

Small Worlds

Learners will use materials from your home and nature to make their own world. They can build a tiny home for a tiny friend, make their own town - they can go wherever their imagination takes them!



Recommended Age: 3-8

Time needed: 30-60 minutes

Link to the Video: https://youtu.be/zAhUe_NebVY

What You Need

For this activity, use a mixture of natural materials and household items. You can use whatever you have on hand. Suggestions include:

- Pinecones, leaves, pine needles, sticks, seashells, rocks
- Fabric scraps of many colors & textures (napkins, rags, etc.)
- Small cars
- Blocks or building toys (LEGO, K'NEX, magnetic tiles, etc.)
- Coasters
- Compact or other small mirrors
- Small plastic toys to live in your world (animals, dolls, action figures, etc.)

What You Do

- Create a workspace. It could be on top of a table or marked with tape or a rug on the floor.
- Gather your materials.
- Think about:
 - What kind of environment will it be? A jungle, forest, ocean, mountains?
 - What animals live there?
 - What plants are there?
 - Do people live there? What buildings do they live in? How do they go from one place to another?
- Once you've decided what your world will look like, it's time to start building and arranging!



Tips for Adults

If your child needs more challenges to go along with this activity:

- Challenge them to create small worlds based off of some of their favorite stories (create their own Arandelle, make homes for the three little pigs, etc.).
- Pretend that some type of weather (rain, snow, etc.) is about to hit their small world. Challenge them to adapt their world to the weather.
- Give your child a household object (a bowl, a serving spoon, a toothbrush, etc.) and challenge them to incorporate it into their small world.
- Document it! Have your child take photos or draw a picture of their creation. Write a story together.
- Have your child dress up in an outfit that they would wear in their small world (for example, if their small world is an ocean they might want to wear a swimsuit and goggles!)
- Create a small world together - or encourage your child to work with a friend!
- As your child is playing, ask them general questions to learn more about their world:
 - Tell me about this place! Where is it? Who lives here? What is going on?



Learning and Skills Connection

- **Thinking creatively and imaginatively:** Envisioning possibilities, solutions, and forms of expression; having hunches; thinking outside the box; problem finding and solving
- **Understanding different perspectives:** Considering issues from the viewpoints of others, assuming different physical and mental perspectives, being able to empathize with others
- **Being playful:** Engaging with a playful spirit; fooling around with alternatives; making and breaking rules; taking a whimsical approach, tapping into humor; feeling pleasure and joy
- **Practicing fine motor skills:** Using hands and fingers effectively to manipulate small objects

Doing STEAM with Kids

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. There are lots of ways you can explore these letters, apart or together. Ask your child to make predictions, describe what they see, and to imagine possibilities and solutions. Don't worry so much about the "right" answer. Developing curiosity, and problem-solving skills are important first steps to doing STEAM!

