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Quick & Easy Habitat Education Activities

Ethnobotany Story

Developed by Heidi Bohan/ Starflower Foundation

Fourth Grade 4-9
45-60 Minutes
Outdoors

<p>Description: Students learn about native plants and their uses for food and shelter by Native Americans. Students use this knowledge to ‘survive’ while enacting an ethnobotany story.</p>	<p>Vocabulary Ethnobotany: <i>the plant lore of a people; the study of how people use plants</i></p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students understand that people use plants for food and shelter. • Students learn to identify native plants. • Students demonstrate that they have gained new knowledge about native plants and their uses. 	<p>Washington State EALRs Science 1.1.6 Understand characteristics of living organisms. Identify observable characteristics of living organisms. 3.3.4 Understand how humans and other living things depend on the natural environment. Describe what humans obtain from their environment. Geography 3.2.1b Describe how people adapt to their environment to meet basic human needs and concerns. Reading 1.1 Use word recognition and meaning to read and comprehend text. 1.2 Build vocabulary through reading. 2.1 Comprehend important ideas and details. Communication 1.2.1. Check for understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing.</p>
<p>Print Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘How-to-do Activity: Suggested Plants and their Uses’ • Master: ‘Ethnobotany Story’ • Images: ‘Ethnobotany- Food & Shelter’ <p>Kit Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foam core clipboards (if needed for taking field notes): 1 per student • ‘Starflower Plant ID’ cards for habitat area <p>Teacher supplied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of ‘Ethnobotany Story’: 1 per team, as needed • Student journals or paper and pencil: 1 per student • Optional: Fresh Oregon grape branch showing bright yellow inner bark 	

<p>Before activity: Go to habitat area and select plants to use for this activity (see ‘How to do Activity’). Set up ‘plant stations’ and organize images and artifacts. Gather a small piece of fresh Oregon grape branch if including this plant (use Gathering Ethics: only harvest 1 out of 20 in a healthy population). Select ‘Starflower Plant ID’ cards of the plants you will be using for this activity.</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring students to habitat area and gather together. Discuss, “We have been learning how native plants provide habitat for wildlife. Today we are going to learn about how native plants provide habitat for people. Native Americans lived in this land for thousands of years and they made their houses, ate foods, used medicine and made clothing and containers from the plants that grow in this habitat for their survival.” • State that, “Today we are going to learn some of these uses, and then you will see if you can remember how to use this new knowledge for your own habitat needs”. Tell students that they will be shown many different plants, and be told their uses. It will be important to remember these uses for their personal ‘survival story’. Tell student they may use their journals or paper to record information that might be useful for survival. • Lead students from one ‘plant station’ to the next. At each ‘station’ show related image or plant part that is relevant to the story (see ‘How-to-do Activity’). Encourage students to take notes, ask questions, touch plants, etc. Show students key characteristics for identification (use ‘Starflower Plant ID’ cards) and emphasize the plant names. • Gather students together. Select from the following approaches to the ‘Ethnobotany Story’; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (Short version): Tell students you are going to read them an ethnobotany story’ and they will need to show you the plant or plants that best meet the need described for the story element. Read story and pause after each story element question. Ask students to point out the correct plant and give its name. Challenge students further by taking them to a different area than originally visited, and see if they can recognize the plant in a different setting. ○ (Long version): Form students into teams. Pass out ‘Ethnobotany Story’ to each team and have them read and answer each story element in their journals, using the correct plant name (label answers with a-j to correspond with the story elements). Assist students by using ‘Starflower Plant ID’ cards or personal knowledge to provide correct names. As the teams finish, have them show the plants in the habitat. • Student journals: Write from memory the survival story and the plants used to survive in this story. Create a new story incorporating the plants and their uses learned during this activity. • Follow this activity immediately with the ‘Ethnobotany Foods’ activity.
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