



ECCCo
Early Childhood
Creative Collaborations

TINY TRACES ON JUNCTION CREEK

FALL RESEARCH QUESTIONS / INVITATIONS a guide for parents and guardians



General notes

- Where possible, visit the area alongside the creek closest to you. How often and how long is entirely up to you and what you are able to do.
- If you aren't near the creek, or are unable to go, you can explore some of these questions in a park near your home.
- Tips for use of materials are included in this package. If you're not familiar with a particular medium, use it alongside the children. Note how it works, what it can do, and explore how each material might be helpful to answer or explore different questions, differently, as each material has its own range, its own vocabulary, its own way of communicating.

Following the child's creative research

- Start by asking the child what they expect to see or find when they get to the creek: this can help them observe the area in contrast with what they expect or already know.
- Try not to answer the child's questions - follow a question with another question:

**What do you think? Why do you think that is happening?
How might we test this out? How might we find out? Where do you think this will go/flow... ? What do you think will happen?**

- Note the questions children generate. From these questions you can select new, more specific, and more complex questions to follow that are of direct interest to the child.
- Note the observations children make. Observations tell us what the children are noticing, and how they are seeing and thinking. Sometimes observations have questions embedded in them, even if the question is unformulated.
- Note the statements children make. Statements are sometimes theories that can be tested.

- Respond to the child's artwork:

Tell me about your drawing, painting...

- Ask the child to share what they learned through their site visit, their drawings, their conversations. Ask what questions they have. Ask what they think is happening at the creek, in the riparian, in the canopy...

Ask them what they are wondering, or what they want to find out about?

- If a debate ensues: for instance, if children have different and contrasting statements, let them discuss the differences, and tease out theories they have.
- Listen to the child's theories, ideas and questions.
- Share new words, drawings, and research questions on a wall, or the fridge where the children can see their research as it changes.

Collecting for further research

- Children may want to collect photos for their research back home.
- Children may also want to bring back natural materials to continue their research and sharing.
- Ensure the children are harvesting responsibly. Encourage them to collect windfall materials that are already on the ground, rather than harvesting materials that are still growing, are attached, or otherwise might damage the plant, or tree if removed. Teach them to carefully pick only the pieces of a plant that they need while leaving the rest of the plant intact. A good demonstration to show how much to collect is to place ten objects on the ground and pick up only one or two. This is a visual of how many plants to be taken.

Working with ECCo and the other educators

- Share the child's questions and art work with us through a Google Drive folder
[HERE https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1BC4YrVhmnsI-C7r1TG9vtzmaaOvzSfCYD](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1BC4YrVhmnsI-C7r1TG9vtzmaaOvzSfCYD)

- Have a peek at what children are thinking.
- Share your questions with the child's educator.
- Join us for community engagements -- follow us on IG and FB, and send us your email to join our mailing list.
- Join our network, attend our collaborative inquiry meetings, and contribute to our blog (coming soon).

Other resources

In case you're interested in further research, or integrating creek and river terms into the process, here are a couple of resources:

- Creek and river terms can be found [HERE \(http://explore.museumca.org/creeks/terms.html\)](http://explore.museumca.org/creeks/terms.html)
- Anishinaabemowin river and water terms can be found [HERE \(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g7peGgOFX8m_smhN5YC-i4PxVhiJgCr4/view\)](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g7peGgOFX8m_smhN5YC-i4PxVhiJgCr4/view)

Materials

These are suggestions only: do not feel you must use them, or only them.

- Graphite, or regular pencils
- Tracing paper
- Drawing or black felt tip pens
- Chalk pastels
- Various papers (one side already used, newsprint, printer paper, etc. cut into small sizes)
- Clipboard (or a piece of cardboard and a bulldog clip to hold paper)

Preliminary Research Questions and Invitations

- These broad, open-ended questions are intended to create space for children to find their way toward their own questions - which could be either broad or specific ones.
- Use as many or as few of the questions as make sense for your child.
- Once you have more questions from the children, you can respond to their questions and theories more directly.
- Feel free to adapt the questions to suit your context and your child.

Flour Mill

- What do you know about the creek? What do you expect to see or hear when we get there?
- How are the swampy areas, the trees and the creek related to each other?
- Why is the swamp there? What is it doing?
- Look up, look down, look around.
- Look up where there are lots of trees - what do you notice?
- Look down where there are lots of trees - what do you notice?
- Look up where there aren't many trees - what do you notice?
- Look down where there aren't many trees - what do you notice?
- Look at a tree closely, touch it, smell it. Draw what you observe.
- Are the trees communicating? What are they saying?
- Draw what you can't see, but can imagine - where are the roots going, what's happening under the earth?
- Stop and listen. Draw what you hear.
- Who else lives here? Are they hiding? Can you find some clues?

Roxborough

- What do you know about the creek? What do you expect to see or hear when we get there?
- How are the trees, the plants, and the creek related to each other?
- Can you see tree trunks or branches in the creek?
What do you notice?
- Where does the creek come from, and where does it go?
- Look up, look down, look around.
- What signs can you see of humans doing things, or making changes, along the creek?
- Choose a tree and spend time with it - touch the bark, smell the tree.
Draw what you see.
- Stop and listen. Draw what you hear.
- Are the trees speaking? What are they saying?

Garson

- What do you know about the creek? What do you expect to see or hear when we get there?
- How are the grasses and the creek related to each other?
- Near the exposed creek area next to the library, where the creek was 'daylighted': sit and create a small circle around you - what do you see in that circle?
- In a treed area within safe distance from the creek: sit and create a small circle around you - what do you see in that circle?
- Look up, look down, look around. Draw what you see.
- Who lives here? What clues can you find?
- Stop and listen. Who or what is speaking? Draw what you hear.

Two short articles about the 'daylighting' of the creek in Garson:
<https://northernontario.ctvnews.ca/failing-culvert-gives-greater-sudbury-a-chance-to-restore-garson-section-of-junction-creek-1.5129246>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/junction-creek-culvert-unearthed-1.5774294>



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*Junction Creek
Stewardship Committee*

*Comité d'intendance
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Transforming our relationships to early learning,
local ecologies and to each other,
through collaboration, celebration and creative research.

Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach™

Contact us at
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IG [earlychildhoodCCo](https://www.instagram.com/earlychildhoodCCo)

**Participation by you and your child in this project is at your own risk.
Please be aware of all risks, and use caution in and around the creek.**



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