

Nature Extensions and Outdoor Connections for Individual Lessons in Unit 6

Week 1

Discovery & Manipulatives: Sorting Beans & Beans

- Connect to Outdoor Learning lesson plan for week 5: Flower Parts & Parts of a Seed.

Art Studio: Above and Below Garden Soil

- Add soil to the paint to allow children to explore a new textured paint.

Blocks: Building a Garden

- Include natural materials in the block area for the children to use to build their garden.

Small Groups: Seed Experiment

- Follow up with Outdoor Learning lesson plan for week 1: Gardening – Will it Grow?

Week 2

Writing: Diagrams

- Connect to Outdoor Learning lesson plan for week 5: Flower Parts & Parts of a Seed

Library & Listening: What Plants are We Eating?

- Research wild edibles. Several flowers are edible (i.e. dandelion leaves used in salads, day lily flowers, several herbs). Be sure to tell the children that they should not eat anything they find outside without first asking an adult.

Week 3

Library & Listening/Writing & Drawing: Researching Oviparous Animals

- Have children look for frog or toad eggs in a vernal pond or nearby body of water. Collect the eggs and/or tadpoles and raise them in an aquarium (see Outdoor Learning Lesson Plan for week 2: Animal Life Cycles – Collecting Tadpoles)
- Introduce the characteristics of amphibians and reptiles.

Discovery: Materials for Nests & Art Studio: Nests

- See Outdoor Learning Lesson Plan for Unit 5, Week 3: Making Bird Nests (and extension - bird nest bags)

Small Groups: Bird Feeders

- See Outdoor Learning Lesson Plan for Unit 2, Week 5: Bubbling Pine Cones (extension – making bird feeders)

Small Groups: Rhyming Games

- Take children outside with nets. They can try catching insects or go to the pond and catch critters in the pond. While they are looking for something to catch, the children can sing “Oh a Gathering We Will Go”
Oh, a gathering we will go, a gathering we will go. We’ll catch a duck and put him in a truck and then we’ll let him go. And then we’ll let him go. (see Unit 1 ideas for Outdoor Learning under insects). Repeat the song using other animals and rhyming words (frog/log, bee/tree, etc.).

Small Groups: How Do I Measure

- Bring the children outside to measure trees using non-standard units of measurement.
- The children could also use natural items such as driftwood, seed pods or other items as a unit

Let’s Find Out About It: Edible Eggs

- Inform the children that eggs come in all different shapes and sizes depending on the bird.
- During large group show the children at least 2 different eggs.
- Allow the children to discuss how the eggs are similar and/or different.
- Taste test different types of eggs
- Hatch eggs in the classroom using an incubator (make a connection with a local farm to get the eggs)

Week 4

Writing: Researching Kindergarten

- Have the children write & deliver mail to a local kindergarten classroom.

Block Area: Bridges

- Provide the children with natural items and encourage them to pretend to be animals making bridge type structures in the wild.

Small Group: Designing Gardens

- The children could draw their own garden using colored pencils.
- They could also could design their own garden by cutting pictures out of magazines.
- Once the children have designed a basic blueprint for their garden allow their designs to come to life in the block area using natural and found items.

Let’s Find Out About It: Life Cycle

- Act out the stages of the butterfly life cycle and sing the butterfly life cycle song (See Outdoor Learning Lesson Plan for Unit 1, Week 2: Butterfly Metamorphosis)