

Nature in the Neighborhood “Signs of Spring”

Nature is everywhere. Children love learning about and being in nature. This video features exploration of signs of spring in a Nebraska neighborhood. The video celebrates the beauty and wonder of nature, and identifies and describes many aspects of nature that can be found in Midwestern climates.

Concepts and Definitions:

Seasons: the order of seasons, and description of spring

Dormant: Some plants rest during the winter. They may look dead, but they are alive. Much of their sap and energy goes down into their roots. In the spring, the sap and energy move back up through trunks/stems, branches, and leaves

Evergreen: Plants that do not go dormant, and stay green all winter. Pine trees have leaves called needles.

Dormant vs. not dormant: We play a game identifying trees that are dormant and not dormant.

Buds: Plants have buds that are baby leaves and flowers. In the spring, they begin to swell (get larger) and then open as flowers and leaves

Plants need water: rain gives plants a big drink and helps them grow

Shapes: Shapes are described, and we compare the shapes of tulip leaves and daffodil leaves, and describe the different shapes of trees.

Catkins: Long, dangling spring flowers. Bears eat them in Minnesota. They are one of the first available foods for bears in the spring.

Descriptive language: Descriptive language is used in this video, such as colors and textures. Encourage children to describe what they find, and to use multiple senses (sight and sound, and when appropriate touch and taste).

States of matter: Water exists in different states: liquid water, solid ice/snow, and gas/vapor. We observe liquid water, and describe how water is solid ice and snow in the winter, and becomes liquid when it becomes warmer in the spring.

We will continue to explore change over time and visit some of the same plants and places in the coming episode.

*Always ask a grownup before going outside