



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION “YOUNG FOREST STEWARDS” LESSON PLAN

Topic: Knee High in the Forest

Level #: 3

Ages: 6-9 Years

Learning Goals

Learning Goal:

How do things living just above the forest floor support a healthy forest?

Investigative Question:

Get down on your hands and knees. What do you see? What can you find in the bushes in front of you? What do you find that is growing on or living inside a fallen tree? How do these organisms play a role in a healthy forest? How do the things that aren't living anymore become part of the soil? What role does new life play in the forest's survival? What types of low brush plants produce food for animals in the forest?

Can you find a nurse log? What is a nurse log? What does a nurse log do to help keep the forest healthy? How does it aid in providing shelter and nutrients for young seedlings?

Teaching Points

Knee level in the forest is full of life. Nurse logs/stumps help the forest continue to grow by providing a seedbed, nutrients and moisture while they decay. Moss, mushrooms, new seedlings, ferns, slugs are things you might find growing on a fallen log. Streams with salmon, frogs, licorice ferns, bracken ferns, sword ferns, deer ferns, coastal strawberries, huckleberries, salal, and skunk cabbage are things that you might see at the brush/knee level. These are all important for contributing to the over wellbeing and nutrients of the forest.

Berries and plants of the forest feed the animals. When animals die their bodies decompose and provide nutrients to the soil which then feeds the forest.

Materials

For Students:

a.)	Paint shirt	b.)	Water colour paper	c.)	Clear container
d.)	Moss	e.)		f.)	
g.)		h.)		i.)	

For Teachers:

a.)	Book 3 - Knee High	b.)	Soil	c.)	Rocks
d.)	Spray bottle	e.)	Tempera paint	f.)	Skunk Cabbage Photo
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. Talk about what else they would see if they sat on their knees in the forest? Do they know of any berries they might find?	Classroom, outside, in the forest.
Art - Water Colour Skunk Cabbage	Use a black permanent marker on water coloring paper Outline the leaves and flower of skunk cabbage using the black marker (You may want to draw in pencil first/also need to have skunk cabbage picture for reference if not doing in nature). Use water color paints to add color. Let dry and mount painting on black paper.	Classroom or outdoor activity.
Art - Moss Terrarium	You will need a small clear container, rocks, soil, spray bottle. Harvest the moss, put rocks, soil and then moss in the clear container. Spray with water and put lid on loosely to allow air flow. Put a well lit, but not direct sun area and keep watered. Watch the moss the grow.	Locate closest natural forest and plan accordingly.
Field Trip - Salmon Creek	Visit a place where salmon spawn in a stream or creek. What do you see around the stream/creek in the forest? What types of plants and tree grow in the area? Do you see any remains of spawning salmon? How do the salmon keep the forest healthy? What animals eat the salmon? How does that also keep the forest healthy?	Locate a local salmon spawning stream and plan according to spawning times. Alternatively, do this virtually.





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
Sharp objects in the moss	Sift through moss brought to the classroom to ensure there are no sharp objects.	Teacher
Forest, animal encounters, water level	Ensure children are dressed appropriately. First aid kits, snacks and water, parental support Use the buddy system and implement all field trip safety protocols. Consider if the trip is safe (water levels for example).	Teacher; consider working with an organization that plans these trips
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 Water Colour and Terrarium

