

Nature Extensions and Outdoor Connections for Individual Lessons in Unit 5

Week 1

Discovery: Reflections in Water

- Bring clear buckets or containers outside along with mirrors.
- Allow the children to use the mirrors as they explore the effects water has on reflections.
- The children could also use silver kitchen tools to experiment with reflections.

Dramatic Play: Woodland/Swamp

- To enhance this area, add small stumps or rocks for the children to use to manipulate while playing.

Blocks: Mylar and Block Structures

- Add silver reflective mylar on several blocks; also add pond animals for the children to use in this area.

Small Groups: Kaleidoscopes

- To make bright colored kaleidoscopes the children can use small pieces of flowers or leaves.

Small Groups: Reflective/Non-Reflective Materials

- Add sea glass, tin/metal cans and other found/recycled materials

Small Groups: Tall, Tall tree Game

- Bring the children outside to explore various size trees.
- Allow the children to use their arms or other nonstandard forms of measurement to find the size of the trees.

Small Groups: Making Tall Trees

- Have the children use sticks, rocks and other natural items to design their tall tree.
- The children could create tall trees on the ground or on paper to construct an outline of a tree.
- Another modification of this activity is allowing the children to use the materials to create a 3D tree.

Week 2

Blocks: Mirrors and Block Structures

- Have the children use tree blocks and mirrors to explore reflections.
- If possible explore the same materials inside and outside.

Art Studio: Black, white and Grey Illustrations

- Allow the children to take turns taking at least one picture of something they find outside.
- Print the pictures out in black and white once each child has been provided with the opportunity to participate.
- Allow the children to share with their peers about the image.

Writing & Drawings: Researching Nocturnal Animals

- Set up a laptop, iPad or another electronic device to stream nocturnal animals.
- This experience will provide the children with better insight about the nightlife of animals.
- While the children are watching the video, they can write or draw about what they observed/learned.

Small Groups: Shadow Measuring

- Have the children work together to find and measure shadows.
- This activity works best on a hard flat surface outside on a sunny day.
- For example, one child can use their body to cast a shadow on the ground; the other child could use chalk to trace the peers shadow.
- If you do not have access to a hard, flat surface outside the children can take turns tracing each other on large dark colored paper.
- Once the children have traced each other they can measure their body tracing using a non-standard unit of measurement such as rocks.

Week 3

Dramatic Play: Shadow Dancing

- Have the children use stencils to trace various types of animals on black paper; once they have finished tracing the children can cut out their drawing.
- They will create their own shadow puppets to use in the dramatic play area.
- The children could also bring their shadow puppets outside to further explore shadows.

Blocks: Skyline Block Structures

- Bring medium or large plastic mirrors outside for the children to build on using loose parts. How are these the same or different from city skylines?

Discovery: Experimenting with Shadows

- Possible shadow exploration:
 - Trace shadows with chalk or chalk paint.
 - Have the children take turns taking pictures of each other's shadows.

Small Groups: Shadow Search

- Start the activity by reading *Whose Shadow Is This* by Clair Bege.
- Then bring the shadow hunt outside to allow the children to further investigate the effects of light.

Small groups: Fill Your Puddle Pail

- Bring the children on a scavenger hunt on the playground or beyond.
- During this adventure encourage the children to collect treasures to put in their pails along the way.

Week 4

Art Studio: Stained Glass Collage

- Create a stained glass masterpiece using contact paper and some of the following items
 - Fresh or dried flowers.
 - Leaves.
 - Sand (add food coloring as desired)
 - Berries.
 - Sticks and small tree bows.

Discovery: Making Collections

- The children make collections using natural materials such as shells, feathers, moss, etc.

Who Works at Night ?

- Set up a game cam to video animals at night. The children can watch the video and determine what animals come out at night.

Blocks: Night City

- Add *Animals at Night: A Glow in the Dark Book* by Anne Jankeliowitch to the block area.
- Add nocturnal animals to the block area