



## SHOEBOX WORLDS

### Materials you need:

- A few empty shoeboxes (even better if you have the lids) Ask families to bring in a few weeks before you want to do this activity if you don't already have a collection.
- Some wooden pegs, reels and other items to make animals and people from (you don't have to stick to a theme, it's yours to create!).
- A collection of loose parts for the children to experiment with (check out that middle drawer in the kitchen for some ideas too!)
- Some material, felt, branches, leaves, whatever you have in the garden or scrap basket.
- Some colourful pebbles if you have them or just some stones collected from the garden are also great additions
- Optional > You might also like to add a few little containers for feed trays or 'ponds'
- Glue and sticky tape.

### Setup for play:

- Lay out the loose parts materials and boxes on long tables place a few items in the boxes as the beginning of a small world to encourage children to use their imagination and explore possibilities.
- There really isn't a lot to setup for this activity – just stand back, provide opportunities for self-selection and let the magic happen!

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## What are they learning with this activity?

As the children create their own small world they are learning to:

- Use their sense of touch, sight and smell to make choices and create
- Use descriptive language and become independent communicators
- Work together in a group with others
- Use hand/eye coordination skills and demonstrate spatial awareness
- Manipulate equipment and real-life tools with increasing competence
- Strengthen fine motor muscles and control
- Use their senses to explore and choose natural materials
- Use their play to imagine and explore ideas
- Persist even when they find the task difficult
- Create with different mediums and textures
- Problem solve and make decisions
- Use their imagination to explore real life events

## Extending the play:

- Ask the children if they want to create a descriptive story to go with their small world box. Who are the characters in the box? What do they do?
- If you don't have access to a lot of boxes and you have a large group, try using foil trays and encourage children to build a 'mini world'.

