

## September

It's a perfect time of year to talk about squirrels and their ongoing search for acorns as we frequently see them scurrying around outside.

Take a walk to investigate further. Call children's attention to their appearance, using new vocabulary words such as rodent, frisky, scamper, or bushy (tail). Give older children paper and pencil (on clipboards) and direct them to watch a squirrel, then draw their observations. Give toddlers a paper and crayon and show them how to do a crayon rubbing of the tree trunk where the squirrels are scampering. Back inside, children can finish their work with crayons or paint.

Extend the squirrel observation by showing this great video of a squirrel eating an acorn on youtube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XsUjY5Z8fk>

*Early Learning Foundations: Infant and Toddler: Language and Literacy: Receptive Language; Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Attention and Persistence; Physical Development and Health: Fine and Gross Motor; Preschool: Approaches to Learning: Initiative and Curiosity; Language and Literacy: Receptive Communication; Science: Scientific Knowledge-Living Things; My Family, My Community, My World: Places and Spaces-Geography; Creative Expression: Visual Arts; Physical Development and Health: Fine and Gross Motor.*

Sing and act out this song:

Grey Squirrel, Grey Squirrel  
Shake your bushy tail  
Grey Squirrel Grey Squirrel  
Shake your bushy tail  
Wrinkle up your little nose  
Put it down between your toes  
Grey Squirrel, Grey Squirrel  
Shake your bushy tail

*Early Learning Foundations: Infant and Toddler: Social Emotional: Self Awareness; Language and Literacy: Expressive Language; Discoveries: Spatial Awareness, Memory, Play; Physical Development and Health: Gross Motor; Preschool: Social Emotional: Self Awareness; Language and Literacy: Expressive Communication; Creative Expression: Movement and Dance; Physical Development and Health: Gross Motor.*

Lay out a row of acorns. Ask children to "estimate" how many acorns they think are in the row. Then count to find out the actual number. Next, ask them to take a handful. Find out how many they can hold in their hands. Who can hold the most? Why?

*Early Learning Foundations: Infant and Toddler: Language and Literacy: Receptive Language; Discoveries: Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor Preschool: Social Emotional: Social Relationships and Cooperation; Approaches to Learning: Reasoning and Problem Solving; Mathematics: Numbers and Operations, Measurement; Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor.*

Play some music. Have children pretend to be squirrels gathering nuts. When the music stops, the "squirrels" scurry "home" (a designated place in the classroom) to stow their acorns.

*Early Learning Foundations: Infant and Toddler: Social Emotional: Self Regulation; Language and Literacy: Receptive Language; Discoveries: Spatial Awareness, Memory, Play; Physical Development and Health: Gross Motor; Preschool: Social Emotional: Self Regulation; Language and Literacy: Receptive*

*Communication; Creative Expression: Movement and Dance; Physical Development and Health: Gross Motor.*

Paint with acorns. Line the lid of shoe box with manila paper. Put a dab of 2-3 colors of tempera paint on the paper. Lay on a few acorns. Show children how to gently roll the acorns back and forth to make a design.

*Early Learning Foundations: Infant and Toddler: Language and Literacy: Emergent Writing; Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Cause and Effect; Physical Development and Health: Sensory, Fine Motor; Preschool: Approaches to Learning: Initiative and Curiosity; Language and Literacy: Emergent Writing; Creative Expression: Visual Arts; Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor.*

Here are some books to read:

Nuts to You by Lois Ehlert

Those Darn Squirrels by Adam Rubin

The Busy Little Squirrel by Nancy Tafuri

One More Acorn by Don Freeman

The Acorn and the Oak Tree by Lori Froeb