
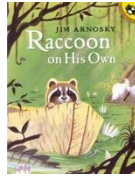


<p>Unit 5</p>  <p>Week 2</p>	<p>Outdoor Learning Opportunities:</p> <p>Pond Life – Raccoon Hands</p>	<p>Standards: M.G.PS.1 S.LS.PS.1,4 PHD.HKP.PS.2 PHD.FM.PS.5</p>
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<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large pot or bowl with water ● Several different types and sizes of sea shells (two of each type) ● Three towels 	<p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pond ● Reflection ● Shell ● Raccoon
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Take the children outside in late spring to visit a pond or stream (or vernal pond) in your area. Have them look in the pond and see their reflection. Is it easy or hard to see what is in the pond, especially when the sunlight is reflecting on the pond? Have the children look for what lives near or in the water (both plants and animals). Look for animal tracks near the water's edge and animal scat. Collect shells that might be around the pond. Raccoon tracks might be found near a pond. Their footprints look similar to a human hand. Raccoons often use their sense of touch to examine food in a pond before eating it, especially since they are nocturnal and may be visiting the pond at night when it is difficult to see what is in it.

In the classroom fill a large pot or bowl with water and place it on a towel. Bring in a collection of shells (possibly ones that have been collected by the children) and place one of each type of shell in the water. Make sure and have a duplicate of each shell on a towel near the bowl of water. Cover the bowl with a towel so the children cannot see the shells in the water. The children can pretend to be raccoons as they feel the shells in the bowl (under the towel). They will try and match the ones they feel with the shells they can see on the towel next to the bowl.

Extension: Place shells in a sensory table with water so the children can use their sense of touch to examine the shells and discriminate between the different types of shells. This might be a good activity to do prior to Raccoon Hands, so the children have some experience with the shells before taking away their ability to see them in the water.

Guiding Questions:

- If the sunlight is reflecting on the pond, is it easier or harder to see what is in the pond?
- What types of animals and plants can you find at a pond?
- How do raccoons find their food in a pond at night?
- Are all sea shells the same? How are they different?