

Crafty Ideas: **Mini Gardens**

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A mini garden based on the story of Snow White



Young children are fascinated by miniature gardens. They love the opportunity to design and create a little garden of their own, to explain its features to others and to imagine the exciting events that could take place in it.

**You will need:**

- Seed trays or shallow dishes
- Compost
- Small pebbles or coloured stones
- Lolly sticks
- Twigs and leaves
- Foil
- Plastic bottles
- Pencils and paper for planning
- Plastic figures or ornaments (optional)
- Paints and PVA glue (optional)

**Use**

Mini gardens are a great way to explore the topic 'Our World'. They can also be made to show a particular season or time of year such as Christmas or Easter. They are equally effective as a group or individual activity.

This approach is also easily extended to making scenes that reflect other topics such as a fairy garden or a garden designed for a character from a book that you are reading together. You can also make farms, parks, or even a dinosaur swamp or pirate island. There are lots of different ways to develop this idea.

**Make**

- ➔ Introduce the activity with a group discussion about gardens. Ask children what features gardens have, which ones they like best, how gardens change at different times of the year, and what kind of things they want to put into their own mini gardens.
- ➔ Give the children a sheet of paper and ask them to plan their garden.
- ➔ Discuss the plans and talk about how to turn their ideas into a reality. Explain the materials required to make the different features that they are planning e.g. a pond, a fence or a path. This can be a good opportunity to also talk about scale.
- ➔ Give each child or group a tray or dish filled with compost.
- ➔ Get children to start making their gardens by creating and adding the garden features.
- ➔ Then, encourage children to plant their gardens with twigs, leaves and sprigs (or plants and flowers that they have made from paper and card if appropriate).
- ➔ Add figures and ornaments if you are using them.
- ➔ Trays can be decorated with patterns using acrylic paint or water paint mixed with PVA.

**Tip**

Mini gardens are brought to life by adding small plastic figures or ornaments.

**Display**

Mini gardens are best displayed on a table so that children can walk around them. You could stack painted boxes of different sizes on the table to vary the display space and allow children to view the gardens from different angles. The sides of the boxes can be used to display additional garden vocabulary and images.

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