

Hope Mountain Centre for Outdoor Learning

Forest Ecology Program

Curriculum Overview

Learning Outcomes — Students will be able to;

- Understand key concepts such as “photosynthesis”, “ecology”, and “symbiosis”.
- Understand how trees grow, and their secret connections with fungi and animals.
- Identify several trees and plants in a coastal forest.
- Recognize several plants that provide food, medicine, and tools.

Pre-Trip — Build vocabulary, establish key concepts, build anticipation.

- **In-Class Presentation.** A program called “Forests, Fungi, and Flying Squirrels” will demonstrate forest ecology using dramatic props, costumes, and games.
- **Colouring exercise.** Students will reinforce the forest ecology lesson with colouring and exercises provided by the naturalist.
- **Fieldtrip expectations.** The naturalist will inform the students of what they’ll be doing and where they’ll be going during the outdoor field trip, with tips regarding clothing and footwear.

Fieldtrip — Experiential learning; demonstrate vocabulary and concepts with direct experience.

- **Hike a Local Forest Trail.** Students will explore a trail near their community, looking at trees, shrubs, herbs, ferns, and mosses along the trail.
- **Close observation.** Students will be given clip boards, drawing paper, and pencils and shown how to recognize key features of a plant, including flowers, fruit, leaf patterns, and bark. Drawing will help them remember what they see.
- **Wildlife.** Local wildlife and their forest habitat will be noted along the trail.

Post-Trip — Reinforce vocabulary and key concepts, students investigate further and present their knowledge to the class. These activities are teacher-driven, with support from the naturalist.

- **Research Report.** Students can choose a plant or animal that they learned about on the fieldtrip, investigate the topic, and present it to class.
- **Artwork Project.** Students can use 3-dimensional models, drawing, painting, or collage to illustrate the forest environment and some of the animals found there.
- **Stewardship activity.** Garbage clean-up along a local trail.



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