

Henry's mother provided her perspective to assist in learning more about Henry's thought process:

We sat down to the table and Henry said he was going to make us again. It started with choosing rocks to be our feet, then our bodies, and heads. He gave himself blue, "Jewels," for eyes because his eyes are blue. He picked green for me after noticing there was no brown for me (since my eyes are brown). He also found the heart shaped rock and placed that on his rock person. He then asked if there was another heart shaped rock for my rock person and we looked through the stones together and found one. He put in another caterpillar, but mentioned it was a shorter one this time. He used the shells and listened to each one and remarked, "*I can hear the water. It's waving to me! I can hear the waves in it.*" So he made the story that we were going for a walk, using our walking sticks and heading to the beach. He placed a few shells along the bottom of the picture to represent the beach.

He also built a nest (the long thin sticks) and placed jewels as eggs. He asked for wing shaped rocks and we sorted through those to make a body, wing, and head. This time the bird was a woodpecker and he added a heart to that as well because, "*The living things have hearts,*" (which was part of a discussion we had about mammals/animals/reptiles previously).

Also new to the table this time was the round wooden rings. Henry decided that would be my backpack and filled it with jewels. When we go for walks, we routinely collect sticks, rocks, feathers, acorns and other, "Treasures." There were also some star shaped beads this week and Henry added those and a larger round jewel that was the moon, so we were going for a night hike. Whenever there's a full moon or something unique happening - eclipse, planets visible, etc., we let the boys stay up to watch. We also have taken them for night time, "Owl prowls."

At one point, he was looking at the picture of the scene he created two weeks prior. He went through the differences from the picture to the scene in front of him. He talked about what was different between the two (the shorter caterpillar, the use of shells, the backpack, the woodpecker this time as opposed to a wood duck last time). Henry decided to make the scene in front of him the same as last time, so he removed the backpack, called the woodpecker a duck, and added to the caterpillar along the bottom.

To gain a deeper understanding of Henry's story, the educator invited Henry's mother to recount Henry's experience with the loose parts:

Henry and I were putting his paintings to dry on the rack and we passed the table with the stones and green mats set out. Henry wanted to sit there and said, "*Let's do this.*" I actually tried to get him to go over to the craft/cutting table, but he insisted on playing with the stones. He sat down and said, "*What can we make here?*" and I said, "Maybe we can make up a story with the stones," (he is really into story telling lately and asks me to make up brother adventure stories regularly).

He started pulling out the stones and placing them on the mat and made a small pile of three stones. He asked, "*What can this be?*" I asked him what it looked like and he said, "A tree," and so he built another tree, "*With something coming out of it,*" which was the coloured, "Jewel," (glass like beads on the table). He pulled out more rocks and placed them together and said, "*This is me and this is you, mom,*" and then, "*These can be our eyes,*" with the jewels. He also said that I have a longer rock in my body because, "*You are taller than me, mom.*" However, the jewels were sliding off our, "*Rock faces,*" so he had to switch out the original rocks he picked for smooth rocks so we, "*Wouldn't lose our eyes.*" He then started making a caterpillar with the jewels and said we are looking at the caterpillar and have to be careful not to step on it. He said it would be, "*The longest one ever,*" and had it go over rocks across the length of the mat. He had to add more stones under the caterpillar to act as the ground.

He then said we needed to add a bird (I think this is because most of our outdoor adventures/walks are to find birds and report to the rest of the family what we see. He has a good memory for this and remembers what type of birds he has seen in different spots). He found one rock that looked like a beak and I found one that was similar in shape. He made one the head and the other the wing. He said it looked more like a duck than another type of bird (did not name what he might have had in mind), but that he wanted it in a tree. He used the small thin sticks and pulled out green ones to be the branches (later that changed to become a nest and he added jewels to act as eggs). We talked about what kind of duck might go in a tree and he remembered a wood duck (we are really into birds in our family and saw Wood Ducks in trees at a provincial park we were in last spring. My husband and I were really excited by that sighting because it was the first time we had seen them actually in trees, so we discussed it at length. Obviously it made a lasting impression).

We looked at his picture and talked a little more about what Mom and Henry do on walks in the woods. He added sticks and I suggested these were walking sticks, but he said they were for poking around. He decided to add a big rock and a purple stick underneath it. "*This is a salamander and we use our sticks to poke up the logs and see under it,*" (which is something we were doing regularly in the fall). He also added two sandwiches and one bun (the white rocks under the people) to be our snacks on our walk. His favourite is melted cheese.