

Structures in Nature – Indoor Lesson

Grade Third Grade (3rd)

Lesson Spring Indoor

Time 50 minutes

Materials *From the Portable*

- Volunteer Handout
 - Plant Chart
 - Pencils
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Objective:

Teach students to observe their surroundings and look for structures in nature and understand why we need different structures in nature. What advantages does it have to be the tallest plant, or to live in amongst thousands of similar plants? Or to be a bear compared to a mouse? Neither is better and both have an ecological niche.

Lesson:

1. Introduce yourself and ask what skills you need to be a scientist. See how many things they can come up with?
 - a. *Answers: observation, analysis, questioning, inquisitive*
2. Explain that when they're out in the watershed they will use all of these skills to look for specific structures and explain why they help the plants and animals. Although both animals and plants have specific structures, we will be using plants as they are better at keeping still than animals, making them easier to observe.
3. Ask students:
 - a. Are all plants and animals the same? What makes them different? Size, color, shape, where they live.
 - b. Why are they different?
4. Break into 5 groups and using the following questionnaires as their guide, give each group a different plant. Ask the students which are the many structures that help keep that plant alive or help it thrive? Using their charts ask them to write down their ideas and figure out what plant they have.
5. Bring the groups into a whole class after 5-10 minutes and talk to the rest of the class about their specimen and its adaptations. What did they figure out? Help them fill in any blanks using the volunteer handout.
6. Explain that during their outdoor lesson they will look for all 5 plants. They will diagram them and make notes based on what they just learned.
7. Remind them of their outing date and the need for them to bring rain boots and coats.

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PNW Native Plant Questionnaire

1. What type of plant do you have? Is it a tree, a shrub?
2. How does it grow fast/slow?
3. What adaptations help it thrive?
4. Does it have leaves?
5. Does it make seeds?