



Observation Hike

NGSS Standards: K-PS3-1, K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3

Level: Kindergarten-2nd grade

Time: 45 minutes to 60 minutes

Objectives:

1. Students will test their 5 senses to better observe nature.
2. Students will understand the definition of habitat.
3. Students will learn the needs of both plants and animals.

Materials:

- 25 hand magnifiers
- 3 smell jars (vanilla, coffee, lavender)
- 3 sound jars (salt, rocks, paper)
- 3 touch jars (cotton, rocks, sweet gum seed pod)
- Starburst candy jar

Pre-Activities:

Art with Leaves: <https://kindernature.org/activity/art-with-leaves/>

Learning the 5 Senses: <http://idahoptv.org/sciencetrek/topics/senses/facts.cfm>

Habitat Lesson: <https://www.havefunteaching.com/resource/science/animal-habitats-worksheet-matching/>

Procedure:

1. Students will test their 5 senses using the jars. Explain that this is a test, they will use their nose to smell, ears to hear, hands to touch, tongue to taste and eyes to see.
 - a. Begin with the smell jars; have students close their eyes and smell the jars one at a time. After each smell jar has had the chance to be sniffed, have the entire class make a hypothesis of what the smell was.
 - b. Repeat this process with the sound jars.

- c. Repeat this process with the touch jars.
 - d. Taste test with starburst. Have the students close their eyes while the teacher hands out one starburst per student. The students will keep their eyes closed and unwrap the candy and place it in their mouth. The students should guess the flavor of the candy without looking at the color of the wrapper (cherry, strawberry, orange, or lemon). After they have guessed they can look at the color of the wrapper to verify they were correct or incorrect.
 - e. Observation is not just seeing, it is using all 5 senses to take in information around you.
2. Observation helps us learn about habitats.
 - a. Habitats: the natural home or environment of an animal, plant or other organism.
 - b. Habitats provide food, water, shelter and space.
 - c. Tell students by using skills like observation they can discover what kinds of animals and plants are living in different habitats. Looking for signs like animal tracks, scat, and nests will help students identify the diversity of living things in habitats.
 3. Observation hike around the school/park
 - a. Rules:
 - i. Respect the teacher, your peers, habitat and scientific tools (hand lens).
 - ii. “When your feet are moving your mouth is closed.” Have students repeat.
 - iii. Remain in a line
 - iv. Leave the habitat better than you found it.
 - b. Distribute hand lens (magnifying glasses) to students after the rules are agreed upon and begin the Observation Hike!
 - c. Use inquiry to test their senses: Does the air smell different outside versus in school? Does this tree bark feel different than this tree bark? Can you spot any nests? Is there any evidence of animals here (tracks or scat-poop)?

Post-Activities & Resources:

1. Have students draw what they found on their observation hike.
2. Have students try a nature scavenger hunt.

<https://oregonforests.org/content/k-12-resources>

<https://www.washcoll.edu/live/files/4272-whats-that-habitat>

Interactive Quiz! <https://quizlet.com/8mbwrv?x=1qqt&i=30m886>