

Project Learning Tree Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood Lesson

Participant Name: LuAnn Gipple

Current Teaching Situation: Pre-Kindergarten Head start

Activity: Get in Touch with Trees, p 33-39

Identify opportunities within the current program or curriculum to integrate lesson plan. This lesson would help children become familiar with trees and their outdoor environment.

Outline use of activity components

1. I would read the overview, objectives and background for educators and plan my activities accordingly. I would begin with having children go on a nature walk to collect items. I would also have them bring items that they have collected from home. As the children touch the items I would pose questions to help them explore how the item feels, where did the item come from, I would also try to help them make connections to their world, environment, and life.
2. Throughout the week I would do various small groups, “mystery box” feeling objects collected by them, help them practice identifying objects. Group time could be going on a “bear hunt”; try the one in the book on page 35 about the “crunch leaves”. Help them think about their environment and relate it back to when they went outside to search for their collectable treasures.
3. Take a texture walk, talk about textures, and bring textures into the classroom. Some examples given were-bubble wrap, carpet, cardboard, and sand paper.
4. During large group, do the music and movement activities: bear hunt, walking barefoot outside in a certain area which have been marked off for safety purposes.
5. At snack time we would eat a textured trail mix, see recipe on page 36; (tree nuts- almonds, cashews, dried tree fruits-apples, apricots, cherries); oat cereal, raisins. Mix together and let children scoop it out and talk about it, discussing “How does it feel on your tongue?” Please note changes need to be made if nut/peanut allergy is noted.
6. We would go outside and do the bark rubbings. We would take their journals and observation sheets to track their findings. We would take various paper and writing utensils for making the rubbing and compare them. What works the best? What doesn’t work very well? We could frame the rubbings, and add variations such as-wet paper, rice paper and butcher paper. We will try the painting with tree-textured paint, added sawdust, coffee grounds and try to make a creation.
7. Outdoor play—we would try the experience of feeling a sandbox with woodchips/sawdust and hide objects and have the children search for them. Then let the children hide objects for another child to find. We will encourage children to get in touch with nature by giving tree hugs, making more rubbings (buildings, tree) lying on the grass and feeling the ground underneath them. Close your eyes and feel the wind on your face. Feel the air blowing

Literacy — try to write a touch book and have them illustrate their own book after reading the book, Trickly, Prickly by: Bonny Becker. We could have them use some materials they gathered as part of their book.

Math and Manipulative —Sorting seeds, sorting the findings; such as leaves and sticks. Then try and graph them. What do we have the most of? What don’t we have very much of?

Science/ Discovery — different parts of a tree pictures that are realistic, bark, leaves could have a walnut green shell, broken open, magnifying glass for exploring.

Large Motor — experiences outside, tree rubbing, bark rubbing, painting with parts of tree, creature creations, making journals. Take a nylon hose (panty hose) drag it around to see what collects on them, put in water to see what grows.

8. Send home copy of the family and friends about exploring the sense of touch on page 39 of the *Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood*.
- Description of your outdoor exploration to take the children outside to make bark rubbings—experience making the rubbings and talking about them, comparing and charting, we would go outside on our play area—grassy or in front of our school.
 - Any additional preparation research what works best for rubbings and have materials available. What will exploration look like? To be able to explore and do the rubbings successfully. I would adapt it for my special need student and put something on her tray to rub. I would use a writing material with a peg.
 - Draft open-ended questions. What else would you like to try doing a rubbing on? Which tree rubbing did you like the best? Are there certain tree barks that work better than others?

List pre/post activities

I have listed them above. I would plan each exploration for the various learning areas. It would be fun to make a book to display our rubbings.

List appropriate literature

Becker, Bonny; Tricky, *Prickly*. New York. Harperfield Fest 1999.

Ehlert, Lois. *Nuts to You!* 2004

Belk-Moncure, Jane. *My Fingers are for Touching*.

Indicate Modifications

For the hearing impaired to wear amplifier microphones and have children wear hearing aids for the stories I read or the directions I give.

Wheelchair bound to bring materials to her level

Identify local natural areas, parks and guest speakers

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<http://iowaprojectswildpH.blogspot.com/>.

<http://outdoorexplorationsforearlylearners.blogspot.com/>.

List standards

7.2 play and senses

10.2 early literacy

7.4 fine motor development

12.1 art