



Seasonal Living

WITH LITTLES

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SEASONAL LIVING WITH LITTLES

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SEASONAL LIVING WITH LITTLES

Welcome!

Welcome to Seasonal Living with Littles! I am so excited to walk you through a year of seasonal living with your little ones. My hope is that you will get just as much enjoyment out of this resource as your children.

What to Expect

Seasonal Living with Littles is broken down by season and can be started at any time of the year. Simply flip through to find the current month and begin, circling back to the beginning of the resource when it's time. Below is an overview of what is included with each season and how you may choose to incorporate this resource into your seasonal living:

Solstice and Equinox Activities: We take some time to learn about each solstice and equinox. We look at why these special days exist in a child-friendly way. There are also suggestions for how you can celebrate these four days with your little ones.

Nature Tables: Nature tables encourage a holistic approach to education by integrating nature, creativity, imagination, and an overall reverence for the natural world into a child's daily experiences. Nature tables also build an appreciation for beauty, and offer our little ones a quiet, reflective space.

Each month, I offer suggestions for seasonal elements you might add to your nature table, following a four-part framework:

- Each season begins with suggestions for a backdrop or landscape, such as pieces of fabric or felt.
- The adult craft for the season often works as a seasonal figure to include on your nature table. Other options are peg dolls or wooden animals. Ideally, the figures should be natural-looking and open-ended.
- Each season includes a piece of beautiful art and a poem that you could place on your nature table.
- The focus is bringing the outdoors in, so nature items found outside are placed carefully and intentionally on the table.

Adult Craft: Each season has a craft just for you. One evening each season, I encourage you to get those little ones to bed, make a cup of tea, and have a lovely time creating. We are creative beings! When we are busy with our little ones all day, it is easy to lose sight of this. My hope is that these crafts will help you add beauty to your home and reignite that love of creating in your heart. Once complete, these crafts can be displayed on your nature table, in your child's room, or even given as gifts.

Artwork: I collaborated with an immensely talented local artist to create a beautiful piece of art for each season. The artwork can be displayed around your home, in your child's room, or—my personal favorite—right on the nature table.

Poem: A sweet and simple poem is included with each season. I encourage you to display the poem in your home and practice reciting it aloud with your little one frequently throughout the season. Practicing rhyme and song with our little ones is fabulous for literacy development!

Seasonal Crafts and Activities: Each season includes three sensory bin ideas (one for each month in the season), as well as twelve seasonal craft ideas (four for each month in the season). Around once a week, you can enjoy a seasonal activity with your little one as you immerse yourself in all of the wonders that the season has to offer.

Now, let's dive into some seasonal living with our littles!

xo Sarah





LET'S CELEBRATE

The Spring Equinox

The Spring Equinox happens on March 20 or 21 in the Northern Hemisphere. This day officially marks the beginning of spring, when daytime and nighttime are almost the same length. As the Northern Hemisphere begins to tilt more toward the Sun, the days grow longer and the weather slowly warms as we move toward summer. Spring is a beautiful season of new growth and fresh beginnings. Trees start to grow new leaves, flowers begin to bloom, and hibernating animals wake from their winter sleep!

Ways to Celebrate the Spring Equinox

Here are some fun ways you might choose to celebrate the Spring Equinox with your little one:



Nature Walk: Take a nature walk and observe the changes happening around you. Look for signs of spring, like blooming flowers, chirping birds, and budding trees.



Plant Seeds: Teach your little one about new life by planting seeds or seedlings in a garden or pots. Discuss how plants grow and what they need to thrive.



Decorate Eggs: Have fun decorating eggs! You can use paint, markers, stickers, or natural dyes to create beautiful designs. This ties in with the symbolism of new life.



Cooking Together: Prepare a spring-themed snack using fresh, seasonal ingredients. Discuss the importance of eating fresh, healthy foods.



Story Time: Read books about spring, nature, or the changing seasons. Discuss the stories and encourage your little one to share what they love about spring.



Sun Catchers: Create sun catchers using clear contact paper and beads. Hang them near windows to catch the sunlight, symbolizing the increasing daylight of spring.



Outdoor Picnic: Organize a picnic in a park or your backyard. Enjoy the fresh air, play games, and talk about the changes you see in nature.



Create a Nature Journal: Start a nature journal together with your little one where you can both draw or write about the changes you are observing in nature as spring progresses.





BRING THE SEASON TO YOUR HOME

Spring Nature Table and Luminaries

Spring Nature Table



Spring Art Print



Spring Poem Print

Setting up your nature table for spring is such a breath of fresh air! With everything waking up from the long winter slumber, the world begins to look bright and new. This nature table is the perfect way for your home to feel this way as well.

The backdrop for your spring nature table could be any pastel piece of felt or cloth. Pale green or pink works beautifully.

When you add your Floral Luminary (the Adult Craft this season), you might choose to place a battery-powered candle or some LED twinkle lights inside. The pretty, soft glow adds such a whimsical touch to the table.

For spring tables, I also like to include some branches with tiny pieces of green wool roving or green felt. This feels just like the trees beginning to grow their leaves outside. Be sure to add some little characters, such as wooden peg dolls or seasonal animals, as well. Birds, nests, eggs, and baby animals are such a nice touch.

Finally, head outside to select some treasures with your little one. You might find some broken eggshells, beautiful fresh flowers, the first new leaves, and more. When you add flowers to your nature table, place them in little cups or bowls of water and replace them as needed.

Flower-Pressed Luminaries

Materials: Wide-mouth mason jar (any size), Mod Podge or white glue, pressed flowers, battery-operated candle or twinkle lights, twine

To make your Flower-Pressed Luminaries:

1. It is so simple to make this pretty craft! Begin by pressing some flowers between paper towels and heavy books. Once flat, you are set to begin.
2. Using a paintbrush, add some Mod Podge (or white glue) to the outside of your jar. Press a flower on and cover with more Mod Podge. Continue until you have used all the flowers you would like.
3. Once dry, tie some twine around the top of the jar and place the battery-operated candle or twinkle lights inside.





SPRING CRAFTS AND ACTIVITIES

March

Fill the Eggs

Materials: Plastic Easter eggs, beads, buttons or other small items, large bin

Grab some plastic Easter eggs along with a whole bunch of beads, buttons, or other small things. Pop these all into a sensory bin and have your little one play away! Perhaps they will fill up the eggs and dump them out, or perhaps they will practice sorting by color as they play.

Beading Caterpillars

Materials: Pipe cleaners, beads

For this simple activity that is marvelous at strengthening fine motor skills, you will only need pipe cleaners and beads. Help your little one thread beads onto a pipe cleaner, filling it almost all the way! Once done, twist the pipe cleaner in a bendy way so it looks like a little caterpillar!

Felt Eggs

Materials: Felt squares, scissors

Gather some squares of felt in all different colors. Our dollar store sells large packs of felt squares. Using scissors, cut a few squares into the shape of eggs and cut other felt squares into squiggles, lines, and dots. Give your little one the egg shapes and encourage them to decorate the eggs using the other felt pieces. The felt works like magic, gently sticking together!

Weather Paper Chain

Materials: Blue, yellow, gray, and white construction paper, scissors, tape

The weather during the spring can really fluctuate! A fun activity to enjoy with your little one is to create a paper chain weather report. Each day, check the weather. If it is a rainy day, add a blue paper chain to your chain. If it is sunny, add a yellow paper chain. If it is cloudy, add a gray paper chain, and if it snows, a white one! Paper chains are nice and simple to make. Simply cut strips of paper, securing the first one into a circle with tape, and inserting the second through the middle of the first circle before securing that one into a circle.

Cherry Blossom Tree

Materials: Twigs, twine, pink and light green tissue paper, paintbrush, white glue

This is such a pretty craft and full of sensory fun for little ones! Begin by gathering some twigs and securing them at the base with twine. The idea is to make this look like a little tree. Next, rip up some strips of pink and light green tissue paper. Have your child further rip these strips into small squares. After, using a paintbrush with some white glue, have your little one paint the branches. Finally, stick on that tissue paper to create a beautiful spring tree.



SPRING CRAFTS AND ACTIVITIES

April

Garden Bin

Materials: Sand or dirt, large bin, little gardening gloves, flowers, pots or bowls

Gather some sand or dirt (rice or lentils also work well) into a sensory bin along with some little gardening gloves, flowers, pots or bowls. If you don't have any flowers available, you can simply cut some out of construction paper. Now your little one can play gardener, as they dig and plant all of their little flowers.

Rainy Day Picture

Materials: Paper, white crayon, watercolor paint, paintbrush

Have your little one draw a picture on a piece of paper using a white crayon. You can create a rainy-day picture for your little one as well. Next, have him paint over top using watery watercolor paint—and the rainy day picture will be revealed! The magic of the paint not sticking to the crayon is awesome.

Symmetrical Butterfly Painting

Materials: Paper, scissors, paint, paintbrush

This simple and classic craft is perfect for spring. Cut out a large butterfly from a piece of paper. This is easiest if you fold the paper in half first and then cut one half of the butterfly, opening up to reveal its symmetrical side. Next, have your little one paint one half of the butterfly. Once done, fold the second wing on top of the paint and press well. Open to reveal your symmetrical butterfly!

Playdough Flowers

Materials: Playdough, green pipe cleaners



Playdough Recipe

Whip up a batch of playdough. You can choose to divide the playdough into a few different sections and color it a few different colors, though once your little one begins to play, it will likely all get mixed! Add some green pipe cleaners and encourage your little one to make some playdough flowers by rolling little balls of playdough and sticking a green pipe cleaner stem in.

Grow a Seed in a Mason Jar

Materials: Mason jar, paper towel, water, seeds

Take a glass mason jar and fill it with paper towel. Add some water so the paper towel becomes a bit compressed, and then fill with more paper towel until the whole jar is full. Next, push some seeds between the paper towel and the glass. You could put 4 or 5 around the edge of the glass. Beans, peas, lettuce, anything goes—and grows! Pop your mason jar in a sunny spot and keep the paper towel wet. Within just a few short days, you will see your seeds begin to sprout!





SPRING CRAFTS AND ACTIVITIES

May

Cutting the Grass

Materials: Green paper, safety scissors, stickers (optional)

Rip some long strips of green paper and pop into a sensory bin. Add safety scissors (if your child is confident with them, otherwise ripping the paper works too!) and have them snip the “grass.” You can add some stickers as well, encouraging your little one to stick some stickers on the pieces of paper.

Coffee Filter Butterflies

Materials: Coffee filters, washable markers, spray bottle with water, pipe cleaner

Another classic and super simple craft is making some coffee filter butterflies. Have your little one color a coffee filter with washable markers. Once done, use a spray bottle filled with water to mist over your coffee filter, allowing the colors to blend. Little ones love this step! Allow to dry and then gather in the middle and secure with a pipe cleaner.

Egg Carton Color Scavenger Hunt

Materials: Egg carton and scissors (optional)



Color Scavenger Hunt

In late spring, the color has finally returned! Head outside with your little one and see if you can find every color of the rainbow. Perhaps you gather a little green grass, a yellow dandelion, and a pink flower! You can simply find these items, or use the printable and an egg carton to collect your treasures. Bring them inside to your nature table.

Flower Prints

Materials: Flowers, paint, shallow dish, paper

As spring comes to an end, we begin to see more and more flowers everywhere! Today, when you are outside with your little one, gather some flowers and bring them inside. Pour some paint into a shallow dish and have your child use a paintbrush to spread paint all over the flower. Next, place the flower onto a piece of construction paper. Repeat with as many flowers as you like, and then press a second piece of construction paper over top, pressing and then peeling off to reveal your flower prints!

Painting with Puffy Clouds

Materials: Paper, cotton balls, clothespin, paint

The beautiful spring sky is such a lovely part of welcoming back the spring! Today with your little one, you can paint with “clouds.” For this activity, take some cotton balls and pinch a clothespin onto each one. These can be paintbrushes for your little one as you enjoy some fun process art painting!





It is Spring

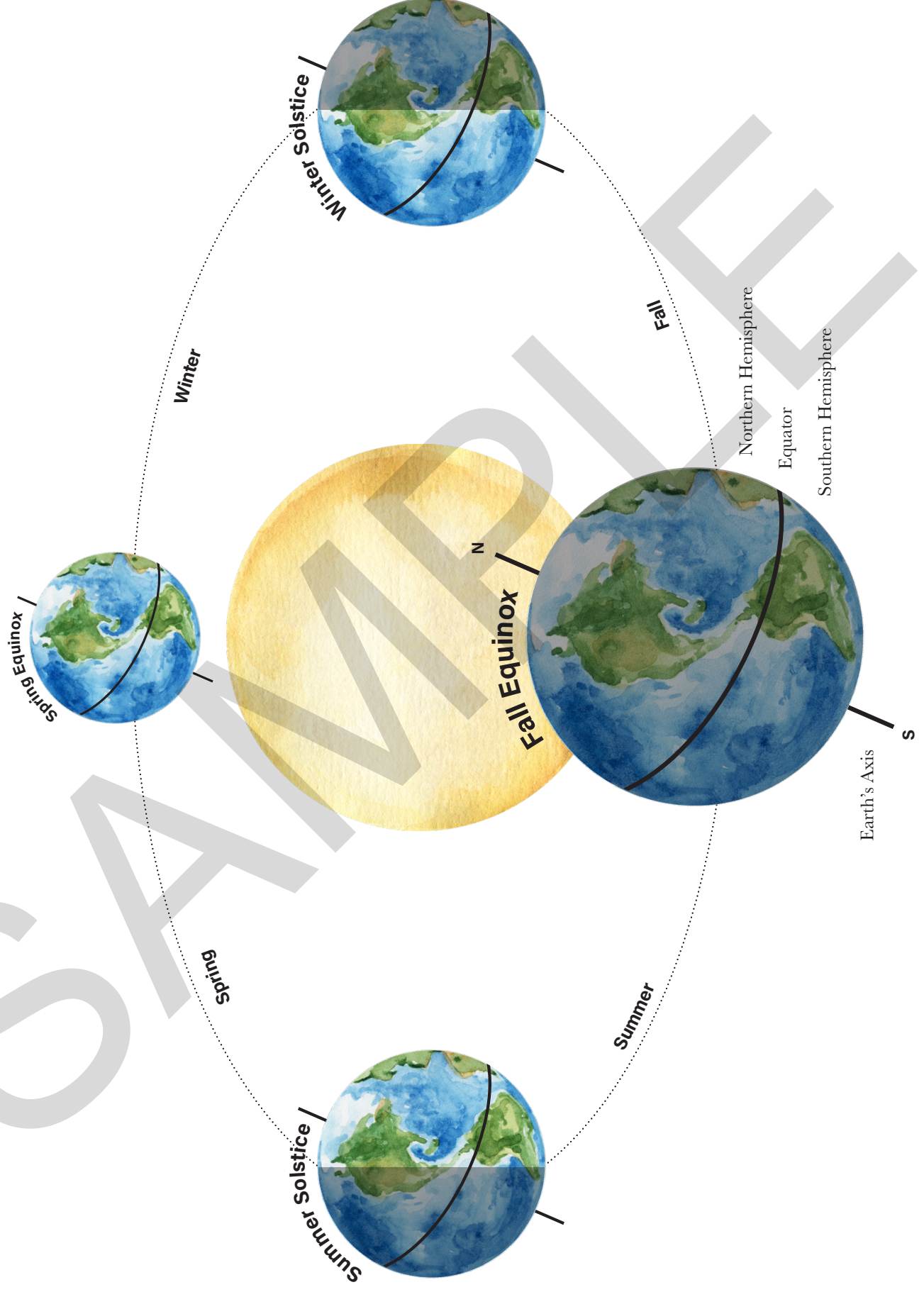
by Sarah Noftle

The rain is falling,
Robins are calling,
I think it is spring.
I think it is spring.

I hear the hum of bees,
The first green leaves on trees,
I think it is spring.
I think it is spring.

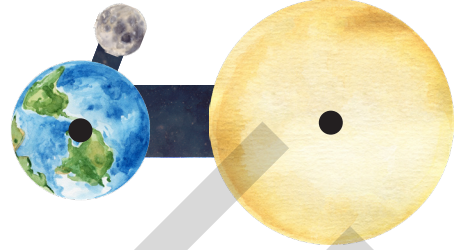
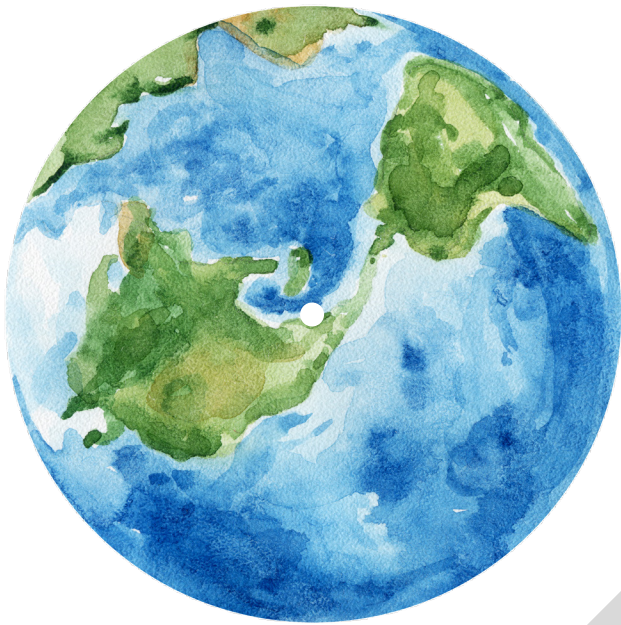
The snow has started to melt,
The warm sun I have felt,
I know it is spring.
I know it is spring.

The Solstices & Equinoxes



Sun, Earth, and Moon

Cut out the pieces below and assemble with two metal brad fasteners to make a rotating model of the Sun, Earth, and Moon.





HOW WEE LEARN

No-Cook Playdough Recipe



FLOUR



OIL



BOILING WATER



MIXING BOWL



CREAM OF
TARTAR



SALT

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup salt
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
2 tablespoons oil
1 cup boiling water



MIXING SPOON
OR SPATULA

NO-COOK PLAYDOUGH RECIPE

Instructions

Add all of the ingredients to a bowl and mix them together. Remove the dough from the bowl and knead by hand until it becomes perfectly smooth.

Optional: Try adding food coloring or a couple drops of essential oils for color and a lovely scent.

Too sticky? Add more flour.

Too clumpy? Add more boiled water.





SEASONAL LIVING WITH LITTLES

Egg Carton Color Scavenger Hunt

Cut out the color circles below, then put one in each cup of an empty egg carton. Your little one can take their egg carton treasure box outside and collect little nature items that match each color!

