

## BENEFITS OF NATURE PROGRAM

### Pre- and Post-Activities for Grades 3–12

#### ACTIVITIES

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#### Investigate Horticultural Therapy

**Curriculum Connections:** Career Development

**Required Materials:** Computer

**Description:** Explore these online resources to learn about horticultural therapy as a career.

<https://www.htinstitute.org>

<https://www.ahta.org>

**Extension/Modification:** Students can share what they learned in small groups or present to the class.

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#### Aromatherapy Research

**Curriculum Connections:** Science

**Required Materials:** Computer; optional: different essential oils like peppermint, lavender, rose, lemon, etc.

**Description:** Have students research the topic of aromatherapy and the types of plants that might be used to spark certain feelings like sleepiness, calmness, energy, etc. Students can look at websites or academic papers.

The links below are just a few places that describe aromatherapy. Students are encouraged to go beyond these websites and do additional research.

- <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/what-are-essential-oils#what-they-are>
- <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/aromatherapy-do-essential-oils-really-work>
- <https://naha.org/>

**Extension/Modification:** Students can present their findings in small groups or to the class. Additionally, the class can pass around and smell the different essential oils researched.



## Plant an Herb Garden

**Curriculum Connections:** Science

**Required Materials:** Mint, parsley, chives, oregano, or other herb seeds, a few containers with holes for drainage, soil, water, pencil, paper, ruler

**Description:** Have students plant different types of herb seeds in separate containers and place on a sunny windowsill. Observe the herb plants as they grow and have students record observations in height, color, and rate of growth.

**How to grow your herb garden:**

- Plant each type of herb seed in separate containers.
- Fill container with soil.
- Create a hole in the soil about as deep as your fingernail, place a seed in the hole, and cover with soil.
- Place all containers in a sunny window and water periodically, keeping the soil moist.
- The seeds will germinate in about 1-2 weeks. Depending on the type of herb, it may take several weeks to months until the plant is ready to harvest.

**Extension/Modification Activity:** Students can research recipes that utilize the types of herbs they are growing. Once the herbs are ready to harvest, have students use them in a dish or meal.

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## Relax Outdoors

**Curriculum Connections:** Environmental Education

**Required Materials:** Outdoor space for students to use; optional: cushions, rugs, wind chimes, art, plants

**Description:** Have students create an outdoor space for relaxation and tranquility to alleviate stress. Fill the space with soft places to sit, like cushions or rugs, relaxing sounds, like wind chimes or running water, as well as art and plants.

**Extension/Modification Activity:** Students can research colors, art, or plants used in relaxation or meditation practices.



## Natural Art

**Curriculum Connections:** Art

**Required Materials:** Computer, art supplies – natural materials (leaves, stones, flowers, etc.), paper, pencil, crayons, paint, markers, glue, etc.

**Description:** Students should research artists that use natural materials, create their art in nature, or create art inspired by nature. Have students create their own nature inspired art based on what they've researched.

**Extension/Modification Activity:** Have a student art showcase where students can display art or photos of their art. Students can also present about artists that inspired their personal artwork.

### WEB RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

#### Horticultural Therapy

[Resources - Horticultural Therapy Institute \(htinstitute.org\)](http://htinstitute.org)

[About AHTA](#)

#### Aromatherapy

[Aromatherapy: Do Essential Oils Really Work? | Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)

National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy – [Home](#) | [NAHA](#)

Healthline – [What Are Essential Oils, and Do They Work? \(healthline.com\)](#)

#### Benefits of Nature

[Nurtured by nature \(apa.org\)](http://apa.org)

#### Nature Inspired Art/Art with Natural Materials

[Featured Artists Nature as Medium Sculpture / Installation | The Art of Nature \(uoregon.edu\)](#)

[9 Amazing Artists to Inspire Nature-Related Art Projects - The Art of Education University](#)

[10 Earth Artists to Know | Contemporary Art | Sotheby's \(sothebys.com\)](#)

[10 Artists Who Celebrate Nature Through Their Work | The Artling](#)

