

Annie's BIG Nature Lesson, Monday morning, Teacher-led Walk on the Trails

Discovery Walk: Teacher and Students

1. Picture books

- a. *ABC Naturally* by Lynn Diebel
- b. *A Quiet Place* by Douglas Wood
- c. *Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature* by Joyce Sidman

2. Sound map

- a. Class stops along the path, stands in complete silence for a chunk of time, then writes in the journal—placing themselves in the middle of the page, then marking the sounds they hear on the page.

3. I notice.....I wonder.....This reminds me of.....

- a. Ask students: What do you notice? What do you wonder? What does this remind you of?

4. Using a Transect

- a. Tool to use so that teacher can point out interesting things along the trail.

5. Color Chips

- a. Children each have a color strip, walk along the trails with teacher, looking for as many things as they can for nature that matches their colors. Good activity for pairs of kids.

6. Shapes in Nature

- a. Glue the Shapes page (geometric shapes) in the journal...teacher talks about each shape and finds examples of the shapes, then kids walk along with teacher to find the shapes.

7. Ground-Eye-Sky

- a. Bringing attention to the ground...then eye level...then sky level...

8. Index card viewing frame

- a. Teacher can prepare this ahead of time—index card with square in middle cut out, so that it's a picture frame. Good way to help kids look closely.

9. One small square—string activity

- a. Teacher can prepare this ahead of time—cut 1 yard of string or yarn for each student. Then, along the trail, kids can place their string around something interesting...show it to a classmate, then be sure to gather up the string before moving on to the next activity.

10. Observation, then Inference

- a. Attached sheet—explaining Observation...then Inference

11. Five Senses (hear-feel-see-smell).

- a. What do children hear—feel—see—smell?

How to Notice and Identify the Unseen

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Walking the trails in Nature along with your students can seem overwhelming. There is so much to see. It is so much bigger than the school. You might not feel confident in your background knowledge. You might even be frightened of the prospect. This lesson is intended to make you feel comfortable not knowing everything about Nature but still using critical thinking skills as you lead a walk in the woods with your students.

Start familiar

Roadside, puddle, sidewalk

Make observations – Observe closely; Inspire curiosity.

Use your students' senses to guide you. What do you see, hear, feel, or smell? Write or draw your observations in journal. Add to them. Let them incubate.

- What else does someone notice?
- How did you notice it? (did you see it after hearing it?, did you smell it first?, did you see it then listen to it?)
- Is it in dry woods, marshy, shore, wet conditions, field, or pond?
- Great observation. I never noticed that!
- How perceptive!

Make inferences or deductions – be encouraging and curious yourself

Discuss what may have occurred using **EVERYONE'S** observations. Disagree respectfully. **IT IS PERFECTLY OKAY NOT TO HAVE AN ANSWER – EVEN AS A TEACHER.** More observations may give light on your inferences.

- What made you think that?
- What other explanations are there? I wonder if
- Have you seen (heard, felt, or smelled) something like it before? Where? How was it similar? I like that idea! I never would have thought of that!