



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

"YOUNG FOREST STEWARDS"

LESSON PLAN

Topic: Soil: Healthy Forest

Level #: 1

Ages: 0-2 Years

Learning Goals

Learning Goal:

Understand that the health of the forest depends on the health of the soil.

Investigative Question:

Dig into the soil. What makes up the forest's soil? What are the factors in healthy forest soil/composition.? What insects and animals have dens in the ground?

Teaching Points

The forest soil is made up of minerals (dirt) composed of sand, clay, silt and small ground up rocks as well as composting materials like tree leaves, needles, branches/twigs (humus), water/moisture from rain, snow, frost, dew, etc., and air. Worms, grubs, ants, roots and animals play a role in the forest having healthy soil by keeping the soil loose, allowing air and water to flow through the dirt. Microorganisms help to compost all the decaying materials to make more soil. Spiders, mice and other animals often have dens in the soil. Soil is food for the whole forest and without good soil, nothing in the forest can be healthy.

Materials

For Students:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| a.) Shovels | b.) Paper | c.) White glue |
| d.) | e.) | f.) |
| g.) | h.) | i.) |

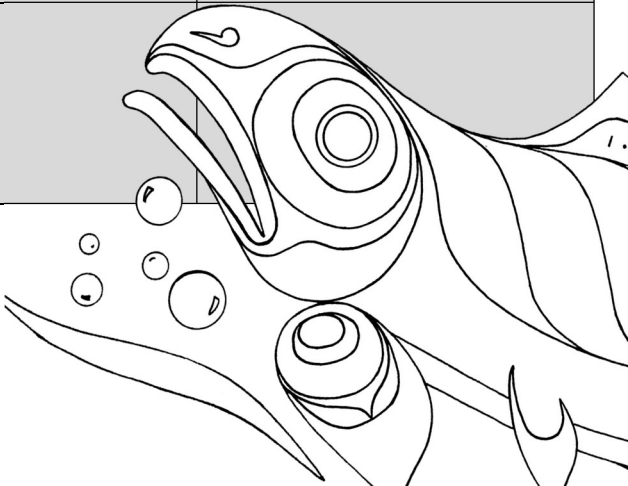
For Teachers:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| a.) Book 1 Soil | b.) Glue spreader | c.) Bucket for soil |
| d.) | e.) | f.) |
| g.) | h.) | i.) |



Learning Experience

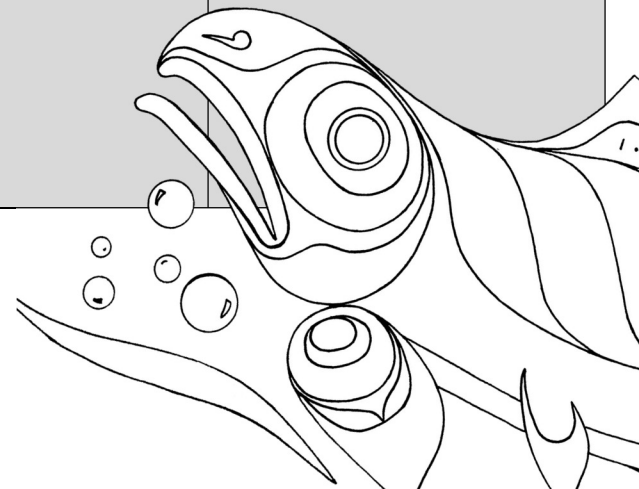
| Experience (e.g., field trip, story, song) | Activity (e.g., game, art, scavenger hunt) | Location |
|---|--|---|
| Book | Point to and discuss the photos as is appropriate to age. | Classroom, outside, in the forest. |
| Art | Child spreads glue on paper, and sprinkles dirt on glue. Let dry and shake off remaining soil. Option: prepare paper with glue and place dirt/soil covered hand on the paper to make a dirt hand print. | Classroom or outdoor activity. |
| Field trip or bring the forest to the classroom | Go to a local forest and explore what is under the grass, leaves, etc. What does the soil feel like? Is it dry or wet? Did you find any leaves, branches/twigs, needles, bugs, other? What does it smell like? Does anyone want to taste it? | Locate closest natural forest and plan accordingly. |
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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 soil | Sift through any soils brought to the classroom to ensure there are no sharp objects. | 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 |
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Example Soil Art

