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CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND RESOURCES REVIEW

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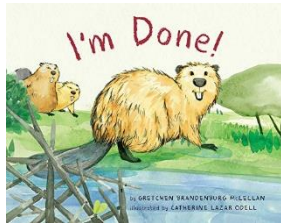
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Animal Architects

Children are fascinated by animals! Learning about animals can assist in developing empathy, wonder, and a sense of awe. Real life observational experiences are ideal; however, we can also learn about character traits through fiction and non-fiction books about animals. Here are a few books to get started, along with additional articles and resources around connecting children and animals and architecture.

I'm Done! By Gretchen Brandenburg McLellan



A young, playful beaver gives minimal effort on his building chores before he is “done” and goes off to play with his animal friends. His parents called him back, inspected his work, and encouraged him to do better. As he eventually puts in the effort for a successful dam, he is proud of his work and is really done, at least for now. Great onomatopoeia words make for a fun read aloud!

Mama Built a Little Nest by Jennifer Ward



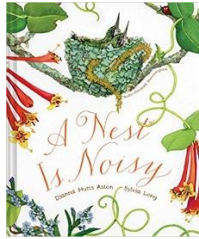
This rhyming book examines different ways birds make nests or a temporary home for their eggs and babies. Nests highlighted include a cavity in a tree, a tiny cobweb nest for hummingbirds, the birds who lay eggs in someone else's nest, a scrape on a ledge, burrows in the ground, a floating nest, sturdy nests, and more. The textures and details on these cut paper illustrations are stunning.

We Build our Homes: Small stories of Incredible Animal Architects by Laura Knowles



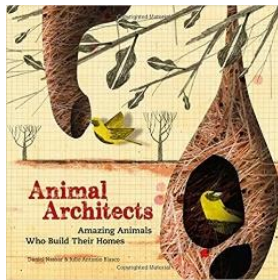
Many animals build homes beyond humans. In this book, learn about 26 different animals with unique homes made of snow, mud, webs, sticks, and other natural materials. Learn about animals around the world and how they are incredible architects. The animals tell their own factual stories. Emphasis on materials and collaboration is essential in each of the stories.

A Nest is Noisy by Dianna Hutts Aston



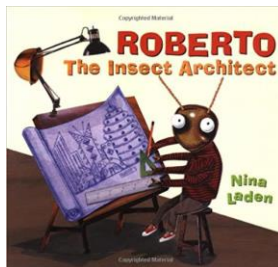
Detailed illustrations of a variety of animal nests, coupled with poetic verse, labels, and scientific information, help the reader understand the magical world of nests. Moving beyond just birds, reptile, insect, fish, mammal, and amphibian nests are also included. The highly visual book is a welcome non-fiction introduction to a variety of nests, along with a literary wonder using poetry and onomatopoeia to keep attention.

Animal Architects: Amazing Animals Who Build their Homes by Daniel Nassar and Julio Antonio Blasco



With each 2 and 1/3 page spread (pages fold out), this non-fiction book looks at an animal, what type of home it has, how it is built, pictures of materials used, building plans, and characteristics of the animals. The book uses drawings, photos, and sketches for a unique design, including insects, birds, amphibians, arachnids, and mammals. Fourteen animals are highlighted with “home” names of a mobile residence, a foamy refuge, a treetop attic, and a suspension bridge. Geared for ages 7 and above, though I often share a particular animal with younger children.

Roberto: The Insect Architect by Nina Laden



Rather than eating wood, Roberto wants to build with wood! However, his reputation as a termite makes others wary of his skills. He finds insect needs and problems all over the big city and decides to do something about it. He finds an abandoned city block full of junk and anonymously begins building homes to fill those needs. He eventually becomes a famous architect inspiring and helping many.

Seaver the Weaver by Paul Czajak



Follow Seaver, an orb weaver, as he is inspired to build his webs by the patterns of the night sky stars. His siblings make round, empty webs, while Seaver makes triangular, square, and hexagonal webs, which catch mosquitoes. Despite the pressure to fit in with circular webs, Seaver finds he likes his webs as they are unique. His siblings like them as they find patterns in the marvelous shapes and catch many bugs.

Articles and Other Resources:

Regarding Animals: A Perspective on the Importance of Animals in Early Childhood Environmental Education by Patty Born

In this research article, Patty Born explores how children interact (both directly and indirectly) with animals in early childhood environments. The author encourages us to reflect on our practice as educators and support child to animal relationships in our environments. Children and animals can be an integral aspect of child development. She recognizes different ways of connection with animals--about, for, and with—encouraging us to move beyond just learning about to allowing children to enjoy being with animals and develop ethics and care for animals as we look at environmental and interspecies connectedness.

https://naturalstart.org/sites/default/files/journal/8._born.pdf

Connecting Children to Animals by Carla Gull, Loose Parts Nature Play

This podcast episode looks at legal, practical, and playful issues and opportunities around connecting children and animals. Investigate ways to enhance habitat, apps, tools, resources, and helpful articles.

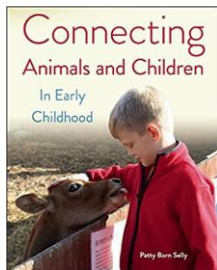
<https://loosepartsnatureplay.libsyn.com/connecting-children-to-animals>

Architecture by Carla Gull, Loose Parts Nature Play

A podcast episode dedicated to children and humans investigating architecture. Ideas, quotes, book options, and explorations are included in this 20-minute listen.

<https://loosepartsnatureplay.libsyn.com/architecture>

Connecting Animals and Children in Early Childhood by Patty Born Selly



An excellent resource that examines why children and animals should be connected, along with the ethics, practical ideas, and a variety of ways to connect with life animals. Topics include the foundations of why children are so interested in animals, how animal encounters might align with child development, how and where children interact with animals in their lives, how to create moments of authenticity with animals, and including animals in classrooms.

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