

Tips for Teachers Using Nearby Nature from Home in Remote Learning Plans

Key Components of a Four Winds Lesson

Introduction

- Use a virtual morning meeting to introduce the topic of the month and share some background information
- The puppet show could be performed at this meeting
- An artifact or photograph relating to the lesson could be shared to offer an intro to the topic
- If the lesson has a slide show (provided by Four Winds) it could be shared
- Your Four Winds volunteers could lead one or more of these activities to stay connected with the class; in this case, you will want to be present to help manage students (muting/unmuting, etc.)

Science Exploration

- Encourage students to go outside for the outdoor exploration segments of the lesson
- Offer parameters: with an adult, in keeping with the rules for outdoor exploration of your household, or based on school guidelines
- Use core routines to enhance this time outside (ex: sit spots, observation, etc.)
- Encourage students to explore the areas accessible to them: yard, neighborhood, natural space they can access with their family, etc.

Reflective Sharing

- Have students take pictures, draw, find artifacts (as appropriate), create a map, etc. to share at a virtual class meeting
- Collect student work and compile to share as a slideshow at a class meeting
- Use an interactive online platform (e.g., google doc, flipgrid, etc.) to allow students to share and comment on their classmates' findings/creations
- Encourage further exploration—what questions/I wonders came out of the lesson (or activity)? Where can you/or we as a class find the answers? What would you like to learn more about?
- Have students keep a nature journal (could be made at home) to compile their observations, drawings, questions.
- Offer reflective prompts for a writing opportunity (ex: "I noticed that insects...." "I learned that beavers...." "I discovered....while exploring a rotting log.")
- Offer opportunities for creative writing (ex: create a haiku based on the lesson topic)
- Volunteers could also be involved here, for example, compiling student photos for a slideshow and presenting it, etc.

Other Considerations

- If a family has children in multiple grades, they could do the activities/explorations together before their respective class meetings.
- Extend the lesson by incorporating the theme into books you might read to the class (see suggestions included in the lesson) or videos you show
- Offer a google doc for posting mystery photos of things kids encounter on explorations. Can classmates help identify?
- Depending how many activities/explorations from the lesson you hope to use, consider sharing them piece by piece rather than all in one large chunk.
- For children without access to technology, an intro to the topic can be provided by performing the puppet show at home. The page of finger puppets and script could be printed at school and sent home with other work (links are included in the lesson). Activities can be shared in hard copy via whatever mechanism is being used to deliver assignments/materials. Children could return their products (drawings, writing, etc.) with work for other classes via the system they are already using.

