



I Love Dirt!: 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature

Jennifer Ward , Susie Ghahremani (Illustrator) , Richard Louv (Foreword)

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I Love Dirt! presents 52 open-ended activities to help you engage your child in the outdoors. No matter what your location—from a small patch of green in the city to the wide-open meadows of the country—each activity is meant to promote exploration, stimulate imagination, and heighten a child's sense of wonder.

To learn more about the author, Jennifer Ward, visit her website at jenniferwardbooks.com and to learn more about the illustrator, Susie Ghahremani, visit her website at boygirlparty.com.

I Love Dirt!: 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature Details

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From Reader Review I Love Dirt!: 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature for online ebook

Kandice says

I love nature and tend to spend a great deal of time outdoors. Heck, I'm scrambling to write this review before I am on the dark side of the internet moon while camping later today.

This summer, some friends and I put together a little "nature club" for our kids (ages 1-6). I picked up this little book from the library hoping it would spark some ideas and activities for our little ones. Unfortunately, I wasn't inspired because I think most of the 52 activities have been done naturally with our kids.

Many reviewers have stated that this book is not for the outdoor enthusiast, but rather for families looking to devote more time to the great outdoors. I totally agree. If you're already a nature lover, don't bother reading this book because you could have written it. However, if you haven't spent much time outside with your kiddos, this book will get you off to a great start.

Sahar Pirmoradian says

This book contains simple and clear instructions for parents or caregivers to enhance the awareness and understanding of the kids about the nature around them by asking engaging questions. It is divided to various chapters on trees, birds, leaves, ..., providing hints on what questions we could ask our kids to enhance their curiosity and attention about a particular phenomenon. For example, when it comes to birds, we can ask our kids to pay attention to the size of the birds, the differences between songs they sing, their colors, or the form of their beaks.

If you are already a conscious human being about the amazing, simple natural phenomena around you, you may already know most of the contents in the book. However, if you need a poke to enhance your awareness, thus your kid's awareness and curiosity, about nature, this book would be very useful.

Irmak says

Do?ayla iç içe büyüyen çocuklar yeti?tirmek istiyorsan?z içerisindeki etkinliklerin faydal? bir rehber olaca??n? dü?ünüyorum.

Bir ço?u birbirine benzer etkinlikler olsa da içlerinde gerçekten çok ho?uma giden etkinlikler de vard?.

Dree says

This is one odd little book. If I had bought this book I would have been so upset.

I'm not entirely clear on who the audience is. The subtitle says "your kids"--but the activities are for toddlers. At the end of each activity it tells you its supposed benefits--"Stimulates imagination and relaxation".

However, these activities are things kids do on their own. Looking for spiderwebs, counting ladybugs, watching the clouds, looking for bird nests. Kids don't need to be led to these activities. Kids are naturally curious, naturally imaginative, and naturally playful, they do NOT need to be led to imagination--and if you are leading them, it's not really imagination, is it?

And then there are the warnings: try to designate play clothes that are allowed to get dirty!; Do not hold or handle ants of any size; remember to wear sunscreen and a hat; never try to hold a spider; make sure the sun is not shining directly in anyone's eyes; layer and bundle your kids.

The very simplistic explanations (what a blue moon is, how ants smell, what is wind, what are leaves, etc etc) are at a toddler's level, not the parents. Any parent (or older sibling!) who does not already know these things is not the sort of person who would ever buy this book.

Also--this book assumes you live in the northeastern US. It rains in spring, snows in winter, you have cardinals and blue jays, birds migrate to warmer areas, there are lots of deciduous trees, and summer is the most comfortable season to be outside.

And, um, it does snow in part of the saguaro's native range.

Nichole says

A must own for parents! This book is broken down, by season, into short activities with fun facts about animals/insects/weather with each activity. As I was reading I noticed how many things children just do naturally but that as an adult I forget or overlook. The book reminded me how simple it is to discover and observe nature and to appreciate all of the wonder that surrounds us each day! I will definitely keep this book on hand as a reminder that there never has to be a dull moment when you're outside with your kids!

Sorento62 says

I Love Dirt! would be a great book for a teacher or kid's group leader who wants to lead kids in semi-structured outdoor activities. But what's really important is just to spend time outside. And generally, the more unstructured or child-led that time is, the better.

The book does encourage going outside, observing something, and giving a mini science lesson based on what you and the child you are with have observed. This is good as far as it goes, but again, I think what's even better to strive for is for kids to be outdoors on their own when possible.

Madison says

I picked this up seeking inspiration for getting myself and my children into nature. The book is divided into seasonal activities that introduce a variety of topics. Some of the ideas are impractical for California, but for the most part there are great ideas to spring from. This book is aimed for younger children with parent

direction.

Tudor Ciocarlie says

Some great activities in here.

Sarah says

This is a nice book for parents who want ideas and suggestions for spending time in nature with their kids. Learning made fun.

Sarah says

the only thing I don't like about this book is how it tells what specific skills your child is "supposed" to be learning with each activity, for example: "stimulates observation skills and awareness of and curiosity about the living world". it feels like this was added by an editor to satisfy all the baby einstein parents, when the whole message of the book is to allow your child to enjoy and discover nature in a joyful way, not to satisfy some lesson plan.

Susie says

The first of a series of books written by Jennifer Ward and illustrated by me, aiming to inspire families to spend more time in nature & the outdoors. The second book ([Let's Go Outside](#)) is due out later this year.

Colleen says

Activity ideas separated by season. I think this book would be best with 6-9 year olds. The activities are easy, not much prep, if any, required so I would consider it open and go. A lot of them are things some kids may naturally do in nature if they're used to being outside (which a lot of kids aren't these days so they might need more adult guidance which this book provides) but it's nice to have for when your mind goes blank and the question prompts keep the discussion going.

Kristen Gebbia says

Save your time. The whole book can be boiled down to this: "Go outside and look around." Or, alternatively: "Let your kids do what kids do naturally when you don't allow them to sit in front of electronics all day."

One idea (out of 52) that I did like: naming the full moons after something significant/traditional you do as a

family that month.

Sarah (Workaday Reads) says

As the title suggests, this book provides 52 project ideas to introduce children to nature.

The description does mention the projects are "open-ended", but to me, I found them too vague. The projects included things like searching for rocks of varying shapes and sizes; puddle splashing; and stargazing. These are all worthwhile activities, however I was expecting more detailed projects.

This would be a good book for families who don't get outside much, and want to start with basic activities. It would also be good for slightly older children who would be able to better comprehend and understand some of the science-based discussions the book promotes.

If you have young children, it would just as easy to go outside, let something capture their attention, and go from there. Most of the discussions are too advanced for little kids, and the actual actions are things they will likely do on their own without any prompting.

Kellie says

Many of these activities may seem obvious to science teachers and those who have spent a lot of time outdoors, but this book was really helpful to me as a mom who doesn't have much knowledge of such things myself but wants to encourage reverence/respect for nature in my kids. I thought the activities presented here were the best I have found - very simple and straight forward, requiring no outside materials, and many would be interesting to both my third grader and my preschooler. One example: going on a hike/hunt for bird nests, talking about how they are different/the same, and then trying to make our own bird nest from mud and sticks and such. Another: leaving food for ants on top of sticks or something, watch them collect the food and observe the other ants picking up their scent trail to the food, then remove the sticks etc with the scent trail and watch their confusion. One more: gravity experiments with natural objects of different sizes, weights, and resistance and seeing which fall fastest. I think this would be a great book to own, and maybe pick one a week to do.
