WENT WELL?

Why? What would I do again?  
What did the children's voices and actions tell me?  
What factors impacted on the overall feel of this week?

## WHAT DIDN'T GO WELL?

What could I do less of?  
How could I manage this better next time?  
What factors impacted on the overall feel of this week?  
What did the children's voices and actions tell me?

## CRITICAL REFLECTION THOUGHTS.

Refer to the Critical Reflection Guide (in Plans Made Simple member section) for suggested questions you might ask yourself or others to guide your critical reflections here.  
Add to the monthly critical reflection tool.

## POSSIBLE IDEAS OR FOLLOW ON FOR NEXT WEEK

What? When? Why?

## ENVIRONMENT CHANGES REQUIRED FOR NEXT WEEK.

Why do I need them? What can I remove, add, modify?



## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 16** – Seed Bags

**A 15** – Tree Faces

**A 44** - Seed Bombs

**A145** – Simple Bug Hotels

## Simple Suggestions to add:

***Jump online then click on the links below** for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- [An air plant indoor garden](#) is a perfect way to introduce children to living things and how to look after them to help them grow.
- Investigate the process of hydroponics [with this bean space garden](#) – all you need is a recycled water bottle!
- Some simple growing fun [with these cress heads](#). Or show children how grass seeds germinate and grow quickly to turn into [playful grass animals](#).
- Help children choose flowers to make their own fresh flower discovery bottle. [Inspiration here for you.](#)
- Head outdoors, find some green leaves [then use this experiment](#) to help children learn about how water moves through veins in a leaf.
- Make recycled paper with [accents from nature using this process](#).
- Grow a see-through seed garden together. [See how easy it is here.](#)



## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 165** – Slippery Sensory Seeds

**A 46** – Bridge Builder

**A 125** – Make a Stick Maze

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Set up a [real garden shop like we did here](#) and invite parents to take something home! Modify the materials and size of invitation for children you have in care.
- Some other ideas for garden shop play [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
- Set up a fresh flower and seed [playdough invitation similar to this one](#).
- Choose a few invitation to play ideas [from this huge collection of inspiration](#) from fellow empowered educators!
- Go on a nature hunt for flowers and greenery then add a little playdough and encourage the children to become little florists as they make flower arrangements. Encourage the use of scissors to snip their flowers and leaves. [See how we played with a similar theme here](#).
- Make some playdough pizzas using nature as your 'ingredients'. [This is one for all ages!](#)



## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 193** – Musical Painting – *Try this one outside with your paintbrushes made from leaves and other items from nature (see instructions in sensory and creative play below)*

**A 81** – Shape Hunt & Squirt – *Instead of shapes peg some leaves in different sizes and colours around the yard for children to 'target'. You can add challenges for the older children with simple directions like 'find a **red** leaf and squirt with the **red** paint!'*

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Before you make your pumpkin soup use some smaller pumpkins to invite gross motor play with [some of these rolling activities!](#)
- Head outside with some measuring tapes and rulers to measure trees, leaves and stones. [Inspiration for more nature math here.](#)
- Download the outdoor scavenger hunt cards [from member hub on this page](#) and then choose the way to play that best suits the age groups you currently have in care. The cards look like this image >>





## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 51** – Lavender Playdough Imprints – *Add different seed pods and leaves to create different patterns.*

**A 7** – White Clay Nature Ornaments

**A196** – Stick Dot Painting

**A 62** – Tree Rollers – *When you finish roller painting the tree see what else the children can find to paint with their rollers – leaves, stones, sticks...*

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Collect some seed pods, add a few DIY paint sponge pads and stand back as the stamping begins – young and old enjoy making patterns! [See how I set up a similar activity here.](#)
- Use flowers for printing and painting then challenge older children to use a scraper as well to create a different effect, [just like they did here.](#)
- Provide seeds, greenery and flower petals for children to create their own unique sticky mural. [Inspiration for you here.](#)
- An oldie but a goodie for all ages! [Leaf Rubbing art.](#) Works well with tree bark too!
- Encourage children to design their own leaf shape then use to make some colourful suncatchers. [Inspiration for you here.](#)
- Use shaving foam and coloured edicol dyes to [create some marbled leaves like these ones.](#)
- Provide materials from nature for children to make their own paintbrushes [similar to the ones here.](#)



# FINE MOTOR / MANIPULATIVE PLAY

## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 134** – Leaf Punch Mobile

**A 52** – Seed Sort, Pack & Label

**A 38** – Stick Leaf Tower Patterns

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Make some sprinkle seed mosaics using sticky paper on trays. [Inspiration here.](#)
- Make some [sensory seed fingerprint.](#)
- Challenge eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills [with this yarn wrapping activity.](#)
- Provide the materials for children to make some simple nature wands [like these ones together.](#)
- Collect seeds from giant sunflowers then [turn them into paint stampers as we did here!](#)
- Use colourful leaves, flowers or bark and some glass gems to set up a simple sorting invitation. [Inspiration here for you.](#)
- On a hot day [add some small frozen flower cups to the water tray.](#) I have also used the larger silicone ice trays to make smaller flower treasures as they allow smaller hands to pick up and investigate a little easier. Allow a little time the day before to collect flower petals and freeze the water cups or cubes with the children's help.
- Use some recycled lids as a base for children to make unique bean mosaics. [See the process here.](#)



## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

**A 143** – Leaf Discovery Box

**A 135** – Jar Lid Boat Races

**A 39** – Let's Cook – Pumpkin Soup – *With a focus on seeds in this planner, why not use some of the 'extending the play' suggestions in this activity guide.*

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a school-age group environment with supervision. Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Go on a nature hunt outside and encourage everyone to contribute to a nature art rainbow collage talking about colours and textures as the children create. [Inspiration here.](#)
- Use some of the book suggestions at the end of this planner to create small interest baskets and spaces children can relax in.
- Make some [rainstick sensory bottles](#) and explore the different sounds they make together. An alternative version for you [using a plastic bottle here.](#)
- Make music outside together with [this recycled jar xylophone activity!](#)
- Play the *does this food have seeds* game. Place some different foods onto a tray or table then explore with the children and open a conversation about whether they have seeds or not. How can we find out? How do they grow without a seed?
- Help children explore environments, ecosystems, energy flow and organism interactions by creating a scale model biodome as a group project throughout the term. [See how here.](#)



## Hub Activity Guides to choose from:

A 130 – Mini Zen Garden

A 144 – Shadow Art

## Simple Suggestions to add:

*Jump online then click on the links below for more ideas and inspiration to add to your blank program. I've done all the researching for you and all activities are suitable for children in a **school-age group environment** with supervision.*

*Please modify as needed according to your children's needs and developmental stages.*

- Get outdoors and explore how bodies move with [these easy garden yoga poses for young children](#).
- Hand out some small paper bags (or baskets) to the children and go on a walk around your local block or just in the backyard. Encourage children to pick up leaves, flowers etc that appeal to them and place in their 'nature treasure bag'. When you get back, provide some cardboard from the recycle bin and a little watered down PVA glue then ask the children to empty those bags create their own art! [Inspiration here for you](#). You could also make some space available for children to set up their own nature displays with their treasures!
- For a longer-term group project trying growing chamomile flowers from seed, nurture until they come into full flower, then snip and make your own chamomile tea! [See how to step by step here](#).
- Go on a nature hunt then [create individual 'nature names' similar to these ones](#) – a nice mix of large and fine motor muscle play while also focusing on letter recognition and creative self-expression.
- If children are craving some wind-down time or space to be on their own for a little bit set up an area with some smooth pebbles of different shapes and sizes. Encourage children to balance and stack. [This meditative art form doubles as a gravity-defying STEAM activity!](#)



# EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS FOCUS

This page includes some optional suggestions for setting up your environment to complement this monthly program outline. *Modify* according to your space and children.... or just use your own ideas! It is completely up to you whether to use these suggestions or not. Everyday essentials can include the *blocks/puzzles/dress-ups/cars/dolls/loose parts and other resources that you tend to have available each day*. Decide what you want to use this month then put everything else away as part of a toy rotation system.

## Materials & Interest Areas:

### Living Things Discovery Table

This is easily modified for different ages but the idea is to invite children to collect and bring in living things they find at home or when playing outdoors. Add books with colour photos of real gardens, seeds, insects, compost piles, flowers, trees, bark.... anything that grows! Add to the table over the month with photo stories and text of the children's activities and playful learning in this area.

### Dramatic Play Areas – Indoors & Outdoors

Dramatic play is a fantastic way for children of all ages to learn more about the world around them – including celebrations! Think outside the box here a little.... try not to just stick with the usual dress ups and hats! Here are some easy setup and prop ideas to get you started for this planner's theme of growth and living things...

- Child size gardening tools.
- Sun hats, glasses, aprons and gloves.
- Baskets, bags and trays.
- Real or artificial flowers and greenery.
- Watering cans or jugs.
- Cash registers, a newspaper for wrapping, paper bags.
- Empty seed packets (or small envelopes if you don't have any).
- Pots of different sizes- terracotta and plastic. Small eco peat pots are budget-friendly to buy in multiple packs and work very well in dramatic play spaces!
- Muffin trays and tins for 'planting'.
- Florist sponge blocks for flower arranging.
- Bug catchers
- Seedling trays (check gardening centres/Bunnings etc)
- Magnifying glasses, binoculars
- Bird, insect and garden books/guides.



# On the Shelves & Around the Room

Add a few baskets or tubs with some simple materials suitable as self-select items for the children to use and add to their everyday play. Think about how to add opportunities for children to extend their own play and access active, visual learning experiences. Some ideas for this planner's theme and general open-ended play:

- A tub of different coloured and sized leaves.
- Nature-themed puzzles and other manipulatives.
- Small felt boards with some leaves, flowers or vegetables cut from felt for children to make their own stories and games.
- A range of textured natural materials including seed pods, pine cones, flowers, leaves and bark.
- A tub of wood cookies, twigs and wool strands.
- Trays from the op shop and clean, recycled seedling trays to fill and empty.
- Clipboards with paper and crayons for rubbings.
- Cardboard tubes and rolls, empty shoeboxes.
- A few acrylic mirrors for looking at reflections.
- A basket of material pieces in different colours and textures along with some silky scarves.
- Small blocks or boxes wrapped in paper for children to build with.
- Wooden blocks, rainbow arches, PVC pipes, hose tubing.
- Watering cans, jugs, sieves and funnels for sensory play tubs and water play.
- Playdough & clay with seed pods for stamping.
- A basket of gardening magazines with colourful pictures.
- Scoops of different sizes to use in the sandpit (try the washing powder scoops, cooking scoops and measuring spoons and make a few from milk cartons)
- A basket of artificial flowers and plastic or wooden vases from the op shop.
- A tray of all thing's 'circle' for baby and crawlers to investigate e.g. lids of different sizes.
- Colourful window blocks or Magna tiles outside to create reflections and shadows.



# SUGGESTED RESOURCES & MATERIALS

## Books to find:

Try asking at your local library or bookshop to see if they have any of these titles available or just google for online buying options. I've also provided links to some story animations and readings on YouTube if you would like to incorporate technology along with your regular storytime.

*Keep in mind these books are just suggestions and not necessary to complete your program!*

### Baby & Toddler Recommended

- One Mole Digging a Hole – *Julia Donaldson*
- The Tiny Seed – *Eric Carle*
- Over in the Garden – *Jennifer Ward*
- Garden Safari - Vegetable Soup – *Eluka Moore*
- From the Garden (a Counting book) – *Michael Dahl*
- Counting in the Garden – *Emily Hruby*
- Ten Seeds – *Ruth Brown*
- One Watermelon Seed – *Celia Barker Lottridge*
- The Icky Bug Counting Book – *Jerry Pallotta*
- Zinnia's Flower Garden – *Monica Wellington*
- How Does a Seed Grow? – *Sue Kim*
- A Leaf Can Be.... – *Laura Purdie Salas*
- We're Going on a Leaf Hunt – *Steve Metzger*

### 3 – 5 Years Recommended

*Any of the books in the list above and...*

- Rainbow Stew – *Cathryn Falwell*
- A Seed is Sleepy – *Dianna H. Aston*
- One Bean – *Anne Rockwell*
- Seeds, Seeds, Seeds – *Nancy Elizabeth Wallace*
- The Dandelion Seed – *Joseph Anthony*
- If You Hold a Seed – *Elly Mackay*
- Leaf Man – *Lois Ehlert*



# SUGGESTED RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- The Curious Garden – *Peter Brown*
- Cucumber Soup – *Vickie Leigh Krudwig*
- This is the Nest That Robin Built – *Denise Fleming*
- My Garden – *Kevin Henkes*
- Little Tree – *Loren Long*
- Growing Vegetable Soup – *Lois Ehlert*
- Tree – A Peek Through Picture Book – *Britta Teckentrup*
- Up in the Garden & Down in the Dirt – *Kate Messner*
- Caterpillar & Bean – A First Science Storybook – *Martin Jenkins*
- Jack's Garden – *Henry Cole*
- Fun with Nature: Take-Along Guide – *Diane Burns & Leslie Dendy*
- Living & Non Living – *Kelli Hicks*
- Roots (Plant Parts) – *Vijaya Bodach*

## 6 – 12 Years Recommended

- From Seed to Plant - *Gail Gibbons*
- The Magic School Bus Plants Seeds – *Joanna Cole*
- Let's Go Nuts – Seeds We Eat – *April Pulley Sayre*
- From Seed to Plant – *Allan Fowler*
- Seeds (Science Explorer) – *Susan H. Gray*
- Seed to Plant - *National Geographic Readers*
- Seeds – *Ken Robbins*
- Kate, Who Tamed the Wind – *Liz Garton Scanlon*
- The Great Kapok Tree – *Lynne Cherry*
- Everything You Need for a Treehouse
- Drawn From Nature – *Helen Ahpornsiri*
- Oh, Can You Say Seed? – *Dr Suess*
- How a Seed Grows – *Helene J. Jordan*
- The Reason for a Flower – *Ruth Heller*
- Because of an Acorn – *Lola M Schaefer*
- There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves – *Lucille Colandro*



## Video Resources:

- [Songs about Nature Collection on YouTube](#)
- [How to plant Sunflowers activity with preschool children.](#) *Teaching 2- & 3-Year Olds.*
- [How does a seed become a plant – By SciShow Kids](#)
- [Life as a Tree – How to find out how old it is](#) – *SciShow Kids*
- [It's Alive – Biology for Kids](#) – *SciShow Kids*
- [Look Inside a Flower Science Project](#) – *SciShow Kids*
- [Be a Field Scientist](#) – *SciShow Kids*
- [Plant the Tiny Seed - Read Aloud Story](#) – *The Storytime Family*
- [The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle](#) – *Read by Pinkley Productions*
- [Farmer Plants the Seeds Song](#) – *The Kiboomers*
- [Watch Dirtgirl talk about Gardening.](#)
- [Dirtgirl's Outside Songs Playlist](#)
- [How to get Kid's into Gardening](#) – *ABC Gardening Australia*
- [Children's World Montessori Toddler Garden Tour](#)
- [Preschool Learn to Dance: Can You Plant a Bean](#) – *Dance & Beats Lab*
- [Tree Song- Learn about Trees! Roots, and Trunks, and Leaves!](#)
- [Play School: There Is A Worm at The Bottom of My Garden](#)
- [Justine Clarke - Doin' It \(Making The Garden Grow\)](#)
- [The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Animated Film](#)
- [Sesame Street: Grover Talks About Plants](#)
- [Horrible Science - Mark and His Plant | Learn About Plants | Science for Kids](#)



# SUGGESTED RESOURCES & MATERIALS

## This Month's Activity Materials

*Items to add to your regular craft & play resources (depending on the activities you choose from the pages above) include:*

Grass & Flower Seeds

Wood Cookies

Ice cube moulds

Bark & leaves

Contact sticky paper

Wool & Ribbon

Playdough & Clay

Sunflowers & soil

Plant pots

Glass or Plastic Bottles

Cornflour paint

Tubs, Trays, baskets

Pumpkins

Flowers & greenery

Seed pods

Mirror

Paper bags

Tissue boxes

Garden magazines

Empty seed packets

Old stockings



WELCOME TO  
YOUR EMPOWERED  
ED COMMUNITY!

Hi there, I'm Jodie!



## A Little About Me

I enjoy supporting early childhood educators around the world through my training sessions, blog posts, digital resources and **private educator Member Hub** to feel more confident in their role no matter their level of experience or the area of early learning they are currently working in!

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I have worked in the early childhood and community services profession for over 35 years so I know what it's like to be in the trenches without the support, time and step by step guidance you need. As busy (& underpaid!) educators we don't have time for difficult to understand jargon or lengthy theoretical debates - you just want to meet requirements while still having the time to do what you do best... supporting and extending the unique learning journey of every child in your care as they grow and discover in these very important early years.

And that is exactly why I like to do things a little bit differently to support educators just like you - I don't believe that professional development and the tools we use to do our jobs well need to be complicated, out of our budget or judgmental. I believe every adult learns differently and at a different pace and that's ok. There is nothing wrong with going back to basics & embracing simple...so welcome to our Empowered Ed Community... let's do this together!



the *empowered* educator  
inspiring ideas and resources for early learning

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