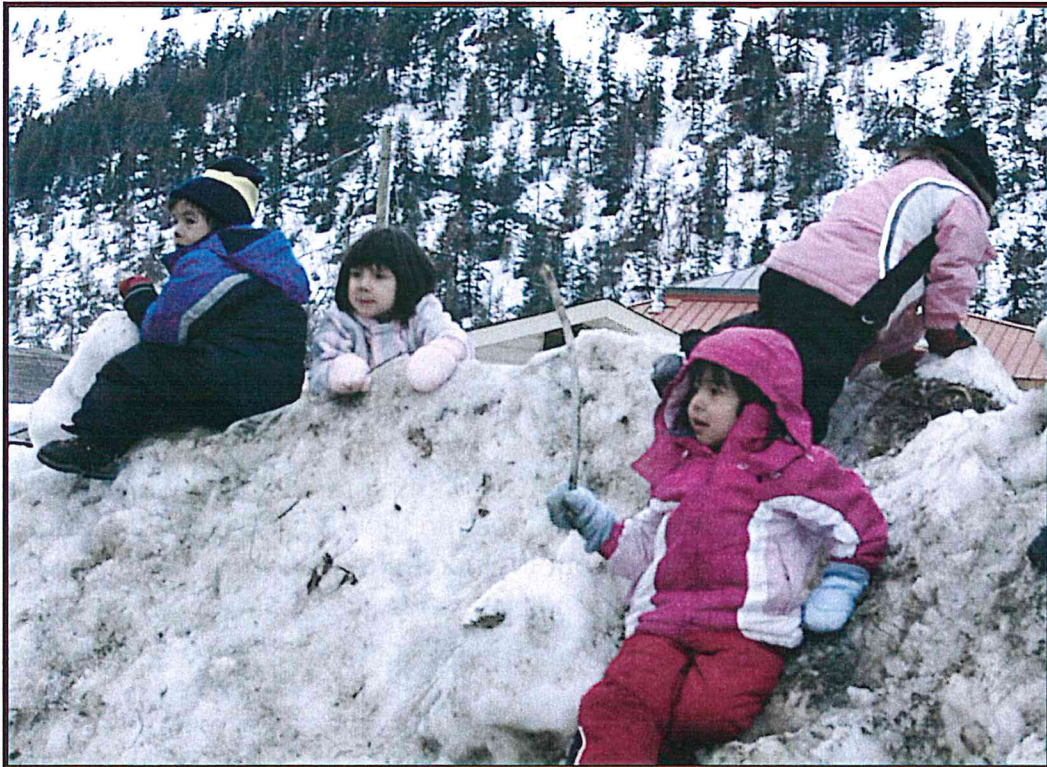


Exploring the Natural World

Exploring the Natural World

First Nations cultures have always held a deep connection with the natural world. Our stories, songs, and histories related this connection to the younger generations. Our cultural practices and world-views are embedded within our languages. By sharing the language and experiences in nature with children we are ensuring that our cultures survive.

Nature is a great teacher to the very young. Nature provides a fascinating and everchanging landscape. By studying the natural world children gain an appreciation of their surroundings. They learn that they are a part of the world and gain respect for other living things.



Sample Lesson Plans

Shoji Nature Walk

Time: 15-30 minute walk/ 15- 20 minute activity

Objectives:

Children will

- Learn about nature and exercise too
- Learn to categorize by colors
- Learn the language
- Learn the names of leaves

Material:

- Plastic bag
- Things from nature
- Towel
- Wax paper
- Iron

Preparation: Have a bag ready for each student. Label each bag with the child's name. (This lesson would follow lessons on what is in nature, or about trees).

Procedure:

1. Tell the children that they will be going for a nature walk and while on this walk they will be picking up items to put into their bag. Remind them that the theme is around learning about the names of leaves.
2. As they walk, stop and pick up a leave to demonstrate what leaves are and discuss the color, the shape, the name of the leaf, and where the leaf came from.
3. After they have collected three or four items in their bags, return to the classroom for the art activity.
4. Upon returning to the classroom, discuss the items in their bags.
5. Place the items of each child between wax paper, and then place the items and wax paper on top of a towel. Iron until the wax paper sticks together.
6. Hang up and enjoy.

(By Hannah a homeschooler)

I Spy, I see a bird

Time: 20-30 minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn about birds in their environment
- Learn the language
- Learn the differences and similarities of birds

Material:

- Check list of birds
- Crayon
- Appropriate clothing for the season this lesson is being used (keep in mind you can find birds even in the winter).
- Clip board

Preparation: Make up the checklist before hand, and put it on a clip-board. Remind the children that on their walk that the game of I spy begins as they go out the door.

Procedure:

1. Take the children for a walk on a trail that is surrounded by forest trees.
2. Tell the children that the first one to hear/see a bird must say they have seen a bird.
3. Demonstrate by being the first one to say the name of the bird, and ask a child to check off the bird on the list.
4. When the checklist is complete return to the nest.
5. Discuss which bird was seen the most or least.
6. Ask the students to say what their favorite bird is.
7. For further activities have the children colour a picture of the bird and make a booklet of all their pictures (with the names).

(C. Manuel)

Nature Rubbing Books

Time: 20-30 minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn about the textures in nature
- Learn language
- Learn how to differentiate what is smooth and rough
- Appropriate clothing for outdoors

Material:

- Lightweight paper (recycled copy paper works well).
- Crayons without paper (old crayons)

Preparation: Find pieces of paper that are large enough to do the rubbings. Take the paper off old crayons and put in a small container with a lid.

Procedure:

1. Demonstrate to the children that each rubbing will look different because all of items rubbed will have a different texture, e.g. smooth, etc...
2. Encourage them to try anything from grass to leaves, from trees to pinecones.
3. Label each rubbing and make a booklet each child.

Gayle's Preschool Rainbow 2009

Animals That Fly or Do Not Fly

Part One:

Time: 20-30 minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn about animals that fly or do not fly
- Learn about classification
- Learn Language
- Learn names of animals
- Appropriate clothing for outdoors

Material:

- Crayons
- Clipboards
- Checklist of animals that fly and animals that do not fly.
- Appropriate clothing for a nature walk

Preparation: Ahead of time make the list of animals that are in the surrounding environment, and put in a clipboard.

Procedure:

1. Take the students on a trail where forest trees surround it or there is a pond or river close by, where animals can be found.
2. Demonstrate to the children by pointing out the first animal and ask the students if it can fly or not.
3. Demonstrate the classifying by checking off the correct classification on the clipboard.
4. After gathering all the information return to the nest.
5. Discuss with them the information gathered and ask the students to say the name of the animal they liked.
6. For further activities get students to cut out pictures or draw pictures of the animals found in the classifications.

(C. Manuel)

Animals That Fly or Do Not Fly

Part Two

Children classify animals according to if they can or cannot fly.

Materials:

- Two large sheets of white blank chart paper
- Title one, "Animals That Can Fly" and the other "Animals That Cannot Fly"
- Markers
- Index cards with pictures of animals printed on them
- Pictures of animals from magazines or flashcards

Plan:

1. Take the two pieces of blank chart paper and hang them up on the wall.
2. Discuss with the children how some animals fly and some do not.
3. Ask children what they think the animals use to fly? Are animals that fly very large animals? Why or why not?
4. Demonstrate with some animal pictures. Tack the picture under the appropriate category.
5. Have each child take one picture and place it under the right category.
6. After all the children are done giving examples then have the teacher or aide point to every answer on the chart paper and say what the animal is. For example, "hummingbird".
7. After the children are all done, have them find pictures of some of the animals in National Geographic magazines and glue them on the chart paper.
8. Keep the chart up and talk to the children about the fact that they organized animals into two different categories: animals that fly and animals that do not fly.

(By Debbie Haren, Preschool Teacher, A to Z Teacher Stuff)

Water Life

Time: 20-30 minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn language
- Learn about the life in water
- Learn animal names
- Learn insect names
- Appropriate clothing for outdoors.

Material:

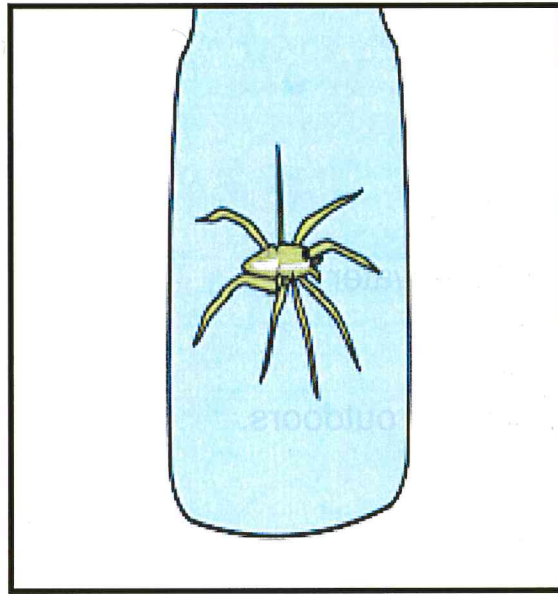
- Jar

Preparation: After having discussed with the children that animals and insects live in the water, have a few jars ready to take on walk.

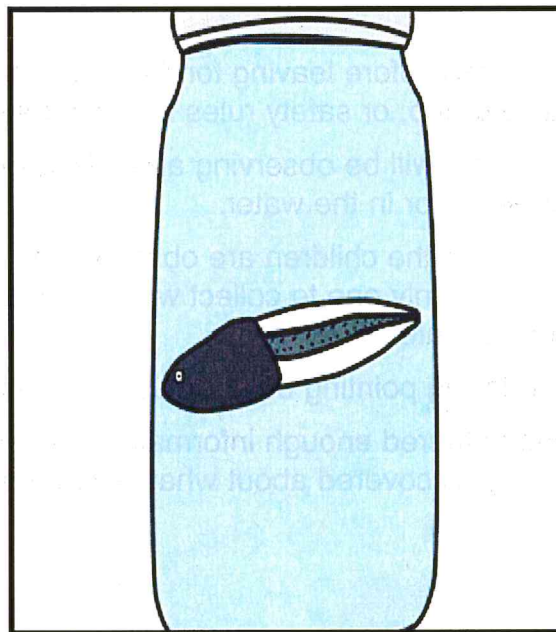
Procedure:

1. Discuss with the children before leaving for the walk, the safety rules of staying together as a group, or safety rules that you have set for walks.
2. Explain to them that they will be observing and telling the teacher what they see that may live on or in the water.
3. If it is a pond or river that the children are observing, then explain to them that the adult will be the only one to collect water so that they may see what insects live in the water.
4. Demonstrate by modelling pointing out the duck, name it.
5. When the class has gathered enough information, then return to the nest and discuss what they discovered about what lives on or in the water.

(C. Manuel)



Sample of water spider



Sample of minnow

Scavenger Hunt

Time: 20-30 Minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn about nature
- Learn language
- Learn what types of things that nature grows in their environment

Material:

- Appropriate clothing for outdoors
- Paper or plastic bag
- Pictures of items to find, e.g. maple leaf, bird feather, rock, etc...

Preparation: Beforehand teach the children about nature and what types of things you can find for example an acorn, a feather, a leaf, or a rock. Teach the children the names of items, and limit the list to at least five to ten items. Tell them that the walk is a game to find the most items on the prepared list.

Procedure:

1. Divide children in groups of 5 or less. Each group leader had one bag to collect nature items.
2. Take them on a walk through the field, on a trail where the items are readily available.
4. Encourage the children to work together and find as much as they can.
5. Encourage them to name the items found.
6. When the class has completed their list to the best of their ability (some may not find all the items) return back to the class and check each bag for the items found and put the names on a chart paper or on board to show the excellent work of hunting.

(C. Manuel)

Flower Press

Time 15-20 minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn language
- Learn the names of flowers
- Exercise
- Will learn to preserve flowers

Material:

- Wax paper
- Proper clothing for outdoors
- Bag to collect flowers

Preparation: Show a sample of a pressed flower and explain to the students that they will be taking a walk on the field and they will be picking flowers to make a pressed flower.

Procedure:

1. Discuss with the children the many kinds of flowers found in their environment.
2. Teach the 3 or four names of the flowers.
3. On the walk demonstrate gathering of the flower so as not to damage it and name it, then place it gently in the bag.
4. When they have gathered up to three or four flowers each, return to demonstrate the flower press.
5. Place the flowers between a folded wax paper and show the children that they must be placed so that the petals are flat. Label each press with the student's name.
6. When all the flowers are ready for pressing, show the children that in order for the flowers to be pressed they must be placed under heavy books (or between two plyboards that will be clamped tightly together).
7. Check on the flowers as they take several days to dry.
8. Make a card or booklet with the collection of pressed flowers.

(C. Manuel)

Animal Tracks

Time: 20-30 Minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn language
- Learn how to identify animal tracks
- Learn how to differentiate animal tracks

Materials:

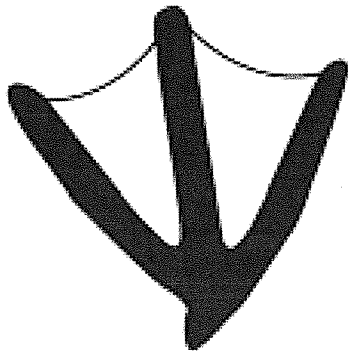
- Appropriate clothing for outdoors
- Plastic magnifying glasses
- Crayons
- Checklist with animal tracks
- Pictures of animal tracks

Preparation: The teacher will have taken a walk to seek out a route that shows plenty of animal tracks, then will develop pictures of the tracks to show the children. Have a checklist with pictures of the tracks found, and a box that the children can check off.

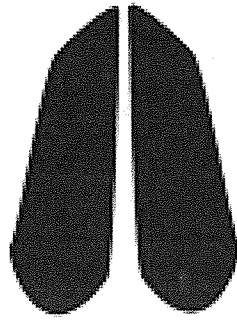
Procedure:

1. Show the pictures to the children and name them.
2. Demonstrate what the checklist is and how they will check off the box when they have found a track.
3. Take the children on the route that you have taken to find the animal tracks.
4. Demonstrate by being the first to point out an animal track, name it and discuss with the class about the animal, e.g. size, color, does it fly? Where does it live?
5. Encourage the children to find more tracks and discuss what they have found.
6. When the children have found the tracks, return to the nest to show what they have found.
7. Ask a child to name one of the tracks that you have pointed out.
8. For further activities to connect to the animal, let the students colour pictures of animals.

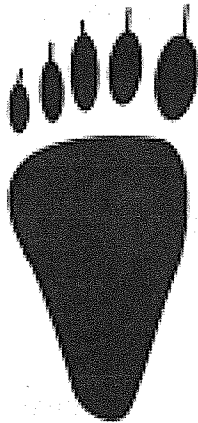
(C. Manuel)



Duck



Deer



Bear

Senses Walk

Time: 20-30 Minutes

Objectives:

Children will:

- Learn to use their senses of smell, feel, hearing and sight.
- Learn language (trees, smell of grass, sound of birds etc...)
- Learn to trust a companion to lead them blindfolded.
- Learn to safely guide another student to objects to touch, smell.

Material:

- Blindfolds
- Appropriate clothing for outdoors

Preparation: Demonstrate inside what a blindfold is and have a child help with the demonstration of being blindfolded to places that are safe. Find a place where the children can use their senses smelling flowers, pine trees, feeling the trees, or grass, and an area where you can keep a close eye on all the children.

Procedure:

1. Explain to the children that they will take turns being blindfolded. An adult will guide them to different areas.
2. When you are on the walk, demonstrate with one child by taking the child to a tree and ask the child to guess what he/she is feeling and how it feels to them.
3. After each child has taken a turn, return to the nest to discuss what they experienced on their walk.
4. For further activities, ask the children to cover their eyes and ask them to tell you what kind of snack you have put in front of them by getting them to first smell it, then feel it, and lastly, taste it.

(C. Manuel)

