

Kindergarten Grade / Spring Walk / At A Glance

Plants, Animals and Seasonal Changes ⌚ 45 minutes

Goals

- Use the four senses to observe and describe seasonal changes
- Discover how plants and animals change seasonally
- Explore plant parts: roots, stem, leaves, flowers and seeds

Using the Four Senses

⌚ 5 minutes

- Sight: *What signs of spring do you see? Have all the trees turned green? What animal clues can you find?*
- Sound: *(have children close eyes for 20-30 seconds) What do you hear? Are birds singing? Any insect sounds? Does the schoolyard sound different than it did in winter?*
- Touch: *What do you feel? Is the sun and air warm? Feel the ground, what do you notice?*
- Smell: *What do you smell? Soil? Flowers? Freshly mowed grass?*

Explore Plant Parts

⌚ 5 minutes

- *Why are flowers growing now when they didn't in winter?*
- Dig up a wildflower (wildflowers may include dandelions, yellow hawkweed, yellow cinquefoil, and clover) *Name the plant parts (roots, stem, leaves, flowers, seeds).*
- *What plant parts do you see that you didn't see in the grassy schoolyard in winter?*

Explore Seed - Flower Connection

⌚ 10 minutes

- Pick an open yellow blossom from a dandelion. *How many flowers am I holding?* Pull off separate petals and let children look at the flower parts with/without a hand lens. Explain that each petal is a flower in a dandelion. (The curly yellow pistil and stamen are clearly visible, along with the white fuzzy filaments at the base of each petal.)
- Pick and open an elongated, closed flower head and observe the seeds forming. (Dandelion buds that have not yet flowered are rounder.) The yellow petals will have wilted and the seeds are clearly visible at the base of the long white filaments. The seeds are green at first but then turn dark brown.
- Find and examine the fuzzy seed. Find the seed at the base of each white filament. Each petal flower has become a seed. Let children blow seeds. The wind helps some plants to spread its seeds. Look at the dandelion leaves. The word dandelion is French for lion's tooth, named after the leaf's resemblance.
- *Now that we have dug up this plant to investigate, what should we do so that it can continue to grow?*

Investigate Trees

⌚ 10 minutes

- *Have all the trees leafed out? Do some trees have new young leaves and some full size leaves? What do young, new leaves look and feel like?*
- Look for flowers and or seeds on different trees. *How are they alike, how are they different?*
- Look for any acorns that may have begun to spout. *Is this a seed? Will it grow? What will it grow into? How many kindergarten students will it take to give an oak tree a hug – measuring the "stem" of the tree?*
- Examine a conifer. *Can you find the seeds hidden inside their cones?*
- *Do trees and wildflowers have the same plant parts?*

Animal Explorations

⌚ 10 minutes

- *What animals or animal signs can we find? Look for ants and ant hills, grasshoppers, crickets, spiders and spider webs, beetles and ladybugs, bees, butterflies, dragonflies, spittle bugs (white bubbles on the stem of a wildflower).*
- Look for worm castings (worm poop). *Where were the worms all winter?*

Wrap Up

⌚ 2-3 minutes

- *What did you discover about changes to plants and animals in the spring?*

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

Rev. 8/23/14/