

TRAILSIDE LESSON PLAN

COURSE/PROGRAM TITLE: Exploring Art & Nature
DATE: 2019 **TIME:** 45min **SESSION NUMBER:** 1 of 1
AGE/GRADE: N/A **ENROLLMENT:** 12
INSTRUCTOR(S): Analia Hernandez / JD

PROGRAM PURPOSE: This is an adaptive interpretation program that introduces students with a range of cognitive and/or physical abilities to the wildlife of the Watchung Reservation while also highlighting simple artistic techniques on the Trailside Sensory Trail.

SESSION CONCEPT(S):

- **Plants and animals have a way of surviving all year round through adaptations for every season.**
- **There are a vast amount of colors, shapes, and patterns we see every season purposely.**
- **Nature influences and inspires many artists and people's creativity every day through its changes and phenomenon.**
- **Our creativity will allow us to create art and sounds seasonally to mimic nature in our own unique way.**

SESSION OUTLINE (ACTIVITIES AND CONTENT, ATTACH ANY HANDOUTS):

Introduce self and Trailside NSC, Watchung Reservation (this special park/ reservation is a place that is reserved or saved just for nature; plants and animals). Please come back again and visit us, the museum and trails are free and open just about every day.

Today we are going to have fun learning about how nature influences art and rhythm in many different ways this season.

We are now going on a walk/hike

Go over trail rules = please no running, stay on the trail, do not touch or pick things.

Tuck SOCKS into pants.

Show/explain poison ivy – “leaves of three, leave me be”, rope = “hairy rope, don't be a dope”

Be very quiet = you see more animals

Watch your step (tree roots, rocks...don't trip).

There may be some things along the way we can touch, but only I will say when it's okay.

Please stay behind the naturalist at all times.

Suggested stops:

Fall

1. Stop at first kiosk and turn the knob so the crowd can hear the information. At the end, go over some points and emphasize information relevant to the current season.
2. Stop at the Poison Ivy display and discuss its appearance depending on the season(hairy rope fall-winter, 3 leaves green summer, or reddish in spring)
3. Stop at the Box turtle display and talk about the bright yellow/orange patterns on the female turtles and how the males are not as bright. Also share the reasoning behind their patterns and how most patterns we see in nature are for camouflaging purposes. Discuss the definition with

kids about camouflaging and its purpose in nature.

4. Stop at the chipmunk display and discuss what chipmunks are doing relevant to season. (Collecting nuts, camouflage)
5. Once you reach outdoor class room #1 have the leaf rubbing plates and animal track plates already there along with the crayons that are colored coordinated with fall colors in Ziploc bags. Hand out paper or booklets to each student to create their own rubbings. Take this moment to talk about different leaves and the colors they change into. (Tulip poplar-, Red oak-, Maple-, etc.) Take out laminated chart to show examples of different trees and the colors we see the leaves change in the fall.
6. Stop at the Red Oak display and show them an actual red oak and the color of the leaves in the fall. Talk about cool oak facts. **Oaks** produce more than 2000 acorns every year, but only one in 10 000 acorns will manage to develop into **oak tree**. You can try and explain the lack of chlorophyll in the leaves causing it to turn its actual color which is red!
7. Continue to walk to the Gazebo and have students play for about 5-10 minutes with the displays. If necessary do it together as a group. Play instruments set up for them and try and create different rhythm like we hear in nature. Include how animals in nature have calls or make noises for different reasons. (ex. Birds sing if there's danger, if they find food, or to attract attention)
8. If time permits, head to outdoor classroom #3 and create a Porcupine leaf collage to take home. Learn about the North American porcupine and recreate him using leaves as quills.

Winter

1. Stop at first kiosk and turn the knob so the crowd can hear the information. At the end, go over some points and emphasize information relevant to the current season.
2. Stop at the Poison Ivy display and discuss its appearance depending on the season(hairy rope fall-winter, 3 leaves green summer, or reddish in spring)
3. Stop at the Box turtle display and talk about the bright yellow/orange patterns on the female turtles and how the males are not as bright. Also share the reasoning behind their patterns and how most patterns we see in nature are for camouflaging purposes. Discuss the definition with kids about camouflaging and its purpose in nature. Add in how turtles dig their way into the ground below freezing line and sleep throughout the winter. (Talk about Bromating)
4. Stop at the display where it talks about the aging of trees and how they can benefit the forest once they are no longer alive by providing many homes for animals.
5. Once you reach outdoor class room #1 have the leaf rubbing plates and animal track plates already there along with the thick crayons in Ziploc bags. Hand out paper or booklets to each student to create their own bark rubbing or animal track rubbings. Take this moment to talk about how we tend to see a lot of animal tracks in the snow during the winter and barks are more visible when there aren't too many leaves out. All different trees have different bark and they all feel different as well.
6. Stop at the animal tracks display and have different animal track imprints to show students what they would look like. In this case show animals relative to season like rabbit, deer, coyote, squirrel, etc.
7. Stop at white pine and discuss how pine trees serve a huge hideout and home for many animals in the winter. Discuss how it is the only conifer with five needles in a bundle. Let students feel.
8. Continue to walk to the Gazebo and have students play for about 5-10 minutes with the displays. If necessary do it together as a group. Play instruments set up for them and try and create different rhythm like we hear in nature. Let students create different strokes with paint on paper using different needles as paint brushes from different conifers.
9. If time permits, head to outdoor classroom #3 and create snowflake cutouts together. Share some snowflake facts as you work.

Spring

1. Stop at first kiosk and turn the knob so the crowd can hear the information. At the end, go over some points and emphasize information relevant to the current season.
2. Stop at the Poison Ivy display and discuss its appearance depending on the season(hairy rope fall-winter, 3 leaves green summer, or reddish in spring)
3. Stop at the Box turtle display and talk about the bright yellow/orange patterns on the female turtles and how the males are not as bright. Also share the reasoning behind their patterns and how most patterns we see in nature are for camouflaging purposes. Discuss the definition with kids about camouflaging and its purpose in nature. Add in how turtles are starting to emerge along with other reptiles.
4. Stop at the chipmunk display and discuss what chipmunks are doing relevant to season. (Collecting nuts, camouflaging, hungry after winter)
5. Once you reach outdoor class room #1 have the Insect rubbing plates and animal track plates already there along with the thick crayons in Ziploc bags. Hand out paper or booklets to each student to create their own insect rubbings or animal track rubbings. Take this moment to talk about how we tend to see a lot insects coming out and beginning to pollinate. Explain what it is to pollinate and how they do it.
6. Stop at the animal tracks display and have different animal track imprints to show students what they would look like. Talk about how it rains a lot more in the spring leaving behind mud where we are able to see animal tracks. In this case show animals relative to season like rabbit, deer, squirrel, raccoon, etc.
7. Stop at the Swallowtail Butterfly display and talk about the different warning colors butterflies have along with unique patters. Emphasize how most patterns are used to distract predators and/or camouflage and show how symmetrical their patterns are.
8. Continue to walk to the Gazebo and have students play for about 5-10 minutes with the displays. If necessary do it together as a group. Have butterfly cutouts ready for students along with paint jars/ trays so that they can create their own design on one side of the butterfly. They will then proceed to fold it in half and create a symmetrical design.
9. If time permits, head to outdoor classroom #3 and create rain sticks.

Summer

1. Stop at first kiosk and turn the knob so the crowd can hear the information. At the end, go over some points and emphasize information relevant to the current season.
2. Stop at the Poison Ivy display and discuss its appearance depending on the season(hairy rope fall-winter, 3 leaves green summer, or reddish in spring)
3. Stop at the Box turtle display and talk about the bright yellow/orange patterns on the female turtles and how the males are not as bright. Also share the reasoning behind their patterns and how most patterns we see in nature are for camouflaging purposes. Discuss the definition with kids about camouflaging and its purpose in nature. Add in the type of habitats turtles need to live in.(woody areas, humid, forest floor, omnivores)
4. Stop at the chipmunk display and discuss what chipmunks are doing relevant to season. (Collecting nuts, camouflaging, hungry after winter)
5. Once you reach outdoor class room #1 have spray bottles full of paint and paper for students. Hand a paper to each student and express how water is essential in the summer time for nature as well as us. Create a craft using water by spraying the watered down paint onto nature items found around the forest floor to make a silhouette craft from nature items. Show example and assist and guide students through craft. Leave to dry.
6. Stop at the animal tracks display and have different animal track imprints to show students what they would look like. Talk about how it rains a lot more in the spring leaving behind mud where we are able to see animal tracks. In this case show animals relative to season like rabbit, deer, squirrel, raccoon, etc.

7. Stop at the Swallowtail Butterfly display and talk about the different warning colors butterflies have along with unique patterns. Emphasize how most patterns are used to distract predators and/or camouflage and show how symmetrical their patterns are.
8. Continue to walk to the Gazebo and have students play for about 5-10 minutes with the displays. Have students create water color paintings.
9. If time permits, head to outdoor classroom #3 and create insect rubbings to take home.

At the end of the hike, gather children together. Perform a TICK CHECK with all persons involved in the hike. If any of the students are unable to check themselves, suggest to any teachers or aids they should check them.

Check for Understanding:

*** Ask teacher to please fill out an evaluation form.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES: (How do you measure what they have learned?)

Session objectives will be highly variable from group to group. The main goal of the program is for any student or scout to leave with some artwork they were able to help create via the influence of the habitats surrounding the Sensory Trail as well as a greater appreciation for the natural world. Pending on the individual's capabilities, subjects may leave with more than one piece of artwork.

RESOURCES USED [Materials, Books, and Computer Files]:

White paper/Rubbings Booklet
Rubbing crayons
Water paint
Spray bottles 4-5
Paint
Pencils
Crayons
Butterfly cut-outs
Water color paint
Rain sticks
Porcupine Pictures

- Leaves (to be collected)

Rubbing plates
Pine needles (to be collected)

Nature influences art in many different ways. Join trailside's naturalists and learn about the wonders in nature and get inspired by the beauty of our current season to create rhythm and art using your creativity. Learn to use the tools that nature provides to discover new realms of resourcefulness and create your own masterpiece.