

HOW TO CREATE TEACHABLE MOMENTS FOR KIDS

A teachable moment is an unplanned, or intentionally placed, learning opportunity. These can happen anywhere and at anytime. They provide parents, guardians, and teachers the chance to help children learn new concepts and deepen their understanding of previously acquired knowledge. This can also be very useful when considering the design process as students can be more informed as they develop future iterations.

Parents, guardians and teachers have learned to watch for these moments. They listen and pay close attention ready to pounce with questions or thoughtful discussion at any time. We can create these moments especially when kids are working on a project or doing their homework by asking open ended questions. More importantly we need to be ready to explain and discuss the 'why' behind the child's answer and encourage them to research and dig deeper. This 'why' is the key to creating the teachable moment to better decode the world they live in.

Sometimes these questions and discussions can lead to questions that adults can't answer and this is the golden opportunity to model how to learn instead of what to learn! When you don't have the answer it gives kids the chance to learn alongside you: "That's a great question! Let's look it up together!" This builds confidence because it's ok that we don't always have all the answers. More importantly, it gives kids the sense of pride to learn that we are all life-long-learners.

TAKING YOUR SENSES FOR A WALK TEACHABLE MOMENT QUESTIONS

Focus on Patterns in Nature. Explore similarities and differences among different things. Biological classifications are based on such traits.

Observe objects in nature with your 5 senses then draw and describe in your exploration journal.

Compare two objects (2 leaves, 2 rocks, 2 branches or other). What are the similarities and what are the differences?

Research about countries that have the most protected land.

Design a survival pack for a nature hike or a hike itself
What would you do?
Where would you go and why?
What would you eat?
What would you wear?
What tools would you take?

Observe and compare patterns and shapes in natural objects.

Explore geometric shapes and concepts such as symmetry, fractals, spirals, and tessellations

Describe your 3D creation and how it is different in dimensions from the original natural object.

Diagram and label the design features of your 3D creation.

Adopt and hug a tree to connect with nature and reduce stress and anxiety.

Practice meditation or mindfulness in nature for a wellness activity.

Describe how you felt during your walk in nature.

Practicing hand and eye coordination.

Go on a hike and breathe some fresh air.

Create a mandala painting by using natural objects as stamps. Play with symmetry, patterns and colors.

Communicate your appreciation of sounds in nature by writing a song to the music of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.

Write a sensory story inspired from experience in nature.

Design guided visualizations exploring key words describing patterns, senses and feelings evoked by nature.

Make a video documentary suggesting ways to seek inspiration from nature.

Create a Naturelogue (dialogue with nature) describing your experiences with nature or natural object.

Research on seed dispersal.

Are you interested in learning more of how nature and biology can help innovation and what we can learn from them? Look into biomimicry.

