

Nature Activities As You Walk Along The Trail

1. Scavenger Hunt – go to ironhorsesquare.org for our Nature Scavenger Hunt
2. Collect Art Supplies – collect objects to be included in a piece of art, such as pieces of bark, dried leaves, seed pods, sweet gum balls, pine cones, etc.
3. Seed Collecting – Ideas for seed collecting: a) put seeds in a clear plastic bag, b) wear bracelets made of masking tape (sticky side out) to hold the seeds they find, c) make a “seed collection box” – get a small box like a shoe box to place seeds in (you could line it with masking tape (sticky side up) similar to the bracelet collector.
4. Use the app “iNaturalist” to take a photo and identify plants and animals you see along your walk. “Leafsnap” is another app which works well.
5. Fun Math – a) you could time your nature walks and calculate your average speed on your walk. Note – distances from the Start (Iron Horse Square entrance sign) are marked every 200 feet. b) have children measure trees in different ways – ex. circumference, diameter, height of the tree – (if you have forgotten easy ways to measure each of these: watch youtube videos before you leave for your hike)
6. Cartography Exercises – take along paper, pencil, straight edge and clipboard or hard surface to write on. Have your child note the railroad tracks, fence, trees, playground, Little Free Library etc. Have child draw a map of the area. You can vary the difficulty to the age of the child.
7. Adopt a Tree – Have your child pick a nearby tree that is special to them and spend time observing and learning about the tree. They could visit their tree each time they visit the park and keep a journal to record and analyze information they collect over time.
8. Photography – have your child use your phone or theirs or a small camera to take photos of birds, insects, flowers, etc. You could have them take photos of all yellow items they find.
9. Have a picnic – while eating watch the birds, insects, trains, etc.
10. A Big Clean Up – Take a garbage bag along with you on your walk and pick up trash you see lying around. (But sure to wear plastic or cloth gloves and watch out for stinging or biting insects and reptiles)

11. I Spy – play the game “I Spy” with your child – Ex. Say “I spy something blue” and have your child try to guess what you see that is blue.
12. Find the ABCs in Nature – Start with the letter A – try to find something shaped like the letter “A” in nature. Maybe just do the vowels to begin with so the game won’t be too long for your child’s attention span.