



Wild Wisdom

curriculum-infused
outdoor Learning ideas

Grade
3



by Rebecca Seiling



Snow and the senses



Season: Winter



Curriculum Expectations:

Dance

A1.1 imitate movements found in their natural environment in a variety of ways and incorporate them into a dance phrase (e.g., modify the movements of animals, snow falling to the ground, ice melting, plants growing; connect a series of insect-like movements together to make a phrase)

Language, Listening

1.1 identify purposes for listening in a variety of situations, formal and informal, and set personal goals related to listening tasks

Language, Reading

1.6 extend understanding of texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience, to other familiar texts, and to the world around them

Language, Writing

1.1 identify the topic, purpose, audience, and form for writing

1.2 generate ideas about a potential topic, using a variety of strategies and resources

Materials needed:

- Rubber mats, one per student

Snow, cont'd



Go outside as a group when it is snowing. Make sure each child is dressed for the weather and has a rubber mat. The book *I Hear You, Forest* is a great prompt for listening outdoors to the world around you. Invite them to listen to the sound of snow, and watch how it “dances” through the sky. Have them do a 4 senses sit spot where they sit still and on their own for about 5 minutes, taking in 4 things they can see, 3 things that they can hear, 2 things that they feel/touch, and 1 thing that they can smell. Depending on their comfort with this, they could even try their sense of taste on the falling snow (not the snow on the ground). Have them notice any words that come to mind as they use their senses to notice the winter world around them.

Inside the classroom, read several texts about snow or winter - either as a whole group, small groups, or individually. Together, note words that came to mind when they were outside - descriptive words about snow and winter. Generate a list that students can refer to.

Have them respond either by writing or by dance - or both! Dance could involve a small group, creating movements to mimic the snow falling.

Small groups could integrate writing with dance by creating a poem that is the base for the dance movements.



Plant parts



Season: Spring



Curriculum Expectations:

Science and Technology, Life Systems

B2.2 identify different parts of plants, including the root, stem, flower, stamen, pistil, leaf, seed, cone, and fruit, and describe how each part contributes to plants' survival within their environment

Materials needed:

- Basket or bags for collecting

(from Six Plant Parts):

After marking out boundaries, give students time to collect all the plant parts they can find on the ground. They may harvest carefully from living plants (such as gently collecting a leaf), but challenge them to find most items on the ground. Provide some additional materials as needed to supplement the findings, especially fruits or flowers which might be harder to find in the schoolyard.

Invite students to look up-close and make observations about the plant parts they see, without actually naming what part it is just yet. Remind students that scientists are excellent observers! What does observation mean? Encourage students to state their observations using these prompts: "I notice" "I wonder" "It reminds me of". Students can share their observations in their small groups, or with the larger group.

Growing a Locavore Lunch



Season: Spring



Curriculum Expectations:

Science and Technology, Life Systems

B1.3 assess the benefits and limitations of locally grown food

B2.7 describe various plants used for food, including those grown by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, and identify local settings where these plants are grown or found

Science and Technology, Earth and Space Systems

E2.1 identify the living and non-living components of soil, and describe the characteristics of healthy soil

E2.2 identify different substances that are commonly added to, or absorbed by, the soil, and describe their effects on soil health

E2.3 examine different types of soils found in Ontario, and describe how different soils are suited to growing different types of food, including crops

E2.5 identify various strategies used to maintain and improve soil health in Ontario

E2.6 describe the process of composting, and explain some benefits of composting

Materials needed:

- Food Connection Cards from Page 11 and Page 13 of [Lesson Plans, Handouts, Slide Notes](#) printed off and cut
- Ball of string
- Seeds
- Trowels
- Composted soil

The following activities include several days and even weeks of content.

Growing cont'd



Read *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World*. Talk about the many steps and countries involved in this process of making apple pie. Ask, “What would it look like to eat only local foods?” Outside, pass out Food Connection Cards. There are 9 cards in total, so have students work in groups of 2 or 3.

Have students stand up, form a circle, and hold their cards up so the fronts are visible. Give one student a ball of string. Ask the student to state the part of the food system on their card and then toss the ball of string to another person while holding onto the end of the string. As they throw the ball, they should explain how the two parts are connected, for example: “I am a cow. I am connected to water because I drink it, it irrigates my feed crops, and my manure sometimes contaminates it.” Continue until students have created a tangled web of connections. Students can throw to the same person more than once if there are multiple points of connection. Once the web is complete, introduce events into the food system. For example, if a drought occurs, water should tug on their strings. Students who felt the tug should explain how they might be affected, then tug on their strings. Students who felt the second tug should explain how they might be affected, and so on. Students should see that stresses to one part of the system may have cascading consequences throughout the system.

Talk about eating local, and define a “locavore” together. Start to work on a garden plan, working backwards by planning for recipes that would use ingredients grown locally. This might end up being a spring salad, and that is perfectly fine! If students learn how to grow their own greens, that is time well spent. They could choose a mixture of sprouts and leafy lettuce. When it comes time to harvest in later spring, other ingredients could supplement - ie. a salad dressing using maple syrup, or some Ontario berries to put on top of the salad, etc.

When planting, add composted soil to the planting beds in order to make the soil healthy.

Autumn Leaf bowls



Season: Fall



Curriculum Expectations:

Science and Technology, Life Systems

B2.3 describe changes that different plants undergo in their life cycles

Art

D1.4 use a variety of materials, tools, and techniques to respond to design challenges

Materials needed:

- Leaves
- White glue
- Balloons
- Bowls
- Tinfoil or plastic wrap

This activity will take a few days of patient work. Read *Leaf and the Fall* as a way to talk about having a growth mindset - that sometimes things don't work like you imagined, and take patience and perseverance. Like this art project! Collect fall leaves, looking for colour and texture of their choice. Press them between books for several days until they are flat.

Blow up small balloons to mold the leaf bowls onto, and set them on bowls so that they won't roll away. Paint the leaves onto the bowls with watered-down white glue. The Mud & Bloom explanation (in other resources) gives great step by step instructions, along with photos.

Structure building



Season: Spring



Curriculum Expectations:

Science and Technology, Structures and Mechanisms

3.3 identify the strength of a structure as its ability to support a load

3.6 describe ways in which the strength of different materials can be altered (e.g. by folding, adding layers, twisting/braiding, changing their shape)

3.7 describe ways to improve a structure's strength (e.g. by using triangulation or cross-members) and stability (e.g. by lowering the centre of gravity)

2.4 use technological problem-solving skills, and knowledge acquired from previous investigations, to design and build a strong and stable structure

2.5 use appropriate science and technology vocabulary, including compressions, tension, strut, ties, strength and stability, in oral and written communications

2.6 use a variety of forms to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Materials needed:

- Check link for lesson plan explanations
- Natural loose parts for building animal shelters

Look at the Grade Three resource link under “other resources.” This is an excellent lesson plan that blends Indigenous STEM approaches, Science and Technology curriculum, and Social Studies curriculum. Ideas here could easily last for several sessions. In particular, look at “Nanabush builds a bridge” (p. 2), “Nanabush builds a shelter for his animal brothers” lesson plan on page 14, and the following activity that prompts students to build a shelter for their animal brothers. For the shelter building part of this process, do this outdoors on the field or tarmac area and take photos before dismantling. This lesson idea needs no other additional thoughts here - highly recommended!

Log it!



I wonder...

This reminds me of...

Log it!



Date:

Weather:



Wind:



Temperature:

I notice...

Imagination space



Date:



what do you sense?



Date:

