

## Natural Materials Workshop - Instructions

First thing you need plan for this workshop is at least one trip with your child or children to natural environment, be it woodland, grassland, meadow, marsh or a local park.

Have a look around and encourage children to gather some of the natural bits and bobs they can find; fallen leaves, twigs, seeds from a tree... Those will later become special features of their clay creatures.

Make it into a fun outing where children get to enjoy exploring nature and learning about it. You can talk about what seed belong to which tree. Acorn – oak, pine cones – pine trees, helicopter seed – maple tree, and so on.

The best season to collect natural materials is autumn with all the tree seeds and colorful leaves. Summer is also lovely with flowering grasses in all sorts of shapes. Whichever season you go out for a hunt, there will be at least something to find – even if it is only twigs.

Share with children appreciation and awareness of other living beings and collect seeds, leaves etc. which are already on the ground.

### Materials you will need:

- Natural clay
- Pots for water
- Pots, baskets, paper bowls or other containers for setting natural materials
- Nylon table cover / cloth to wipe the table with
- Natural materials (leaves, twigs, pine cones, acorns and their cups, beech tree nuts, pumpkin or butternut squash seeds, pine needles, etc.)
- Access to water for children to wash their hands after the activity



Lay out on the table a selection of natural materials and a lump of clay for each child. You can make an example creature to give children the idea of what they will be making. Encourage children to make their own imaginary creatures. Let them have a good look at all the natural bits and bobs and think what could they become for their wild beings. Beaks, wings, tails, ears, teeth, hair, scales, prickles...?



Use clay to make your creature's body, or just as a glue, or sticky stuff that helps to connect other natural materials.

It often useful to dip your fingers little bit in water when working with clay – that makes it stickier and softer. Not too much water though, as it will make the clay soggy.



When the creatures are done, look who are they. What story they could tell us? Have fun improvising a story with the clay creatures the child / children have made!