

Plant Inventory – Outdoor Lesson

Grade Second Grade (2nd)

Lesson Fall Outdoor

Time 1 hour

- Materials**
- ✓ Backpacks (if desired), garbage bags (to collect litter), medical kits
 - ✓ Datasheet for the lesson, grease pencil
 - ✓ Plant Identification Resource books (if desired)
 - ✓ Paper for leaf sample size (to be made into a bookmark for each student after dried)
 - ✓ Boots
 - ✓ Beads for Watershed Necklaces (to put on each necklace after the lesson)
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Objective:

Plants and trees are important to the watershed because they provide homes for the wildlife and shade for the streams. Shade keeps the streams colder which is better for the salmon. Also, plants and trees along the streams prevent erosion of the stream banks and deterioration of the water quality.

Before the lesson:

1. A couple days before the outing, send reminder email to the volunteers and let them know to arrive at the Watershed Portable or classroom (your choice) about 15 minutes before the scheduled departure.
2. You or your teacher should split the students into small groups; # of groups depends on how many volunteers you have attending.

Day of the Lesson Prep:

1. Arrive at the Watershed Portable prior to the outing to assemble the materials in the backpacks (if desired) and review the lesson.
2. Visit the classroom to see who needs boots and either bring the students to the portable to get them or find out their sizes and bring them to the classroom.
3. When the volunteers arrive, introduce yourself and review the contents of the backpack. Let them know there is a First Aid kit and garbage bag in the backpack as well.

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5. Review the lesson with the volunteers by showing them the information that was covered in the indoor lesson. Show them the other materials needed for the outing such as the Data Sheet, Size of paper for leaf sample, Plant Identification Resource Books, Handout of What Plants Not to Pick.
 - a) Explain that each student will pick ONE leaf sample to press. Select samples that can be pressed (not pinecones, large berries, moss, etc.)
 - b) Leaders will help students complete the data sheet at different sites within the Watershed.
 - c) REMIND again to tell students not to pick any “leaves of three” or stems with sharp thorns, needles, etc.
6. Give each chaperone the assigned list of students they will have in their group for the outing. You may choose to have the groups start at different sites within the watershed.
7. Remind volunteers that students need to stay with their assigned group at all times. Volunteers need to stay with students until they are back in the classroom with their teacher.
8. Answer any questions. Give the parents the time they should be meeting to leave the watershed and head back to the classroom.

The Lesson:

1. Introduce yourself to the students and ask them some review questions as a group.
 - a) *Who remembers what we are going to do on our outing today?* We’re going to do be looking at plant types and their characteristics in the watershed.
 - b) *Why do we want to identify the different plants and trees in the watershed?* We want to be able to identify different plant types (tree, shrub, grass, herbaceous plant), evergreen or deciduous, sun or shade, and leaf shape. We will also look to see how abundant certain plants are at different sites within the watershed, because not all plants thrive in the same area.
 - c) *Why are plants and trees important to our watershed?* They provide homes to wildlife provide shade for streams and prevent erosion along the streams.
 - d) *How many samples are you going to collect today?* Each student collects ONE leaf.
 - e) *What types of leaves and plants do we leave alone?* Leaves of three, let them be! No poison ivy or stinging nettles. Blackberry and salmonberry stems have thorns. Leaves and blossoms can be picked for samples.
 - f) Remember to stay with your assigned parent leader and follow the guidelines for working in the watershed.

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2. Start walking as a group to the watershed sites. Group cross at the crosswalk stopping the entire group and reminding them to “stop, look and listen.” Have 1-2 chaperones go out and guard the crosswalk. Remind student and parents that students are on the inside of the white line and parents are on the white line.
3. Determine what time each group should meet back up to return to school. You may direct groups to different sites within the watershed, or you may all start together and then spread out from there. The parent volunteers can retrieve materials from backpack to get lesson started. The students may take turns recording findings on the data sheet.
4. As the leader, if you don’t have a group yourself, you can periodically check-in on the groups and be sure they are guiding the students through the completion of the data sheet.
5. Make sure each student has collected ONE leaf sample that will fit on the paper sample. Verify that all groups are accounted for before heading leaving the watershed and heading back to the school.

Finishing up:

1. Once back in the classroom, give each student a pre-cut piece of paper to place their leaf on. They should write their name and/or any details about their leaf on the paper. Carefully gather each students paper + leaf to bring to the portable.
2. Be sure to gently stack the pressed plant samples (1-3 samples between 2 boards), rubberband them together, and let dry. Once plant samples are dry, they can be laminated and made into a bookmark for each student. You may decide to punch a hole in the top for ribbon/jute.
3. Make sure all boots are returned to the watershed portable.
4. If time permits, put the new watershed bead on student’s necklaces.
4. Remove materials from backpacks and return them back to their place in the watershed portable. Wipe down any wet and muddy backpacks or other materials (data sheets) before putting them away in the lesson bin.
5. Thank parent volunteers!
6. Please return all supplies to the portable and provide any feedback to the Watershed Chairs.