

ESLI Intro Lesson

Eco-Schools Topic:

Healthy Living
School Grounds
Healthy Schools

Objective: Students will:

- Practice observation skills
- Learn about the history of their county's landscape
- Go outside
- Get to know their surroundings better
- Develop their sense of place

Key Questions, Attitudes, and Behaviors to teach:

- Preserving nature in my community is important to me
- I like to spend time outside

Format: Small groups; 2 rotations, 15-20 minutes each

Grade Level: Grades 1-8

Prep: None

Time: One hour

Materials:

- Coloring Supplies
- White Paper
- Clipboards or something to write on
- Staplers or hole punch
- Yarn if using a hole punch
- Scissors for students
- Paper lunch bags
- Glue sticks or glue
- Creative supplies for observation book (stickers, pom poms, googly eyes, etc.)
- Print *Sense of Place* story



Engaging Intro (15 minutes)

- Introduce yourselves and the ESLI program
- Play a name game
- Set Rules and Expectations
 - Takes this opportunity **to set rules and expectations** for the year. Use a whiteboard and have the kids first list rules and expectations, then let an instructor fill in any forgotten rules (use **affirmative rules**- be nice to one another, be safe, be respectful, create a safe space, listen, be inclusive, don't yuck my yum, etc.)
- Split into smaller groups
 - Make Observation Journals: (15 minutes)
These journals can be used throughout the year for observations and can be kept at the SACC program.



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- Fold white paper to fit into journal:
 - Lay paper in portrait view
 - Fold in half from top to bottom
 - Cut along this fold
 - Fold paper halves in half from side to side so pages fit inside paper bag cover
- Give one paper bag per student to use as cover
- Staple or hole punch and tie pages and cover together
- Provide coloring and creative supplies to decorate bags, making sure the students' names are legible on the front cover
- Leave time to clean up.

Exploratory Activities (OUTSIDE) (40 minutes):
ROTATIONS (20 min at each station)

- ROTATION 1: Hug a Tree: (20 minutes)
 - Have students pair up and take turns leading each other blindfolded to a tree to feel/hug, then back to their beginning spot. Have guiding student place their hands on blindfolded student's shoulders to guide them. Based on their observations/senses of their mystery tree, blindfolded students should guess which trees they hugged.
 - MAKE SURE THEY ARE PLAYING IN A SAFE AREA AND MAKE STUDENTS AWARE OF ANY ROOTS/OBJECTS THAT COULD BE TRIPPED OVER.
 - Remind them: Take big slow steps, be aware of boundaries, be careful, lead someone the way you want to be led, get to tree, give them time to feel it
- ROTATION 2: Observation Station and Storytime (20 minutes):
 - Go over 5 senses with 5 finger trick (for younger kids)

<p>Thumb: Hearing</p> <p>Index finger: Sight</p> <p>Middle finger: Smell</p> <p>Ring finger: Taste</p> <p>Pinky: Touch</p>	
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- Story:
 - Have the kids close their eyes while you read the story on the next page or use another story about the history of your county, portraying what life here was like in the era that you choose.
 - This exercise is meant to develop a sense of place, appreciation for the land, and to start to develop a stewardship of the land (how each generation is borrowing the land). Use link below to help.
- Students choose a space outside, sit **by themselves** within **eyesight** of the instructor where they can draw their favorite part of their outdoor space or where they can observe trees, animals or plants.
 - Students can write down questions they might have (ex. What is this plant/tree/etc?)
 - Students can reflect on the story
 - If students cannot think of something to draw, suggest they draw what they wish was in their schoolyard.
 - Instructors: Provide students with coloring supplies, journal, and something to write on. Walk around and check in with kids. Make sure all students are within your sight!
- Afterward, you go around and share thoughts and then you can all together write a Declaration of Stewardship that students can sign and you can keep in the SACC room.

Meaningful Discussion: (5-10 minutes):

- Have students stay in small groups, circle back up and share out what they drew, observed and hope to get out of the year with ESLI.

Additional Links/ Resources: Fairfax County History:

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fcpos/fc_history.pdf



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Passage from “A Brief History of Fairfax County” by Donald Sweig

“THE FIRST PEOPLE to set foot upon what is now Fairfax County were native Americans, whom the Europeans later called Indians... The Indians of Fairfax lived very differently than people do today. They altered and adapted their way of life as the Ice Age passed (11,000-5,000 B.C.) and the environment became more habitable. By the time the Englishman Captain John Smith explored and mapped the lands bordering the Potomac River in 1608, the local Indians had been a settled agricultural people for almost two-thousand years. The Indians encountered by Smith grew corn, beans, squash, and tobacco; they also continued to hunt, to fish, and to gather nuts, berries, roots, and shellfish for subsistence. They lived along the many streams and rivers in Fairfax, especially the Occoquan and the Potomac. In 1608, the major tribe living in what is now Fairfax was the Dogue (from which we get Dogue Creek, etc.). Their main village... was located on or near the Occoquan, and was home for 135 to 170 Indians. They lived in longhouses, arbor-like structures of bent poles covered with bark or reed mats. Soon after the first Europeans settled in Fairfax, the Indians moved elsewhere. [The European settlers brought with them new diseases and wars. This caused many Natives to move away or die.] The English took over the village sites and fields; and practiced the new agricultural, hunting, and fishing skills the Indians had taught them. The native Americans had gone, but their heritage remained.” Think about all the people who inhabited that land that you sit on right now. [PAUSE]. We are all just borrowing the land.

Sweig, Donald. “A Brief History of Fairfax County.” *Heritage Resources Information Series: Number 1* (February 1995): 1-2. Web. 30 August 2017. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fcpos/fc_history.pdf>.



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