

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

"YOUNG FOREST STEWARDS"

LESSON PLAN

Topic: Forest Floor

Level #: 2

Ages: 6-9 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.)	Glue
d.)		e.)		f.)	
g.)		h.)		i.)	





Learning Experience

Experience (e.g., field trip, story, song)	Activity (e.g., game, art, scavenger hunt)	Location
Book	Read through the book and discuss what is on the forest floor and who lives there. Why are these small things important to a healthy forest?	Classroom, outside, in the forest.
Art - Nature Bugs and Forest Floor Animals	Go to a local forest and explore what is on the forest floor. Collect non-living things in a bucket. What lives on the forest floor? Can you gather things in the forest and then make forest floor animals? Can you create a spider, centipede or mouse? Use empty seedlings, cones, leaves, or anything else non-living you find in the forest. When you get your perfect bug glue it together on white paper.	Forest visit and classroom
Art - Stamping and Patterns	Go to a local forest and explore what is on the forest floor. Collect non-living things in a bucket. Create patterns with objects collected from the forest floor. Sticks, leaves, needles, cones or anything works for this, see what you come up with.	Assign a staff member to plan this trip. (Plan well in advance as this may be a seasonal opportunity)
Animal Footprint Identification	Use the flashcards of animal prints of wolves, bears, cougars, snakes, mice, deer,/elk and raccoons to play a matching game or even "Go Fish." Name the animal and find it's print. These cards are 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
Tree Planting Location (forest, hillside, city park, etc.)	Ensure children are dressed appropriately. First aid kits, snacks and water, parental support Use the buddy system and implement all field trip safety protocols.	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 Stamping and Patterns

