

Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood from Project Learning Tree WAEYC 2017

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Introduction

Why Environmental Education is so important
About the book: Eleven themes. Each theme has many sections plus extensions on their website. More extensions on pltwa.com

Activities Modeled in the Workshop

The Shape of Things #1 music – track 1 - and make the leaf shape. Shape search, critter search
Pltwa.com_has shapes bingo

Get in Touch with Trees #3 describe textures, texture walk to music, texture nature hike (under OUTDOOR PLAY)
And discuss old growth vs new growth

Trees as Habitats #10 ideas of plants and animals using trees and of how to find animals: Sheet shake, spread flour pg 91 under family and friends, hunt through the leaf litter.
-Page 107 appendix 6 put a flat board on the ground where it won't be disturbed. In about two weeks critters will start to use it as a home.
Tree Bingo on pltwa.com
TRACK 12 THIS BARK ON ME

STATIONS

Trees as Habitats #10 roller muncher scraper and bark beetle, squirrel lunch leftovers , LICHENS, FUNGUS, MOSS

The Shape of Things #1 Twig shapes

Sounds Around #2 Match the Sound *from Discovery Table*

Get in Touch with Trees #3 mystery cups

Get in Touch with Trees #3 and To Be a Tree #9 _leaf rubbings

We All Need Trees #4 Match the smells

Signs of Fall #5 sort fall leaves

Evergreens in Winter PLT #6 Sort Cones

Evergreens in Winter PLT #6 Sort the conifer branches into prickly and tickly

Adopt a Tree #8 Memory game with leaves (using starflower cards) on pltwa.com

Adopt a Tree #8 Describe leaf and partner has to pick it from your words

Three Cheers for Trees #11 sort the tree products into the right pile

Trees as Habitats #10 place animals on the part of the tree they can be found

Additional resources:

Worms Eat My Garbage Excellent guide to get you started on a worm bin. By Mary Appelhof

Peterson First Guide to Caterpillars Nice illustrations and very inclusive.

Bug Containers Allows for close observation without hurting the critters. nature-watch.com/bug-box-with-magnifying-lid or Oriental Trading Co. "See-Through Bag jars"

Beginner's Guide to Birds – Western Region by Stokes

Golden Guide pocket field guide series includes: Insects, Spiders, Butterflies and Moths, Pond Life, Stars, Fossils, Geology

Backyard Birdsong Guide by Kroodsma includes recordings

Audubon Plush Birds Squeeze the birds and you hear the birds call

The Beachcomber's Guide to Seashore Life in the Pacific Northwest by J. Duane Sept
MAC'S Field guides (laminated sheets with pictures and names)
Best Hikes with Kids - Western Washington and Cascades by Burton

Sounds Around #2 listen to inside sounds track 3 and outside track 4

Make our own forest Concert

1-2-3 close eyes & count, A SILENT HIKE/listening walk, Outdoor Play - Ear cups

To Be a Tree #9 How are bodies are like a tree, tree vests, act out a tree life cycle

-Sing a Tree Song "Yippee Hooray!" track 11

Going over the book

WEBSITE: Plt.org (developed on the national level)

You will need to create a password to access additional information for each activity, this is under the Curriculum heading

-NAEYC and HEAD START Standards alignment to Activities

-Activity Extensions including books, and Family connections

WEBSITE: pltwa (developed on the state level)

-book list

-TREE bingo sheet

-SHAPES bingo sheet

- Guidelines about collecting things to bring inside, Page 106 appendix 3

-Greening up the classroom Appendix 8 page 108

Look for an activity that interests you and then share it with the group

EVALUATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Additional Natural History information shared during the workshop

Look for Evidence of Engravers/Bark Beetles

Bark beetles, like butterflies, go through complete metamorphosis: *means complete change*. Life stages are EGG, LARVA (this is the caterpillar stage), PUPA (this is the chrysalis stage) and ADULT. The female bark beetle burrows into a tree and lays her eggs just under the bark. The larva hatches and as they eat they make tunnels in the wood. Sometimes you can see how the tunnel gets wider as the larva gets bigger. Look for tiny exit and entrance holes on the outside of the bark. To see tunnels on the inside, peel back bark of fallen limbs or observe where bark has already fallen off of sticks on the ground.

Look for Evidence of Critters on Leaves

Rollers: green leaves that have been rolled or folded under and held this way with silk. Carefully unroll these to see if the insect or spider that made the hiding place is home.

Munchers: look for leaves that have been eaten or have holes in them. Decide if the same type of insect was responsible for all of the holes or not.

Scrapers: look for leaves where the surface has been eaten either in a race track like fashion or in blobs. The tunnel starts where the adult insect, known as a *Leaf Miner* laid as egg. Then the larva hatched and started eating between the layers of the leaf. Sometimes the tunnel gets wider as the larvae (the caterpillar stage) gets fatter. Where the tunnel stops is where the creature went into a pupa (the cocoon stage) and then came out an adult.

Adopt a Caterpillar

In its' homemade habitat include a stick for the chrysalis and provide daily fresh leaves from the plant you found it on. Not sure what it eats? – experiment, do some research and check the Washington Butterfly Association's website.

Look for Evidence of a Squirrel's Lunch

Squirrel's peel the scales off of pine and fir cones to get at the nutritious seeds inside. They drop the scales and finally the peeled off mid-rib of the cone on the ground.

Take a Close Look at Plants

Although you don't need to know the names of plants and animals to enjoy them, it can make a closer connection to know a name. It also trains the observer to look more closely for certain characteristics.

Stinging Nettle: leaves shaped like tear drops, have a toothed margin and come out of the stalk opposite of each other.

In Spring Notice the New Growth

This is the evergreen state and in the spring the evergreens put out the new growth which will be bright green and very soft unlike the older, tougher dark green growth from past years.

Scratch and Sniff Cedar

Gently scrape a bit of the outer layer off the green scaly leaves. Now smell.