

Lesson Plan: Local species of plants

Unit connections to curriculum

Big Ideas:

- Plants and animals have observable features
- Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things

Curricular Content:

- Basic needs of plants and animals
- Adaptations of local plants and animals
- Local First Peoples uses for plants and animals
- Weather changes
- Seasonal changes
- Living things make changes to accommodate daily and seasonal cycles
- First Peoples knowledge of seasonal changes

Curricular competencies:

- Make exploratory observations using their senses
- Experience and interpret the local environment
- Discuss observations
- Represent observations and ideas by drawing charts and simple pictures
- Share observations and ideas orally
- Express and reflect on personal experiences of place

Introducing: (15 minutes)

- Invite children to explore provocations laid out at the tables as a group. Lay out different dried or fallen leaves from outside (salal, thimbleberry, salmonberry, blackberry, cedar) and prompt them to sort the leaves into groups that make sense.
- Explanation of expectations: We are being scientists, and scientists make observations about plants. I will know that you are a scientist when you make your leaves into groups that make sense, and can explain to me what you have noticed together.
- Circulate while children are working in small groups (3-4 children per group), encouraging them to share their thinking with one another and myself. Ask meaningful questions about why they have placed a certain leaf in a certain group. Reinforce related vocabulary for all learners, especially those who are ELL, such as the names for parts of the leaves or words to describe the textures and shapes students are noticing.
- Invite children to come and sit at the carpet for a community circle. Have an example of each type of local leaf taped to chart paper.

Developing: (30 minutes)

- Ask children to share with the circle anything that they have noticed about the leaves. What is different about the colours? The way they feel? The edges, or shapes? Are any of the leaves similar? As students share, scribe or use volunteer writers to record their observations.
- Explain to students that an important thing scientists do is record their observations, and that is what we are doing together.
- Assess prior knowledge by asking children to share if they recognize any of the leaves or can identify their names.
- Explain to students that these plants are all local and are all native species, meaning that they belong to our environment and community and weren't brought here by humans. Teach

the name of each leaf (use of visuals and physical object to support ELL students), clapping out syllables and using lots of repetition. Pass each leaf around as we talk about its name and anything we notice about it, reinforcing related vocabulary such as names for parts of the leaves, and descriptions of what we notice.

- Shoes and coats on, so we can head outside to find each of the leaves we have learned. Once in the forest/ trail area, invite students to search altogether for each leaf one at a time. When a group of students has found a leaf growing outside, call all the students over to examine it and reinforce its name and our observations about it.
- If students finish more quickly than expected, invite them to look for another plant that we haven't learned about together.

Closure: (10 minutes)

- Regroup into a circle outside, and place the basket of leaves we have collected in the center (from the first activity we did inside). Invite children to work together once more to sort the leaves into groups.
- Go through each group, asking children to explain their thinking and identify the name of the plant in that group.
- Reflect together that today we were scientists. What type of learning did we do that made us scientists? (Making observations, looking at plants outside, sorting objects into groups, talking about our thinking).
- Ticket to go play in the forest until the bell rings: Point to one of the leaf groups and tell me its name.