

Grade Five / Fall or Spring Walk/ At A Glance

Forest Ecosystem Walk ⌚ 45 minutes

Goals

- Observe and measure weather conditions and think about what role weather might play in an ecosystem
- Identify and record evidence of producers, consumers and decomposers
- Recognize that the forest ecosystem is a system of plants and animals interacting with each other and with the non-living environment

Introduction to Ecosystems

⌚ 5 minutes

- *Think back to the BBY walks you have experienced over the years. What living things have you observed? What is needed for these things to survive?*
- *Today we will be studying a forest ecosystem, what do we mean by ecosystem?*
- *An ecosystem can be as small as your backyard or as large as an ocean. You will be eco-detectives to find out how this ecosystem works and how the many parts work together.*

Observe and Measure the Weather

⌚ 5 minutes

- *How might weather affect the type of living things we might find in the forest ecosystem today?*
- *How can we observe and record today's weather?*

Identify and Record Parts of the Food Chain

⌚ 20 minutes

- *What do we mean by producer?*
- *What is photosynthesis and what "ingredients" are needed for this process?*
- *What producers can we find today?*
- *How do producers and consumers differ?*
- *What is a decomposer and why are decomposers important in an ecosystem?*
- *Can we find evidence that decomposers are active in the ecosystem?*
- *Where does the soil come from?*

Identify and Record Non-Living (Abiotic) Things

⌚ 10 minutes

- *What is the difference between living and non-living things?*
- *Think of non-living things that are needed by living things in order to survive. How many of these non-living things can you find in this ecosystem? (soil, rocks, water, sunshine (light and heat) and air)*

Wrap up

⌚ 5 minutes

- *How is an ecosystem constantly changing?*
- *How might ecosystems be similar and how might they differ? (pond vs. forest)*
- *How might an ecosystem be disrupted or moved out of balance?*
- *What evidence can we find that shows some connections between different parts of the forest ecosystem?*

This summary does not replace the Walk Guide. Activities, their order and duration will vary depending on your group dynamics and weather.