

Saint John's Outdoor University Field Trip Overview

Sensory Exploration

Objective: Students will explore and describe the living and non-living components of the natural systems (prairie and forest) using observation skills. Students will also investigate trees through exploration by identifying parts and the relationship between trees and animals. Students will demonstrate how to stay safe while exploring, how to respect their environment, and understand that nature is not just a place they visit, but that it also exists all around them every day.

Field Activities:

Rainbow Chips: Students will explore the natural world and all the colors it contains. Students will match color swatches with living and non-living components of the prairie or forest.

Owl and Mouse Game: Students will play a role-playing game mimicking an animal's life and how they use their senses to either find food or not get eaten.

Dozen Senses: Students will collect materials from the prairie that stimulate their senses. Students will gather their materials, examine them up close, sort them based on living or non-living, then share with the large group what was discovered.

Listen Up!: Students will use their sense of hearing to discover things in nature that may otherwise go unnoticed. By stopping and listening without interruption, students will be able to uncover noises in nature that are often missed.

Tree Rings, Hugs and Song: Students will observe trees in many different ways, including determining how old trees are using a scientific method, how big trees are using an estimation method, and the parts of a tree through a song.

Nature Explorer Connections: All students have the ability to be nature explorers. Nature explorers **respect** the natural world, **observe** using their senses, and **wonder** by asking questions about their observations.

Respect – Ways we will demonstrate respect:

- What lives in nature, stays in nature. We will not take anything home with us.
- Some plants may be collected for observation, then returned to nature.

Observe – Observational activities included in field trip:

- After observing the forest, students' descriptions of the forest will be written down and brought back to classroom to be compared with the other student's descriptions.
- Observation games will be included throughout the field trip.

Wonder – Sample questions that may be discussed:

- What are the parts of a tree?
- What does a prairie look like? What does a forest look like?
- What makes something living?
- How do we use each of our senses to explore in nature?
- How else could you sort the objects in your collection tray, besides living versus non-living?
- What would be the result if there were no more trees in the forest?
- How are living things connected to non-living things in nature?

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards addressed and focused on during activities:

Strand	Code	Benchmark
SCIENCE		
1. The Nature of Science and Engineering	0.1.1.2.1	Use observations to develop an accurate description of a natural phenomenon and compare one's observations and descriptions with those of others.
4. Life Science	0.4.2.1.1	Observe a natural system or its model, and identify living and nonliving components in that system.