



Autumnal Transient Art



Autumn is here and the countryside is changing. The trees are on the turn, oak trees are bearing acorns and shiny brown conkers are dropping to the ground. The colours and shapes of autumnal nature items are perfect for making transient patterns. Children of all ages can play creatively with the items - and at the end of the session they can be saved for another day.

THIS ACTIVITY...

- introduces children to some of the signs of autumn
- offers lots of opportunity to explore colour, shape, texture and smell
- allows children to engage freely with the resources and manage their own exploration
- encourages the creative exploration of design and pattern
- allows children to share resources and inspiration

WHAT TO DO

Gathering

Go on a nature walk with the children and gather nature items such as autumnal leaves, conkers, acorns, sycamore 'helicopters', beech nuts, blackberries, rose hips, twigs, pebbles, snail shells and feathers.

Exploring

Back in the setting, talk about your finds with the children and focus on those that have a particular link with autumn (leaves, conkers, acorns, blackberries and so on). Encourage the children to feel, sniff and talk about the shapes and colours of the items, and compare different textures such as the dry, crinkly leaves and the soft, squishy blackberries.

Designing

Let the children explore the resources freely, and suggest that they make a 'transient' pattern or picture. Once the patterns have been completed, photograph each one to make a permanent record. Turn the photos into a display for the setting wall.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Provide appropriate surfaces for the children to use as backgrounds for their transient patterns. Some possibilities include sugar paper and felt in natural colours, cork tiles, wooden chopping boards, soil boxes, trays of sand, patio stones and areas of lawn.
- Encourage older children to try out different backgrounds and make creative choices about which background they like best.
- Putting the items into large tubs gives children the experience of sharing, and encourages them to swap ideas. Allow pairs and small groups to make a large shared picture if this is their preference.
- Encourage any children who are interested to create repeating line patterns, such as
 - leaf, acorn, leaf, acorn, leaf, acorn
 - conker, conker, blackberry, conker, conker, blackberry
 - pebble, pebble, rosehip, rosehip, rosehip, pebble, pebble, rosehip, rosehip, rosehip.
- Talk about how 'transient' means that the pieces are not stuck down and can be moved about. Explain that photographing the transient artworks creates a 'permanent' record for each child to keep.
- Encourage older children to move items about and try different arrangements. Help them to choose which arrangements they prefer and would like to have photographed for the wall display.



Transient art

is non-permanent and constantly evolving creativity in action. When children work on **transient art** projects they manipulate, explore and experiment as they work individually or collaboratively, on either large- or small-scale artworks



SAFETY FIRST!

Conkers and acorns contain small amounts of toxin, and they can be a choking hazard. It's also important to check that any autumnal berries are safe. If in doubt, stick to easy-to-identify berries such as blackberries and rosehips. Talk about the importance of not putting any nature items in our mouths, and supervise the children as they explore. Choose safe items to display in the setting for independent play.

