



STORY TIME

LOOSE PARTS RESOURCES

Story Time Description

Did you know that a stick is the number one open-ended toy? Guess what, it is! Sticks are very much a part of children's play. It is truly inspiring to observe how children approach and use sticks in different ways. Today's story time book *Not a Stick* by Antoinette Portis is the perfect book to show how a stick can promote play, imaginative thinking, creativity, and support a child's need for autonomy through choice and collaboration. Go outside and pick up a stick!

Children's Picture Books That Promote Creativity and Imaginary Play

- *Not a Box* by Antoinette Portis
- *A Stick is an Excellent Thing: Poems Celebrating Outdoor Play* by Marilyn Singer
- *Sticks* by Diane Alber
- *Scribble Stone* by Diane Alber
- *Stick and Stone* by Beth Ferry
- *Stick Man* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler
- *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert
- *A Leaf Can Be...* by Laura Purdie Salas
- *A Rock Can Be...* by Laura Purdie Salas
- *One Piece of String* by Marthe Jocelyn
- *Just How Long Can a String Be?* by Keith Baker
- *Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett
- *The Squiggle* by Carole Lexa Schaefer
- *What to Do with a Box* by Jane Yolen
- *A Box Story* by Kenneth Lamug
- *The Birthday Box* by Leslie Patricelli
- *My Book Box* by Will Hillenbrand
- *Chloe* by Peter McCarty
- *Sitting in My Box* by Dee Lillegard
- *No One Can Play* by Mercer Mayer
- *Chalk* by Bill Thomson
- *Abiyoyo* by Peet Seeger
- *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

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Other Useful Resources

- <http://www.stickmanofficial.com> Stick Man resources
- Watch Antoinette Portis on Imagination - YouTube video
- Watch Not a Stick book recommendation and activities - YouTube
- www.tinkergarten.com/activities/great-wall Great activity about building a wall using sticks, twigs, and dowells
- www.playfullearning.net
- www.fairydustteaching.com/loose-parts
- www.makerspace.com

Pen and Paper Phonics – Great *Not a Stick* Activities

<https://www.penandpaperphonics.com/book-activities-not-a-stick>

Inspiring Loose Parts Play in Young Children Series

All four of the books are written by Lisa Daly Miriam Beloglovsky

Loose parts are open-ended materials that offer tremendous play value and provide children with a whole range of activities. A rich selection of loose parts can include both natural and manufactured items.

In the books there are more than 550 colorful photographs of many kinds of loose parts and suggestions on how to use them. The books also provides inspiration and information about the ways loose parts support open-ended learning, enhance play, and empower children. With loose parts, the possibilities are endless.

Lakeside Nature Challenge

Part of our new approach is the [Lakeside Nature Challenge](#). The Lakeside Nature Challenge is a daily video that infuses education, experiments, and experiences to urge kids to go outside and interact with their surroundings. We initially thought of this idea at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, as schools closed, and parents began to wonder how they could continue their children's education. We wanted something that would give parents something to teach or do with their kids, while simultaneously giving kids a reason to go outside and do something that wasn't on a screen.

Early Space

www.earlyspace.com

Nature Play at Home by Nancy Striniste Founder of Early Space

Children & Nature Network

www.childrenandnature.org

This website will keep you updated on ways to stay connected to the natural world during COVID-19. Each week new resources from incredible partners, tips, tools, blogs and webinars, along with the best and brightest ideas from the field will be posted.

Nature Play at Home

www.naturalearning.org (download the guide)

Developed by the Natural Learning Initiative and the National Wildlife Federation, this guide shows easy, affordable ways you can turn your backyard or other types of domestic outdoor spaces into vibrant Nature Play Spaces™ for children so they can reap the physical and mental benefits of playing outside. Creating natural play opportunities can be part of the solution to increasing the amount of time kids spend in the great outdoors for the health of their minds, bodies, and spirits.

Exploration – Take a Walk in Your Backyard and Neighborhood

As you walk around your neighborhood or in your backyard look for sticks, twigs, and fallen branches. There's lots of opportunities to spark creative thinking and to ask open-ended questions about sticks you may find such as:

- How heavy is the stick?
- Does the stick have bark on it?
- Is the stick long or short?
- Is the stick crooked or straight?
- Where did you find the stick?
- Can you tell me about your stick?
- Why did you choose that stick?
- What does the stick feel like?
- How many ways can you use the stick?
- What will you do with the stick next?

Thing to do at Home to Reinforce a Positive Connection between Children and Nature Using Sticks

- Allow children to play with sticks indoors and outdoors
- Set clear boundaries and expectations about stick play
- Provide non-fiction books and concrete materials
- Take daily walks and collect sticks (have a magnify lens handy)
- Utilize the resources from this blog post