

*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.*

Take Only Memories

The following activities meet Nebraska state standards 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.4.1 & 4.4.3

1) Seed Delivery Service

Objective: Observe seed dispersion and understand the consequences.

Materials: Socks, plastic grocery sacks, masking tape, 2 trays, paper, pencils

Directions:

- 1) Divide your class into two equal groups: Group A and Group B.
- 2) Every member of Group A will receive a pair of socks to put on over their shoes. Either have the children bring an old pair from home or buy several pairs from the thrift store.
- 3) Every member in group B will receive two plastic grocery sacks to tape around their shoes.
- 4) Both groups will go outside to the school yard.
- 5) Group A will walk around in the grass.
- 6) Group B will walk around in muddy or wet areas.
- 7) After 10 minutes, everyone will meet back together.
- 8) Group A will carefully remove their socks and not shake off anything they've collected. After removing the socks, they will shake all contents into tray A.
- 9) Group B will carefully remove their sacks in an effort to retain the contents. After removing the sacks, they will shake the contents into tray B.
- 10) Each group will then record the contents of their tray.
- 11) Take both trays back to the classroom and place them close to a window.
- 12) Observe the trays each day and record any changes.
- 13) Keep the trays moist, but not wet. This will allow any collected seeds to germinate.
- 14) After about one week, you should see something growing.

Discussion:

- 1) Compare Group A and Group B.
- 2) How was this experiment similar to how animals help in the dispersion of seeds?
- 3) Is moving seeds from one place to another always a good thing? Discuss exotic and invasive species (e.g. garlic mustard).

Go Beyond...

Have your class volunteer to remove exotic and/or invasive plant materials from your community. You may be surprised to find some in your own backyard. Contact the County Extension office for a complete list of these species.

Douglas/Sarpy County
Extension Office:
8015 W. Center Road
Omaha, NE 68124-3175
(402) 444-7804
Douglas-County@unl.edu

Glossary:

Exotic plants are those occurring outside their native ranges, often as a result of human action.

Invasive plants are those that become overly abundant in a plant community of which they are either indigenous or non-indigenous, often in response to a change in the disturbance regime.

2) Ethi-Thinking: Adapted from Project WILD

Directions:

- 1) Ask the students to make a list of human activities that seem harmful to wild plants and animals. Ask them to think about things they've seen or known about that might be harmful:
Examples: removing plants from their environment, destroying bird nests, harassing wildlife
- 2) Now do the same procedure, but for human activities that may be helpful to wild plants and animals.
Examples: placing bird feeders in the school yard, picking up litter on your way home from school, creating an outdoor classroom
- 3) Have the children draw or use magazine clippings to depict these behaviors.
- 4) Use two pieces of large paper or poster board to delineate good and bad behaviors.

Results:

The difference in behaviors will become visually evident. Do any behaviors belong in both categories?

Extension:

Does one of these behaviors strike a cord with your class? If so, what can they do? This could be an opportunity for these young citizens to take action and promote awareness and change. Writing a letter to a government official, for instance, will give them practice at writing a formal letter and researching their topic.

3) A Species All My Own

Procedure:

- 1) Discuss the needs of an animal's food, water, shelter and space.
- 2) Provide your students with art and craft materials such as toilet paper tubes, markers, glue, tissue paper, etc.
- 3) Tell them they will create their very own animal and provide for it all of its needs.
- 4) Each student will write a paragraph describing their new species and its needs. The students will become aware of the difficulty in some instances to provide for the basic needs of a species.

Option: This activity could be done in groups.