

Naturally Sense-Sational!

Welcome to the natural world of Fontenelle Forest and Neale Woods Nature Centers! Below is a guide to pre and post field trip activities that you can do with your students either indoors or on your school grounds. These activities will greatly enhance your students' field trip experience and are also a lot of fun!

We look forward to your students' arrival and are excited to provide them with a fun and educational experience. If you have any questions, please call us at 731-3140.

Suggested Grade Level(s): Pre-K to 1st

Program Objectives:

- Participants will use their sense of smell, touch, hearing and sight to explore the outdoors.
- Students will learn how different animals use their senses.
- Students will discover at least two kinds of textures, animal sounds, odors and colors in nature.

Pre- and Post-Visit Activity Suggestions

Scented Sponges (Smell)

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: (for class of 20) 4 colors of sponges, 5 bottles of extract (peppermint, lemon, onion, etc.), 1 box of toothpicks, 1 box of quart-size Ziploc or similar bags

Procedure: Cut the sponges into small (1/2") squares. You will need 5 squares per student. Place 2 capfuls of one extract plus 8 capfuls of water into one of the bags. Put in 20 sponge squares -- 5 of each color -- and squeeze the bag to saturate the sponges. Do the same for each extract. Stick a toothpick into 4 of each group of 5 sponges and place them around one section of the schoolyard. Give each student one sponge piece and challenge them to find the other four that have the same color and scent.

Observation Practice (Sight)

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip

Time: 20 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: an assortment of natural objects (nuts, leaves, stones, apples, etc.), a sheet

Procedure: Allow students to look at the arrangements of objects for a few moments, and then cover the objects with a sheet. Ask students to try to name the things they can remember that are covered up. When students have named everything or can't remember anymore, remove sheet so they can check the objects. Consider having a prize for the student who remembers the most objects.

Ear-Ye, Ear-Ye (Hearing)

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: various unbreakable small to medium-sized objects (can be natural from outside or other things), sheet

Procedure: Ask students to name some sounds that are easy to identify. Next, have two students hold up the sheet so that it is impossible for other students to see behind it. Tell the class that you are going to drop different objects behind the sheet. Their job is to use their sense of hearing to identify the object being dropped. Pick one object and drop it. Repeat. Have students guess objects and discuss reasons why they think it might be a particular thing. With younger students, this activity works best if you show all of the objects they will have to choose from at the beginning of the activity.

Sharp Eyes (Sight)

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip or Post-Trip

Time: 20-30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: none

Procedure: Have students sit in a circle. Choose one student to start out the game. This student should stand in front of the group and turn in a circle so that everyone has a chance to observe him or her. Next, have the student hide and change one thing about themselves (untie a shoe, tuck in shirt, take glasses off, etc.). When the student returns, have the other students take turns guessing what one thing has changed. The student who first guesses correctly can be "it" next.

Nature Window Hangings (Sight, Touch)

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 45 minutes

Location: Outdoors and Indoors

Materials: waxed paper, newspaper, iron, string, and hole punch

Procedure: Have students go outside and collect several different shapes, sizes, and colors of leaves, grasses, and weeds. Give each student two 10" x 10" sheets of waxed paper and have them make a design with their plant parts on one of them. Cover this with the other sheet of waxed paper. Sandwich this between several sheets of newspaper. Turn an iron on to "medium" heat and press. Let the students trim the design around the leaves. Punch a hole through one end and tie a string through it. Now they have a piece of nature's art to hang in a window.

Peanut Butter Play Dough (Taste, Touch)

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials:

2 c. peanut butter

2 c. powdered milk

3 tbs. honey

Procedure: Combine in mixing bowl; if too sticky, add more powdered milk, one tablespoon at a time. If desired, add chopped nuts or raisins. The students can play with it and/or eat it. Always make sure there aren't any students with peanut allergies.

Resources

Acorn Naturalists: Resources for the Trail and Classroom. To order this educational resource catalogue for environmental and science education call 1-800-422-8886. To look at these resources on-line go to <http://www.acornnaturalists.com>.

Cornell, Joseph. Sharing Nature With Children. Dawn Publishing: Nevada City, CA, 1998.

Nabhan, Gary Paul, and Stephen Trumble. The Geography of Childhood: Why Children Need Wild Places. Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.

Sheehan, Kathryn, and Mary Waidner. Earth Child: Games, Stories, Activities, Experiments and Ideas About Living Lightly on Planet Earth. Tulsa: Council Oak Books, 1991.

Selected Stories

Brighton, Cetherine. Five Secrets in a Box. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1987.

Brown, Marcia. Blaise Cendrars. New York: Macmillan, 1982. (African folktale about shadows).

Carle, Eric. The Secret Birthday Message. New York: Harper and Row, 1998. (about shapes).

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