

KINDERGARTEN SPRING NATURE WALK

Summary: Students observe the changes in our environment during the spring. They use their sense of touch, sight, hearing and smell to investigate their surroundings. Students discuss how a shadow forms, how large rocks become smaller rocks, and finally learn the different parts of a plant.

Intended Learning Outcome for Kindergarten:

Objective 1: Framing questions. Conducting investigations. Collecting data. Drawing conclusions.

Objective 2: Developing social interaction skills with pers. Sharing ideas with peers. Connecting ideas with reasons.

Objective 3: Ideas are supported by reasons. Communication of ideas in science is important for helping to check the reasons for ideas.

Utah State Core Curriculum Tie:

Standard 2 Objective 1: Earth and Space Science

Observe and record that big rocks break down into small rocks.

Standard 2 Objective 2: Earth and Space Science

Explain what happens when you block the sun's light. Explore shadows and temperature changes.

Standard 2 Objective 3: Earth and Space Science

Observe weather changes that occur from season to season.

Standard 4 Objective 2: Life Science

Identify the different parts of plants, e.g., roots, stem, leaf, flower, trunk, and branches.

Preparation time: 15 min to go outside and find an environment with spring bulbs growing, flowering trees, and evergreens.

Lesson time: 30 min

Small group size: works best with one adult for every 5 students

Materials: none

Pre-lab discussion: Show the students a picture of a tulip (or whatever spring flower they will find outside) and tell them they are going on a tulip hunt. Ask them if they see tulips all summer long or in just a special season. Take them outside and begin the spring nature walk.

Instructional Procedure: Take the students outside for this activity.

1. Group the students sitting down outside. Ask the students what season it is and what they would expect to see the plants, trees and animals doing in this

season. Have them close their eyes and use their sense of smell, feeling, and hearing to identify signs of spring. Discuss the smell of flowers and plants, the feeling of sun on their faces, and if they hear any insects or birds.

2. Find an area with buds on trees. Discuss how flowers on trees form before the leaves on the trees do. Explain that flowers will turn into seeds or fruit. On the tree identify the flower, trunk, branches, and any leaves that can be found.

3. Have the students find the spring flowers. Explain that these are the first flowers that form in the spring but they will soon die at the end of spring and not live through the summer. On the spring flower, identify the flower, leaves, and stem.

4. Look at the trees and notice what is happening. The leaves are just starting to bud. Look at evergreen trees and realize they haven't changed over the season. But you should see some new needles added. Find areas on the end of the branches where new growth is occurring.

5. Have the students stand on the concrete. Have them notice their shadow. Ask them how a shadow is formed. Explain that when we block the sun we see our shadow. Look at shadows that formed from the building, houses, fences, or whatever other shadows may be found in the area.

6. Ask the students to feel how warm their body feels in the sun then move into a well shaded area and ask them if they feel as warm. Explain that in the shade, not all the sun's energy can reach our skin and it feels cooler. Go back and forth from sun to shade and have students identify the difference.

7. Find some soil that has different sized particles. Use your foot to smash the pieces into smaller pieces. Explain that larger rocks are broken down into smaller rocks. These smaller rocks eventually get broken down into our soil.

8. Bring the students back together as a group and discuss the main signs of spring: spring flowers, buds on trees, birds calling to each other as they ready their nests, and warming temperatures.