



Museum of the Cape Fear presents

Preschool Pals Virtual Program

Preschool Pals is geared for ages 3 to 5. The virtual program is a kit that includes the same kind of activities that children would do at the museum. Each kit requires adult supervision and assistance.

(Adults, read the following to the children or if they can read, have them read it to you.)



The theme for this Preschool Pals Virtual Program is squirrels. The gray squirrel is the official state mammal of North Carolina. Squirrels are found in yards, parks, playgrounds, and running up and down trees. Gray squirrels look mostly gray on top with a white belly and a bushy tail. They eat acorns and nuts. They often bury their food and are able to go back to where they buried it when they need it.

Included in this virtual kit:

- A coloring sheet you can print
- A short story
- Instructions for the crafts
- A link to a song on YouTube about squirrels

Supplies you need:

- Crayons, especially gray, but any color is fine. (You can use your imagination.)
- Plastic or paper bowl or container
- Strips of paper
- Cotton balls
- Glue stick

Coloring Sheet



Squishy and the Red Squirrel

An original story by Leisa Greathouse
Curator of Education at the Museum of the Cape Fear
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It was a beautiful day when Squishy the squirrel woke up. She ran down the tree from her nest. When she reached the ground, she



noticed some people walking in the park reading signs. Then she saw many other squirrels going about their daily routine, such as looking for nuts they had buried, or gathering twigs for their nest.



Squishy smiled, closed her eyes, and stretched her neck toward the warm morning sun and she felt the breeze flow through her fluffy tail. When she opened her eyes she noticed a new squirrel in the park. This squirrel looked like her except the squirrel's fur was red instead of gray. Squishy, who usually runs everywhere she goes in the park, walked calmly toward the red squirrel.

"Hello. My name is Squishy. Would you like to play with me."

"Hello Squishy. My name is Robin. I'm new here to the park. I would like to play with you."

They were playing and running and visitors at the park, who were on a tour, smiled and giggled at how much fun the two squirrels were having. The tour guide knew the visitors were interested in watching the squirrels so the tour guide began to tell them about the two different types they saw.



"The gray one is the official state mammal and it is called the Eastern Gray Squirrel," said the tour guide. "We call her Squishy because when she was a baby squirrel, she made a squishy sound when she wanted something to eat. The other squirrel," said the tour guide, "must be new here. This is the first day I have seen that squirrel, but it looks like a Red Squirrel, which are usually found in the North Carolina mountains."



Squishy and Robin became tired and stopped playing to rest. All that running around made them hungry. The park where Squishy and Red lived is called Arsenal Park, where there are lots of pecan trees, so there are plenty of pecans for all the squirrels. Plus, Squishy had buried some nuts from last season and knew where to find them. After digging up several pecans, Squishy and Robin ate all they could. Instead of playing, they decided to look for other nuts, or acorns, they could bury for later. In Arsenal Park, there are pine nuts from pine cones, acorns from oak trees, in addition to the pecan trees. They collected lots of acorns and buried them in different spots around the park.

They decided to rest under one of the trees. It was getting warmer as the day went on and sitting in the shade cooled them off. As they sat under the tree they began to talk.

“Squishy,” said Robin, “ I have had a good time today. Thank you for making me feel welcome. There are a lot of squirrels in this park but none like me. I moved here from the mountains. There are parks there too with swings and slides and people sitting on benches.

Sometimes they feed us nuts.

What is this park? Where are the swings and slides?”

Squishy answered Robin by telling him all about Arsenal Park. “This is a special park. There are no swings or slides because this is a historic site. I have heard the tour guide say that many people worked here a long time ago to build a lot of buildings in a square and it was called the United States Arsenal in Fayetteville. That’s why it’s called Arsenal Park.”



“What would you like to do now,” Squishy asked.

“I think it’s time to go to my nest and have a rest,” answered Robin. “Can we play later?”

“A rest is a good idea. When we wake up, we will be ready to play again. We can climb the pine trees and find the pine nuts in the pine cones,” Squishy said with excitement.

“That’s a great idea. See you later Squishy.”

“See you later Robin. Have a good nap.”

Squishy and Robin became friends that day, even though the two squirrels were each a different color. In their long friendship they spent almost everyday playing, running around, and eating plenty of acorns and nuts.

The End



CRAFT TIME



Activity 1 — Make a squirrel’s nest

Supplies Needed:

- Plastic or paper bowl or container
- Strips of paper

Instructions:

Tear scrap paper into thin strips, about a half inch to an inch wide. Put them in a plastic bowl in a disorganized manner with the strips hanging over the edges of the bowl. Squirrel’s nest are thick and bushy so make plenty of strips to use in your nest. Do you have nuts you can put in your nest?

Activity 2 — Make a squirrel’s tail

Supplies Needed:

- Cotton balls
- Glue stick

Instructions:

On the picture you colored, put some glue on the tail and place cotton balls on it to make the squirrel’s tail fluffy.

Click the image or the link to go to the YouTube song, “Gray Squirrel Shake Your Bushy Tail.”



Gray Squirrel Shake Your Bushy Tail | Gray Squirrel | Kids Song | The Kiboomers

<https://youtu.be/5uf3WwYfUYw>

We hope you enjoyed this virtual program. Look for other educational activities and opportunities on the museum's website [here](#). If you discover any errors, such as typos or broken internet links, please notify the museum as soon as possible so corrections can be made before the next adult and child make use of it. Thank you.



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