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Quick & Easy Habitat Education Activities

Leaf Discovery Drawing

Developed by Heidi Bohan/ Starflower Foundation

2-6

Second Grade

15-30 Minutes

Indoors/outdoors

<p>Description: Students increase their knowledge about leaves by creating a leaf rubbing of one leaf from the habitat area. Students use the characteristics of their leaf to name their leaf rubbing, and to tell others why they named it. Students use this rubbing and its description as ‘clues’ to find their plant in the forest during the <i>Leaf Discovery Walk II</i> activity.</p>	<p>Vocabulary Characteristics: <i>a distinguishing trait or property</i></p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students use art as a scientific tool to learn about leaf characteristics. • Students describe and name a plant based on leaf characteristics. • Students understand that observing different leaf characteristics will help them identify plants. 	<p>Washington State EALRs Science 1.1 Use properties to identify, describe, and categorize; and use characteristics to categorize living things. 2.1 Develop abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry. Arts 1.2, 1.3 Organize arts elements into artistic compositions. Use and develop art skills and techniques to solve problems and express ideas. Seattle School District Standards Science 1.2 Some plants are a lot like one another in the way they look and in the things they do, and others are very different from one another. 1.1, 1.3 Objects can be described in terms of their composition and their physical properties. 2.1, 2.4 A lot can be learned about plants and animals by watching them closely.</p>
<p>Print Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images: ‘Leaf Rubbing of a Stinging Nettle Plant’, ‘Leaf Shape, Edges, Texture’ • Masters: ‘Leaf Chart’ and ‘Leaf Characteristics Matrix’ graphic organizers <p>Kit Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foam core clipboards: 1 per student <p>Teacher supplied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sketching pencils (softer, larger lead if possible): 1 per student • 1/2 sheets of 8 1/2” x 11” drawing paper: 4-6 per student • A variety of native plant leaves from the habitat area that students can easily locate during the <i>Leaf Discovery Walk</i> activities (if possible include plants studied in the <i>Evergreen & Deciduous Leaves Walk</i> as a way to further connect these activities). 	

<p>Before activity: Collect a variety of native plant leaves from the habitat area. Choose leaves from plants that students can easily locate during the <i>Leaf Discovery Walk</i> activities.</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather students in an outdoor or indoor classroom area. Tell students, “Today we will be making rubbings of leaves from plants from the habitat area and give them an original name” (show image: ‘Leaf Rubbing of a Stinging Nettle Plant’). What are some things that you notice about the leaf in this rubbing (veins, edges, texture)?” • Show images: ‘Leaf shapes’: Compare shapes to stinging nettle. “Which is the best shape to describe it?” (heart-shaped) • Show images: ‘Leaf edges’: Compare edges to stinging nettle. “Which is the best edge description?” (toothed edge) • Show images: ‘Leaf textures’: Compare textures to stinging nettle. “Which best describes its texture?” (thorny, spiny) • Demonstrate making a leaf rubbing. “Let’s do a demonstration so you can see how to make a rubbing yourself. Choose a leaf and place it on your clipboard under the piece of paper. Using the flat side of your sketching pencil, gently rub it back and forth across the paper. Make sure to rub the edges and the veins so that you easily see them. If you have room on the paper you can turn the leaf over and make a rubbing of the back of the leaf on the same paper.” • Give every student a clipboard, pencil, and three to four pieces of paper. Invite students to choose leaves and begin their rubbings. Give students 5 minutes to work on several different rubbings. Say, “Now that you have had some time to practice making rubbings it is time to choose one leaf that is your favorite. Now use a new sheet of paper to make a rubbing of your favorite leaf. Be sure to flip the leaf over so that you get a rubbing of both sides of your leaf.” • Tell students; “When you finish your leaf rubbing look at the shape, edge and texture of your leaf. Use your ‘Leaf Chart’ graphic organizer to describe the leaf. Use these words to help create an imaginary name for your leaf. Write the imaginary name of your leaf on your leaf rubbing. We will save this rubbing when you are finished. We will use it to find the plant your leaf came from when we again visit the habitat area.” • Have students share their leaf rubbings with the class. Ask students the name of their leaf and why they named it. • Evaluate how well the name describes the leaf; “Could other people recognize the leaf from its name?” • Ask, “How can we use these leaf rubbings to help us learn about native plants?” (help with identification). • Have students write their own name on the rubbing and save their rubbing for <i>Leaf Discovery Walk I & II</i>. <p>Extension: Use ‘Leaf Characteristics Matrix’ graphic organizer to study and compare several different leaves.</p>
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