

Seeing Green

Lesson Sequence and Description

The Seeing Green Program is designed for both PreK and K students. For the PreK students there is a pre-post visit activity (*Activity 1: Sensory Observations*) that allows them to compare different sensory observations in the classroom, playground, and Garden. The pre-visit part of the lesson focuses on reviewing the five human senses and recording observations in the classroom and playground using these senses. In the visit to Garden in the Woods, students will explore a natural setting using their senses, observe living and nonliving things at the Garden, and begin to look beyond “a wall of green” to see individual plant parts and learn their functions. Students will use observational skills—touch, hearing, sight and smell to notice different parts of a natural setting. When returning from their visit, the post-visit part of the lesson asks student to record their sensory observations and to compare their observations across the three settings—noticing similarities and differences.

Since there are different standards at the PreK and K grades, *Activity 2: Plants Growing* is provided as a post-visit activity for Kindergarten students. The goals of this activity are to (1) reinforce the plant parts and functions that were covered in the Garden visit, and (2) help students recognize that plants grow and change over time. It is often difficult for children to recognize that plants move as they grow because it happens so slowly they cannot directly see the movement. The video in this lesson will help children to actually see plants growing.

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PreK Pre- and Post-Visit Activity

Activity 1: Sensory Observations

Materials Needed

Poster paper for three classroom charts:

Observations of our Classroom (man-made indoor space)

Observations of our Playground (man-made outdoor space)

Observations from Garden in the Woods (naturalized space)

Overview

Prior to going to the Garden, have the students practice using their senses (minus taste) to make observations of their environments. This is an opportunity to review or introduce the 5 human senses and how making careful observations using those senses is the most important part of what a scientist does. You will want to have three charts labeled noted above where you can record the students' observations. See the examples at the end of this activity.

Procedure

1. Tell the students that they are going to practice using their senses to make observations in different places (classroom, school yard, Garden in the Woods) so they can compare what is similar and what is different in each location.
2. Review or introduce the 5 human senses (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste).
3. Have the children use each of their senses around the classroom (explain why taste isn't being used due to safety) to make observations to share with their classmates. You can make this a fun experience by planting interesting textures around the classroom, introducing new sounds and smells. Have the students try to isolate one sense at a time—closing ears, eyes, holding nose, touching with their elbow instead of their hands—to see how these tweaks change any of their observations.
4. The same with some outdoor area near the school. However, it would be best if the outside observation area was not manipulated, so the children can make a fair comparison to what they observe during their visit to the garden. Though closing their eyes while focusing on listening could be interesting in this context too.

Grade: PreK-K

Guiding Question

By using our senses, what do we observe that is similar and different between our classroom and outside?

Timing 10-15 minutes

MA STE Standards addressed in lesson

PreK-LS1-2(MA): Explain that most animals have five senses they use to gather information about the world around them.

PreK-LS1-3(MA): Use their five senses in their exploration and play to gather information.

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PreK Pre- and Post-Visit Activity

- Record observations for each of their senses in each context on a poster in the classroom. **After the Garden in the Woods visit** record observations on the poster.
- Discuss with the children differences and similarities they see across contexts to answer the *Guiding Question*.

Observation Chart Examples of things children might notice:

Observations of our Classroom

Sight	Sound	Touch	Smell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bright colors - Lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buzz of the lights - Doors shutting - Chairs moving on the floor - Bells - Paper shuffling - Laughter/talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smooth surface of tables/chairs - Rough surface of carpet - Squishy toys - Hard wooden toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Markers - Crayons - Snacks - Glue

Observations of our Playground

Sight	Sound	Touch	Smell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playground toys - Asphalt - Wood chips - Grass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laughter/talk - Squeak of swings - Wind blowing - Clanking - Banging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cold, hard metal - Soft grass/soil - Rough wood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grass - Asphalt

Observations of Garden of the Woods

Sight	Sound	Touch	Smell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green leaves - Flower colors - Birds - Mushrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Birds singing - Wind in leaves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fuzzy leaves - Rough tree bark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Earth - Flowers