

Nature Extensions and Outdoor Connections for Individual Lessons in Unit 3

Week 1

Art Studio: Making Sailboats

- The children can use sticks, leaves, fruit peels, bottle caps and other found items for constructing their boat.

Writing & Drawing: Blank Books

- Bring the blank books outside for journaling.

Discovery: Using Sailboats

- Bring the homemade boats outside.
- If possible, test the boats in a natural stream caused from the rain.

Dramatization: Baking Cakes

- Bring pots and pans outside for the children to use to make nature cakes in a mud kitchen.
- The children will be able to continue their learning beyond the classroom walls as they use grass, dirt and other items to create their cake.

Art Studio: Storm Painting

- Have the children color on absorbent paper using markers.
- If it is raining bring the children outside with their paper that has been colored on.
- As the rain falls onto the paper it will cause the colors to run and mix together.
- If it is not raining on the day of this activity use spray bottles to simulate a rain storm.

Blocks: Stability Challenge

- Rather than using the standard wooden blocks for this activity switch them out using at least one of the natural or recycled items.
 - Rocks
 - Paper towel rolls
 - Plastic containers
 - Wood slices

Small Group: What Can Air Move? Seeds

- Read *Flip, Float, Fly: Seeds on the Move* by JoAnn Early Macken.
- Talk to the children about seed dispersal (the scattering of seeds)
- Watch *Seed Dispersal - The Great Escape* on You tube by Naturalist Outreach.

Small Group: Blowing Objects Through Straws

- Have the children collect milkweeds, dandelions, maple seeds, petals and other natural items.
- The children will use their straw to try to blow various shapes and size items across the table or ground.

Week 2

Writing & Drawing: Storm Stories

- Place paper and writing tools near the window for the children to use while they observe the weather outside.
- This activity could also be done outside using sit spots. Sit spots is a spot away from others that the child chooses.

Art Studio: Box Lid Paintings

- The children could do this project outside on a rainy day to explore how the colors on the paper mix when it comes in contact with water.

Art Studio: Wind Illustrations

- Use a watered down paint or water colors for the children to use at the art area.
- Before the paint dries have the children hold their picture in front of a small fan for a few seconds.
- The wind from the fan will cause the paint to run across their painting.
- If this activity is done on a windy day leave the paintings outside to dry to create “wind marks” in the paper.

Blocks: Rabbit Habitat

- Take children outside to look for rabbit habitats referring to the book and block activity.
- Have them think about the rabbit habitats they made in the block area and look for natural materials they can use to build a rabbit habitat outside.

Small Groups: Sound Cans

- Lead a rainstorm with the children using their own bodies;
 - Begin by snapping fingers or lightly rubbing hands together
 - Start clapping lightly then more loudly and rapidly
 - As the storm gets louder, hit hands on thighs, then stomp feet
 - Slowly reverse the actions until it is no longer raining

Week 3

Art Studio: Animal Covering

- In small groups bring the children outside to explore the playground or nearby woods area for animal coverings.

Library: Animal Research

- After researching an animal, have the children create riddles for their animals that include characteristics of the animal (e.g. has fur, has four paws, lives in the forest, is a mammal, etc.). They then share the characteristics with the other children and the children guess what animal it is.

Blocks: Animal Habitats

- Take children outside to look for animal habitats. Make a list of the different habitats they find and which animals might live there. Have them try and find the animal habitat that they researched.

Writing: Animal Stories

- Bring the writing center outside; allow the children to journal about the animals they observe in nature.
- Use an iPad or computer to play a live stream video of forest animals or zoo animals as animal story inspirations.

Let's Find Out About It: Animals Prepare for Winter

- After learning about what animals do to prepare for winter, take children outside and revisit the Migrate/Hibernate/Stay Active game detailed in the Outdoor Learning lesson plan for Unit 2, Week 4.

Let's Find Out About It: Camouflaged Animals

- After learning about camouflage, take the children outside and play the camouflage game detailed in the Outdoor Learning lesson plan for Unit 3, week 3.

Week 4

Art Studio: Clouds

- The children could paint outside or near a window that allows them to observe the clouds in the sky

Discovery: Ice Melting

- An expansion for this activity could be painting with food colored ice cubes.

Writing: Winter Stories

- To help inspire the winter stories, have children go outside and play in the snow. As they play, they may come up with ideas for their stories.

Let's Find Out About It: Winter Activities

- Provide the children with information about what animals do when it is winter.

Unit 3 – Nature Connections to one of the books

Rabbits and Raindrops

- Continue activities that focus on mammals (from Unit 2 – Squirrels and Chipmunks), as rabbits are mammals.
- Since rabbits stay active in the winter time, look for rabbit tracks in the snow and see if they lead to a rabbit den.