



# Sensational Sunflowers: Fun Summer Activities for Kids

There's nothing like driving by a field of sunflowers in the summer. The burst of yellow, green, and brown catches the corner of your eye and immediately brings your attention to the beautiful flowers. However, the sensational sunflower is much more than a beautiful plant. Check out these five fun facts about sunflowers and the accompanying multisensory and art activities you can do with the children in your care this summer.

## Five Fun Facts About Sunflowers

1. Sunflowers are native to the Americas: Sunflowers were originally grown in North America for food, medicine, dye, and other uses before they were distributed to other parts of the world by Spanish conquistadors around 1500.
2. Sunflowers track the sun: In its early stages of growth, a sunflower will turn towards the sunlight (a behavior called heliotropism). Young sunflower buds and blossoms typically face towards the east in the morning and will follow the sun's path during the day.
3. Sunflowers have a history of healing: Many Native American tribes believed that sunflowers soothed chest pain and helped treat kidney issues.
4. Sunflowers have traveled to space: U.S. astronaut Don Pettit decided to pack sunflower seeds for his trip to the International Space Station in 2012 and document their growth process in space.
5. The world's tallest sunflower was 30'1" tall! Guinness World Records recorded the world's tallest sunflower in Germany on August 28, 2014.

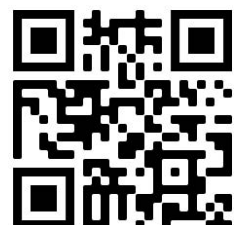
## Multisensory Learning Activities

- Have children use the sunflower seeds as counters and count them out loud as a multisensory math activity.
- Help children dissect a sunflower and learn about its different parts as a multisensory science activity.
- Create a sunflower-themed sensory bin for the young learners in your care. You may want to include a few whole sunflowers or different parts of sunflowers for children to explore. Another idea would be to put a variety of yellow items (sunflowers, envelope, sponge, whole lemon, daffodil, etc.) into a sensory bin.

## Materials

- White Paper (construction paper or newsprint paper)
- Tape
- Brown Markers
- Circular Object for Children to Trace (e.g. tape roll or plastic lid)
- Glue

Scan this **QR Code** to view this activity on our **website** and to check out more of our **Insights and Inspirations** articles!



- Glue Spreaders (Item #60447)  
(craft sticks or a piece of folded paper are two other options)
- Brown Sand (Item #30729)
- Recycled Paper Towel Rolls (cut in half)
- Yellow, Brown, and Green Tempera Paint (other colors optional for background)
- Paint Cups (Item #84983)
- Paintbrushes (Item #84704)

### 1. Hand Out Paper

Give each child a piece of white paper. You may want to tape the edges of the paper down to help it stay in one place.

### 2. Trace A Circle

Give children a circular object to trace near the top of the paper (be sure to remind them to leave enough room for the flower petals).

### 3. Add Glue

Once children have traced a circle on their paper, have them add glue to the middle of the circle and then spread it around the circle.

### 4. Cover the Glue with Sand

Cover the glue with brown sand and let it dry. Pour excess sand into a paper plate and fill in any uncovered spots in the circle with brown marker.

### 5. Use Paper Roll to Paint

Give children yellow paint and a paper towel tube. Explain that they need to squeeze the tube to look more like a petal and that they will be using the paper towel roll as a paintbrush. Dip the end of the paper towel roll in yellow paint and stamp petals around the circle. Let the yellow paint dry.

### 6. Add to the Scenery

While you wait for the yellow paint to dry, encourage children to add a stem and leaves to their sunflower. They can also add trees and other flowers to the scene.

### 7. Fill in Petal with Paint

Have children go back and fill in the petals with yellow paint. Remind children to be very careful to not mix paint colors together as they paint.

### 8. Let the Painting Dry

Let the paintings dry and take pictures of the children and their sunflower art!

