

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.

CREATE YOUR OWN NATURE TRAIL TEACHABLE MOMENT QUESTIONS

Write informative signs and labels for the plants that you observe along the trail.

They can be creative, maybe it is a song or poem!

Research what the environment would look like if the things that you listed on your nature trail did not exist.

How are they important to us and the environment?

Can you draw what you observe?

Keeping a record is helpful for research. It also allows you to spend time really examining the nature around you. You may notice things like female birds are not as brightly coloured as male birds, or some plants change colour depending on the season.

Keeping detailed journal illustrations or photographs of flora and fauna so that each item can be identified through research.

What are the stages in the life cycle of birds?

What are the food sources of birds?

What are the predators of birds?

What are the benefits of having birds nesting in your garden?

What facts can you discover about the land that you are on? Who lived there before you? How did they use the land and what did they consider to be important? How did it evolve through time?

Find old pictures of your community and compare.

How are nature walks beneficial to us?

Does knowing your surroundings and how local nature relates to you, make the walk even more enjoyable?

What is the distance of your nature trail?

What unit of measurement would you use to describe your trail?

Would it work better to use feet, meters, kilometers?

What tools would you use to measure its length and area?

What is the area that you will be covering?

The Great Trail of Canada is a network of 24,000km of trails from coast to coast. To learn more about the trail system visit: <http://thegreattrail.ca/>

