

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

"YOUNG FOREST STEWARDS"

LESSON PLAN

Topic: The Forest Floor

Level #: 2

Ages: 3-5 Years

Learning Goals

Learning Goal:

Understand the relationship between what sits on the forest floor and what is above and below it. Seek early understanding of the forest floor and how it's important to a healthy forest.

Investigative Question:

Lie tummy down on the forest floor. What do you see? What makes up each layer of the forest's floor covering? What is alive, what is deceased/not living? Does light reach the forest floor in this area? What does new life in the forest look like?

Teaching Points

Some of the forest floor is alive and some is not. Fallen leaves, branches and logs, different types of tree cones, seeds or seedlings, young trees, mosses, grasses, flowers, plants and low shrubs make up the forest floor. The children might find animals living there like snakes, snails, ants or centipedes and they might see decaying material like logs, tree stumps, animal feces and animal carcasses. How do all of these contribute to a healthy forest?

Materials

For Students

a.) Painting shirt

b.) Paper

c.) Collection Bucket

d.)

e.)

f.)

g.)

h.)

i.)

For Teachers:

a.) Book 2 - Forest Floor

b.) Tempera Paint

c.) Ink Pads

d.) Camera

e.) Glue

f.)

g.)

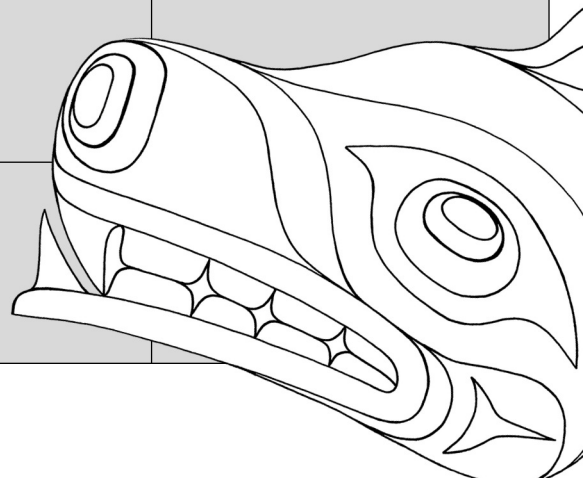
h.)

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Learning Experience

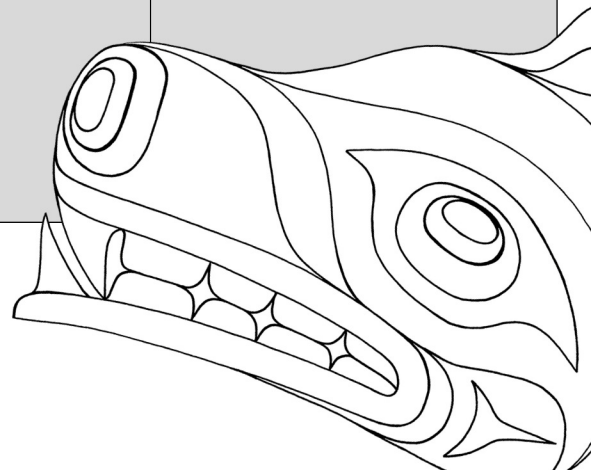
Experience (e.g., field trip, story, song)	Activity (e.g., game, art, scavenger hunt)	Location
Book	Point to and discuss the photos as is appropriate to age.	Classroom, outside, in the forest.
Art - Leaf Printing	Leaf printing. Collect all sorts of different types of leaves. Dry them first and then use them as stamps on white paper. This can be done with paint or ink pads.	Classroom or outdoor activity.
Art - Stick Collage	Go to a local forest and explore what is on the forest floor. Collect sticks, small rocks, dead leaves, cones, empty seed pods, and other forest floor items (leave those things that are living). Create a mosaic. Can you create an animal or a bug?	Forest visit and classroom
Animal Footprint Identification	Use the flashcards of animal prints of wolves, bears, cougars, snakes, mice, deer,/elk and raccoons to play a matching game. Name the animal and find it's print. What does it look like when an animal scratches in the dirt? This game is available on the supporting website. There is also a game to play on the website.	Classroom or outdoors





Risk Management

Identified Risk (e.g., falling, animal encounters, bee stings, vehicle use, lost child)	Management Measures (e.g., buddy system, driver's/criminal record checks, first aid kits)	Planning/Responsibility (e.g., staff responsible for each part of the Risk Management Plan)
Forest time	Use the buddy system, ensure children know their exploration boundaries, have an extra adult to support needs such as bathroom breaks, carry a first aid kit, do not enter the forest if it is windy or if there is a concern of overhead objects falling.	Teacher
Animal encounters	Remain together, make a lot of noise and raise arms to make yourself large. Maintain eye contact with the animal and slowly, as a group, back away from the animal.	Teacher
Forest time - footing, falling, eye hazards and prickles	Choose a relatively flat and level area for easy walking and not too many obstacles. Choose a darker area where there will be less underbrush which can snap back and hit walkers in the face or eyes. Avoid brushy areas with lots of prickles (salmonberry, trailing raspberry, devils club).	Teacher



Example Stick Collage

