

Outdoor Activities

Earth Windows

Lie down; lie still. Think of yourself as part of the earth. Cover yourself with leaves etc.

Blind Walk

In pairs, blindfolded, one led by other. Show, help explore. Other senses than sight this time, perhaps heightened.

Meet a Tree.

Pairs. One child is blindfolded, led by partner to tree, explores with hands, smell, sounds. Child is then led away, blindfold removed, and child tries to find the same tree again.

Blind Trail

Lay out a long trail with string, child is blindfolded, follows it with one hand on the string.

Role-Playing

Be a _____ (certain animal, plant is ok too).

Sounds

Lying on the ground with eyes closed and fists raised, lift a finger when you hear a new bird song.

Colors

How many colors (or shades of colors) can you see without moving or turning? (Can have them look through a paper tube or box.

Caterpillar Walk

Lead children, all blindfolded and linked hands on shoulders of the child in front of them, to a spot. Undo blindfolds and find their way back.

OR have the children explore the destination spot while blindfolded, then lead the children back blindfolded and ask them to find the secret spot.

Duplication

Show children examples of several natural objects that they can find outside. Show them for only 25 seconds under a handkerchief then hide the examples. Children then spread out and bring back examples of those objects.

Micro-hike

Use a piece of string three to five feet long. Lay it across the natural surface. Follow the string. Keep your eyes no higher than one foot above the ground. See what you can see.

Pyramid of Life

Children write on a slip of paper an animal or plant they would like to be. Pick them up, explain a food pyramid starting with energy from the sun, to plants, to prey species, to predators. Build a pyramid starting with plants on the bottom. Not possible? Have some children change from predator to a more modest animal or a plant.

Recipe for a Forest

Give each child a 'Deed' to an imaginary square mile of land, and each student draws a map of an ideal dream-forest.

Webbing.

Create a web using a ball of string or yarn. Pass the yarn to each member and describe their connection in nature (food to the eater, prey to predator, etc.) To demonstrate how each member of the natural community is important to the whole, tug on the string for a chosen member who might be 'eliminated,' and feel how many others feel it.

Plant Succession Crawl.

Children crawl slowly toward a pond, in order to become aware of the different soil, moisture, and other conditions and the plants in each ring around the pond.

Tree Silhouettes

Each child shapes his/her body to look like a particular species of tree. Others try to guess which one. Can do in groups to shape a representative, or to all be a grove of their species.

Scavenger Hunt

We've all done these. Go in groups; it's more fun.

Sleeping Miser

This is a game to play. Choose Miser and Stalkers. Miser waits, lying in a natural setting, blindfolded, protecting a target object. Stalkers must creep up silently and steal it. If the miser hears a stalker and points at him/her, that stalker must freeze. If someone steals the object, he/she becomes the new miser.

Still-Hunting

Choose a sitting place, or let one choose you. Be comfortable and stay motionless. Observe

Selections adapted from Joseph Cornell. 1979. Sharing Nature With Children. Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications.