

International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education
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ISSN: 2331-0464 (online)



CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND RESOURCES REVIEW

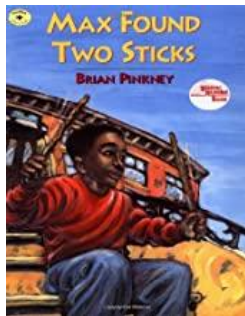
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Sticks, Lots of Sticks!

When my youngest was 2 and 3, he wanted “sticks, lots of sticks” for all of his presents! Sticks are still one of our favorite playthings in an outdoor context—there are so many opportunities! Find a variety of children’s read aloud books related to sticks, stick art inspiration, and stick support for educators below. How are sticks used in your setting?



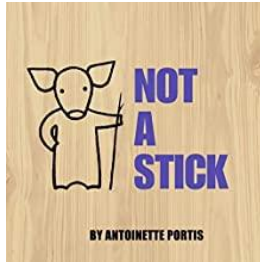
A Stick Until . . . by Constance Anderson explores how various animals use sticks as a tool—a flyswatter for an elephant, a lure for an alligator, a spoon for a chimpanzee, and even a game of fetch for a dog and boy. There are two lines of text, one simpler and another with more details about how the many animals use sticks in their daily lives.



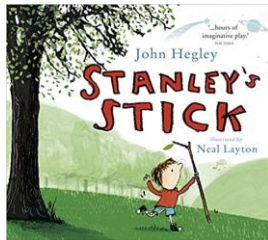
Max Found Two Sticks by Brian Pinkney is set in a more urban area as Max sits on his porch finding two twigs fall down from a nearby tree. He picks them up and starts exploring sound all around his neighborhood, tapping the sounds of pigeons flying, subways passing by, rain on the windows, and the church bells. A marching band passes by, sharing special sticks with Max. Nice rhythmic text!



Sticks by Diane Alber follows a popsicle that melted on a hot summer day, leaving behind just the stick. A twig in a nearby tree reaches out. They find Pencil and Brush and see the many things they can do. The stained popsicle stick feels like he doesn’t belong, until Twig shows Stick a popsicle stick bird feeder. Stick creates art in a bird feeder in the tree and feels that sense of belonging.



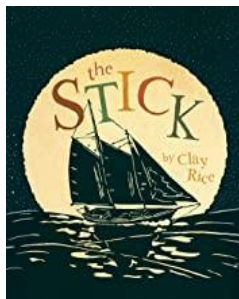
Not a Stick by Antoinette Portis cleverly illustrates the many ways a stick can be a part of child's play. From slaying a dragon to conducting music, sticks have unlimited potential. Simple line drawings allow the imagination to soar.



Stanley's Stick by John Hegley follows Stanley as his imagination uses a stick for sticky games, visiting the moon and stars, creating dinosaur skeletons, writing in the sand, stirring, and fishing. He releases his stick for others to play and finds a new, curvy stick the next day, which becomes a horn, mast, and telescope. It is "fantastick"!



Stick Man by Julia Donaldson showcases Stick Man with a stick family. Stick Man is chased by a dog, used in a nest, raced for a pooh stick, and becomes close to being part of a fire! He only wants to go home to his family tree for the holidays, not becoming a pen, flag mast, snowman arm, or bat. Santa helps him reunite with his family for Christmas.



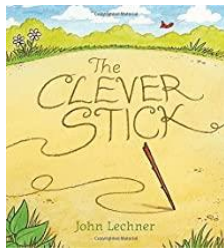
The Stick by Clay Rice is a great alternative to Not a Stick or The Giving Tree. A boy with no toys finds a stick in the park, which transforms him into a pirate, baseball player, or fisherman. Words inscribed on the stick promise that imagination lives in him and he can be anything he wants to be. Growing up, the stick is a constant companion until he shares it with a young girl with no toys near where he found it in the beginning. The silhouette illustrations are stunning.



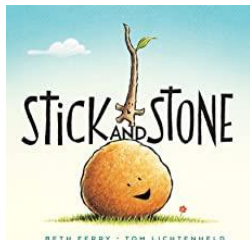
Stick by Irene Dickson follows a boy and a dog with a stick. In this simple book, the boy uses the stick for walking, throwing, tapping, balancing, swishing, drawing, stirring, waving a flag, dropping, floating, and building!



6 Sticks by Molly Cox shows how two mice use six craft sticks to make flags, whiskers, swings, letters, snowflakes, skis, tents, and other imaginative creations! The book includes many math connections in the simple wording and illustrations.



The Clever Stick by John Lechner finds his “voice” as he realizes he can make marks in the ground. Previously only able to appreciate the beauty in nature around and unable to communicate, the Clever Stick is able to make a masterpiece on the ground that attracts all the nearby animals. Even when the rain comes and washes away his art, he knows he is a very clever stick. Lots of social/emotional connections!

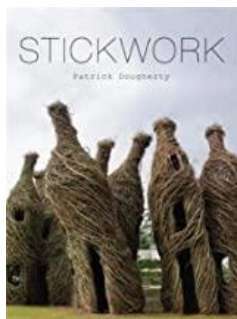


Stick and Stone by Beth Ferry explores friendship as Stick and Stone unite, go on adventures, get lost in a storm, and reunite as the number 10. While each are different, both contribute to the friendship. The book contains many social/emotional applications.



The Stick Book: Loads of Things You Can Make or Do with a Stick by Fiona Danks and Jo Schofield contains 70 projects or ideas focused on sticks! This is for ages 8-11 or as inspiration for projects that might be done in class, such as musical instruments, den making, stick weaving, bird feeder, and wild weaving!

Additional Resources



Stickwork by Patrick Dougherty highlights stick sculptures throughout the world. These whimsical ephemeral works of art typically last around 2 years, made with locally grown materials, volunteers, and his stick expertise. I’ve been able to work on one of his projects—so fun and delightful to see community come together to make and play with the sculptures!



The Toy Hall of Fame inducted the stick into the museum in 2008, claiming it may well be the world's oldest toy. It helps children get outside and provides opportunities for creative play! <https://www.museumofplay.org/toys/stick/>



Stick Play Podcast Episode by Loose Parts Nature Play explores stick safety, procuring sticks, storing sticks, and playing with sticks in the outdoor classroom. <https://loosepartsnatureplay.libsyn.com/stick-play>



Chelsea Forest School Risk Assessment shows how one school looks at benefits, risk, and safety with stick play.

<http://www.chelseaforestschoo.ca/index.php/en/risk-assessments/>



Tinkergarten Stick Activities:

- Follow the Arrows: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/follow-arrows>
- Bundle of Sticks: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/pick-up-sticks>
- Pickup Sticks: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/pick-up-sticks>
- Build a Dam: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/build-a-dam>
- Build a Wall: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/great-wall>
- Go Fish: <https://tinkergarten.com/activities/go-fish>

If you have ideas or would like to contribute book or resource reviews, please contact Dr. Gull at Carla.Gull@phoenix.edu.