

## Field Activities

One or two children, a group, a class...

### Path or trail

Mark with string or cord.

Follow along the cord. When you reach a marker (clothespin, knot, stick...), stop and explore.

Option- can do this blindfolded.

### Motor activity over ground

Center as a starting point. Children make a circle facing in to hear directions. Now turn around (180 degrees, math!) to face out. Move out in a straight line (and later, move back) according to directions:

- Go x steps (counting) and stop. Name pace. Walk slowly. Walk fast. Take bounds (long leaping steps; this tends to satisfy the need to race wildly without letting them race wildly). Others?
- Walk or move like an X animal (biology). Coming back we'll stop half way and each can name his/her animal.
- Take four (six, ten) steps and stop. Notice the circle is bigger. If you go out straight it will be a circle still. (geometry)
- Now go up the alphabet taking one step saying each letter, stop when you reach the letter of your first name. Turn around and face the post to come back. Now go up (or down) the alphabet, stop when you reach the first letter of your last name. All stop. Look around.
- Take x steps, looking for things on the ground that begin with the letter X. Remember them.
- Things that begin with the letter on your card/ bandanna. Remember them. OR write them down in your explorer notebook.
- Look in your mini-nature-preserve for things that are wet, or green, or that crawl. At every step stop and look down.

### Move or stay (with adult OK of course)

Roll down the hill.

Get into the mud

Wade through the water.

### Circle the group for connection.

Spokes of a wheel. Make circle arms length apart, face (out or in - you say), all lie down

Heads in if you want to talk with them and have them share with one another.

Heads out if you want them less likely to talk with one another.

Lie on belly (look down at what you find)

Lie on back? Look up at the sky.

### Animal relay.

Watch animals outdoors.

Do a relay with children moving the way each animal gets from place to place.

Can be general. Everyone knows that a bunny hops, squirrel scampers, snake slithers, slug slides, insect crawls, bird flies.

Or be more specific and learn more. First watch the actual animals move and study that. Then move as they do. This is more specific. Look at birds for instance. Some birds fly in dips swoops, some hover, some soar high in circles, then dive. Some move in a formation.

### Clouds

Lie on your back and look at clouds. Arrange children around some marker so their heads are closer (but not too close) so they can talk. Ask them to point out shapes that they see in the clouds. Ask what clouds might bring rain or snow.

### Maps and Pictures

Once indoors, think of draw a picture of something, the area you visited, etc. Then make a collage, a map. Use these things as a trigger to discuss some of the things the children saw and experienced. “Oh, this is the pond, isn't it? What did you do there/ see there?”

### Rubbings

Have the students make rubbings by placing paper over outdoor textures and objects and rub with the long surface of a crayon. Bring these indoors as “specimens.” Use them if you wish to display or to make collages or other artworks.

### Treasure (Scavenger) Hunts

Children can look for a particular thing or list of particular things from outdoors. In addition, there are many things to look for that are represented by the particular natural items, for instance.

**Shapes** Find lots of the same shape. Find as many different shapes as you can.

**Colors** Are the fall leaves really all red or yellow? Are spring leaves the same green?

**Opposites** (big/ little, high/ low, wet/ dry, light/ dark, hard/ soft.)

**Movements** Things that stay still, sway, fall, rise up, flap, and grow,

Have children look for natural objects that represent the “target” they are looking for (shape, color, etc.). You can give them a card with their “target” drawn or written on it.

- Have children explore in pairs or groups looking for these, then come back together OR
- Have children sit in a circle, each child facing out and looking.

Once they see an item for their “target” they raise their hand. To share, have all the children for a particular shape name what they saw, or point it out to the others.

Collecting / Bring back something. (something small) in the film canister, zip lock bag.

To report out about this, process the experience. You may:

- Share it now by showing and talking.
- OR (maybe better for a larger group): Show your object now silently, we will discuss/ share verbally later.
- Or: Display it on your desk/ or your spot on the bulletin board, share verbally later.

Just experiencing these things in the natural setting is fine. You can photograph objects and items, or draw them in the natural setting. The objects can be left in or returned to their original spot. Or they can be scattered appropriately, and left outdoors.

OR you may wish to bring items/ specimens back, (as appropriate). This offers an opportunity to do other things later. These may also help connect your nature experiences with the curriculum. For instance, back indoors, if you wish you can work with (make a record of) what the children found on their treasure hunts:

### Work with the Collected Natural Materials

#### Simplest:

- Put the objects into a plastic tote or other container(s) (as appropriate; some things really should stay outside). Children can see “their” item from time to time, can even watch as it changes (dries out, molds, rots, etc.)
- Make a large poster of them. Glue down the objects; add children's own words about their object. Have children add their objects one by one to the poster, probably starting with larger objects, adding smaller ones. Make it artistic, or make it scientific, whatever you prefer.
- OR if you prefer, each child can do a square and those can be assembled like a patchwork into a poster. Use different colored paper for background and the end product will be even more pleasing. Poster has the advantage that it can be displayed for all to see.
- OR as a variation do a patchwork pattern bulletin board with the pieces separate (easier for each child to take home his/her part later).
- Make a book of it. Glue down the objects and add words. If each child does his/her own page individually the pages can be assembled into a book later in a ring binder. .
- Make a large scavenger score card poster showing how many different things were brought back; see if every square can be filled. The items could be presented and the scorecard filled in large group, or if that isn't practical, each child can do individually with a helper and the large group can see the results later.
- Make a large poster showing how many of each thing was brought back. Graph it. (sorting, categorizing, counting, graphing) This could be done in large group, or each child can bring their item to the poster individually with a helper; the large group can see the results later.
- Make bingo cards with natural items (or pictures of natural items) glued on them.
- Make “matching” cards with natural items on one, a drawn shape or word on another. Play matching games (memory game, post them in two columns and link each item with its word with a string, etc.)
- Play bingo or other game using natural items as tokens.

#### Obstacle courses (generally)

Find challenging routes in the outdoor setting. Mark them in some way. Make a non-challenging course a challenge by adding a difficulty factor (carry a full glass of water, lead a blindfolded partner, do it backwards; move silently, move in slow motion) Make it NOT a race, rather a test of skill.

Cornelius, 2006