

A PICNIC AMONG THE TREES

Food tastes best outside



Goal: To realise it is possible to have a feast, a snack, a rest, or just simply some fun among trees. The children will try to pause, slow down, taste and enjoy food among and/or in trees. The picnic among the trees is so pleasant for children that they will want to invite someone else.

The children will develop the ability to perceive their surroundings and look for pleasant soothing places in nature.

How long: 20–30 minutes

Who: 5 to 99

Where: A place with trees or shrubs

When: All year round (the first time should be when it is warm but then try again on colder days)

You need: Blanket, goodies, seat cushions, mugs, plates...

1. PREPARATION

You can agree together in advance who will prepare and bring what. It's good to make the event more than just a picnic or snack outside. It is advisable to make it a festive occasion and give it an exceptional title, e.g. Tea Party. It's great to learn how to have unique moments every day.

2. TEA TIME

Choose a place with the children, preferably somewhere among the trees or directly under a tree. It is advisable to check whether there isn't an anthill or other insect dwelling nearby. Spread the blankets and goodies. You can make a table centrepiece made of natural items and treasures.

3. INTRODUCTORY RITUAL

You can establish a simple ritual if the group is willing. Before you start feasting, sit in a circle and sing together or just listen in silence to the sounds of the surroundings. You can also greet the surrounding trees and thank them for the invitation or thank nature for all the goodies you have there.

4. SLOW CELEBRATION

Let's eat and drink, tell stories and feel comfortable among the trees. Whoever has finished eating can just lie down and look up into the treetops, or climb up and have dessert sitting on a branch.

TIP: It is good if you can bring tea brewed from trees or shrubs, like rose hips, linden, etc.

5. SHARING AMONG THE TREES

At the very end, meet with the children in a circle once more to perform a farewell ritual to give thanks, and also to share what food you enjoyed during your outdoor picnic. It's great to talk with children about whom they would like to invite to a picnic (parents, friends, grandparents) and where their favourite place among trees is in the city, in the countryside, etc.).

EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE (EVIDENCE OF LEARNING)

- The children participated in a picnic among some trees

- They experienced slowing down and tasting food among trees and/or in trees

- The children talked about the picnic as a pleasant experience

- The children wondered where to have their next picnic and whom to invite.

EXTENSION:

Upon our return, you can follow up with an activity in which children map all the tastes that a tree can offer – A TREE FULL OF TASTE. First you can brainstorm together with the children about what we can get from trees and how we use it for eating or drinking. Then you can give the children a piece of paper divided into three categories:

1. a large mug (into which they depict any of trees or shrubs from which tea is made, e.g. linden, elderberry, green tea, rose hips, hibiscus, citrus, etc.),
2. a spice jar (children draw or write down from which trees or shrubs spices come from, e.g. cinnamon, bay leaf, etc.)
3. a plate (where children show us the trees or shrubs whose fruits we eat, e.g. apples, nuts, blueberries, cherries, currants, citrus, etc.).

This game is great for spring (when a lot of trees and shrubs are in flower) or autumn (when there is fruit). It's also good to provide a mug, a plate and a spice jar for each group into which the children can put their ideas of what the trees have to offer.

