



Outdoor Explorations Community Classes
Grades K-5
Teachers: Christy Bennik and Christine
Beugelink
Term 1 (Fall 2018) Summary 1

Language Arts: students read (including picture-read and looking for important information in field guides via pictures and captions) **fiction and non-fiction** books related to themes of nature, autumn, local animals, bugs, birds, and forests. Students explored **poetry** ("Poetree") in relation to our Fall theme and brainstormed in small groups to create their own poetry. Older (gr. 3-5) students worked independently while the younger students worked with buddies or teacher support and scribing or copy work. Styles of poetry included: rhyming, ABCB style and acrostic. The last 2 classes will include haiku and cinquain.

Oral storytelling during play encouraged imagination and collective story making.

Social Studies and Health: "Be Safe, Stay Smart" in relation to **personal safety and community responsibility**- students learned how to take care of themselves and the ecosystem around them in order to stay safe and be observant stewards of creation. "**Get Lost**" Whistle activity was popular- where a teacher taps one or two students to "get lost" and they sneak behind a tree- hug a tree- and whistle for "help". The group searches for their lost friends and learn what to do if lost. (Using a whistle saves the voice from going hoarse and travels farther with a higher pitch. It also scares off wildlife. Hugging a tree provides shelter and security). The Directional Dice game introduced compass rose- N,S,E,W,NE, SW.

Problem solving, collaboration and cooperation, how to resolve conflict or listen to other ideas, creative and critical thinking skills to make shelters or build with STEM bins.

Tea Time: drinking teas made from local natural sources, such as hemlock- which has the health benefit of Vitamin C.

Science: a beginner's focus on **tree, bird, fungi identification**. Parts of a leaf, seeds and cones, bark, and other organisms that use the tree (woodpeckers, moss and lichen, fungi, insects, ferns, new trees growing from older or nurse trees).

Seasonal weather and observations, checking temperature and noticing signs of **seasonal changes**.

Biodiversity in the local forest- each student had a lanyard with a picture of a forest organism (tree, fern, animal- either herbivore/carnivore/omnivore) and had to determine their connections with other organisms in the circle. Holding on to a string and passing the string to their connection, a large web of living things that are interconnected (biodiversity) was created. A student suggested adding a second round of string-passing to create a more diverse web. Then another suggestion was to slowly eliminate one organism from the web and see who was all affected (if your string went slack, then you let go of your web string)- to show in a powerful and visual way how we are all interconnected, and God's design of his creation is purposeful and inter-dependent for healthy ecosystems and sustaining life.

Physical Education: Many games using **gross motor skills, cooperation and leadership** development, and team dynamics. Games: Fox Tails, Blindfold Find-a-Tree, Fox and Rabbit, Forest Sneak-Up ("Go-go-stop"), Goose V-formation, Directional Dice, Crow vs Owls, Bird Lifecycle rock-paper-scissors. Forest and Field Play: gross motor skills such as climbing, balancing, building, digging.

Fine Arts: welcome song, bird song, listening to sounds around us, being attentive and positive **audience members** when others are sharing or performing, **arts and crafts** related to Fall theme: leaf paintings showing symmetry, apple prints showing symbols, bark and leaf rubbings, bird feeders, and using leaves to create a Leaf Animal. **Drama:** **improv game** "That's exactly what it is!" (also known as "Anything But"), where students use an item from nature and created another idea for it. Ex: This is not a stick, it is a paintbrush! This is not moss, it is a beard!

Math: recording number of spider webs found, using **non-standard measuring** tool (string or hand width) to measure width of their assigned Seasonal Tree (will recheck each season/term) and making **estimations** on how tall the tree is based on how their own height (i.e.: how many Johnny's tall is their tree). Gaging length of sticks to create a mini and life-sized shelter. Recognizing patterns in the environment (leaves, webs). Counting dice (up to 24 dots) for Directional Dice game. Reading a thermometer for temperature.

ADST: creating and building mini and life size **shelters** with sticks, **STEM Discovery bins** for opening centres time (using items in a bin to create own design or suggested ones, like tunnel, cave, bridge. Next term- extend to how to improve design, add weight to it, etc).

Questions that you can ask the student about their learning:

- Share your poetry from your Nature Duotang- what is your preferred style of poetry from those we did in class together?
- Which is your favourite forest game to play?
- What is something you became more observant about in nature? (Trees, fungi, bird call, bugs, etc.).

