

Home, Sweet Home

(Birds: post-lesson)



Audubon Center
of the North Woods

Purpose: Students draw a map of the school yard and practice their observation skills through silent observation.

Concepts:

- Animals use the schoolyard as habitat.
- Habitat is a place where an animal can find food, water, shelter and space.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to

- Use a map of the observation site and mark where things are spotted.
- Make notes about what they see.

Minnesota Academic Standards:

- Science:
 - 5.1.3.4.1 Use appropriate tools and techniques in gathering, analyzing and interpreting data.
 - 5.1.3.4.2 Create and analyze different kinds of maps of the student's community and of Minnesota.

For Background Information see end of lesson

CLASS LENGTH: 45 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR

AGES: 5TH TO 8TH GRADE

SEASON: ANY

SAFETY: NONE

MATERIALS: BLANK PAPER, WRITING UTENSILS, CLIPBOARDS

OPTIONAL MATERIALS: BIRD FIELD GUIDES

PRE-CLASS PREP: A LOCATION FOR THE OUTSIDE PORTION SHOULD BE CHOSEN

CLASS OUTLINE: (Class sequence of events)

- I. Spot the Changes - 10 min.
- II. Draw a schoolyard map - 15 min.
- III. Silent observation – 10 min.
- IV. Discussion – 10 min.

I. Introduction (10 min.)

- A. Lesson Preview** – Kids, especially, always want to know what comes next. Write a brief preview of the class schedule, on the whiteboard. This will decrease how many times they ask you what comes next during the class.
- B. Grabber** – Start the class with an activity called *Spot the Changes*. This activity tests the observational skills of students.
- Pair the students up and have them stand in 2 lines facing each other.
 - Tell the students that they have 45 seconds to memorize how their partner looks.
 - At the end of 45 seconds, have the students turn so their backs are to each other.
 - Each student should now change 3 things about themselves (tucking in their shirt, changing their hair, taking off glasses etc).
 - When everyone is done “changing” have the students turn back to face their partner and try to name the changes.
 - At the end, ask a few questions about the activity (Was it hard or easy? What techniques did they use?).

II. Class Experiences (25-30 min.)

A. Draw a map (10 min)

1. Begin this activity by telling students that they are going to draw a map of the schoolyard (or whatever location the teacher has chosen in advance). If students are familiar with the location, this can be done inside or outside. If a new location is chosen, then students can draw the map outside.
2. Pass out clipboards, blank paper and writing utensils to students.
3. Tell students to draw their map.

B. Silent Journaling and Observation time (15 min)

1. Explain to students that they will be going outside and spreading out from classmates. While outside, students should draw on their map any birds (or other animals) that they see. Students can also write down notes about the critter – what does it look like? What behaviors are seen? (For this activity, it is not important that the students know what species they are observing but rather take the time to observe).
2. Have students take their map and a pencil and then find a spot to sit. (This activity can be shortened or lengthened depending on the students).

III. Conclusion (10 min)

A. Discuss what students observed.

- What wildlife was spotted?
- What behaviors were seen?
- Where were most of the animals seen?
- What can students do to help wildlife?

B. Answer questions and give positive feedback about session

- C. Transitions** – Remind students about the birding activity and what they saw while in class at the Audubon. Relate today’s activities to the Audubon Center and day to day life.

IV. Authentic Assessment

- A.** Students should be able to answer questions about what they observed and different techniques they used to spot animals.

V. Extensions/Variations

1. Students can build/place bird feeders around the schoolyard. There are many simple bird feeders that student could make such as cutting a hole in the side of a milk carton and placing seed in the bottom.
2. Have students repeat the activity at home. The 2 maps can be compared – were different species spotted? Behaviors different?
3. Use field guides to identify some of the animals spotted.

VI. Background Information

Birds are found on all 7 continents and in a wide variety of habitats. Like all plants and animals, birds need a habitat that provides food, water, shelter and space. Each type of bird has different requirements. For example, an Osprey requires a diet of fish and lives near water. On the other hand, a warbler eats seeds and is found in a wide variety of habitats. By observing animals, we can learn a lot about their habits such as where they live, what they eat, how they catch food etc. This is all important information that can help us understand our surroundings better. This activity encourages students to use observations skills in an everyday environment.

VII. References

- *Home, Sweet Home*. Flying Wild. First Edition. Pages134-137