



High Touch High Tech®

Science Experiences That Come To You™

Fungi Prints ©

**notes for parents* you can use grocery store mushrooms. Try to get a variety. You might check an Asian market for a good variety. Any mushrooms are fun!*

Supply list per child

- Mushroom
- Paper plate
- Magnifying glass (optional)
- Inkpads (multiple colors if possible)
- Fungi print handout

Instructions:

Mushrooms can all look a little different, but all have the same parts and characteristics – that’s what makes them all fungi! Let’s learn about the parts of our mushrooms. Then we’ll dissect our mushrooms, examine them, and make some fun prints. Before we start, let me mention that some mushrooms you can eat, but a lot are POISONOUS. That means you shouldn’t ever eat a mushroom except if it comes from a store.

Cap: the rounded top of the mushroom. Mushrooms can have very different looking caps – skinny, fat, broad.

Gills: fin-like area under the cap that contains spores.

Spores: “baby” mushrooms. Fungi reproduce via spores instead of seeds. A typical mushroom makes about 1 million spores per minute and can release spores over the course of several days. Spores are microscopic.

Stalk: The “stem” of the mushroom

Hyphae: The “roots” of the mushroom. These can be small filaments under the ground connecting and extending up into groups of mushrooms. These absorb nutrients and transport it to other areas of the fungus – this is a simplification.

Procedure:

1. Set out all your mushrooms on paper plates or paper towels. Caution the kids to be careful with their mushroom and to not eat it.
2. Use your magnifying glass to carefully look at your mushroom.
3. Go over the different parts and guide the kids in identifying them on their specimen. Keep it simple – can they find the cap? The gills? The stalk?
4. Pass around the inkpads and fungi print handout.
5. Carefully dip the cap in ink and make a print on your paper. Now try to make a print of the gills and the stem. It is ok if you need to break apart your mushroom to do this.
6. Encourage them to make a beautiful design using their mushroom.

Experiment Conclusion:

Do you feel like a fungus expert yet? The world of fungi is huge and unique, but all fungi is grouped together because of similar characteristics. That is how scientist classify and organize our world!

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