

EarthWorks Orchard Curriculum

Field Guide Introduction

Grade(s): 4-8	Topic: Field Guide, Seasons, Plant Life Cycle	Season: Any
Timing: 45 to 60 minutes, including 10 minutes expectations & safety, 15 minute introduction, 15 to 40 minute outdoor exploration and field guide brainstorm, and 5 minute conclusion		
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students can summarize the rules and expectations of Outdoor Classroom use• Students begin to assume the role of a nature detectives, looking more closely at nature and noticing details• Students help create a feeling of community with teachers in the Outdoor Classroom• Students begin to explore and learn about the orchard and how they can be stewards of it, and begin classifying materials found in it• Students can explain what a field guide is and list some of the information a person might find in a field guide and different ways one might be organized• Students help to develop a plan for class/school field guide		
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examples of field guides, such as <i>Peterson's Field Guides</i>• Rulers• Measuring tape• Camera• <i>Field Guide</i> worksheets (1 and/or 2)• Colored Pencils• Compass• Thermometer• Magnifiers glasses and/or boxes		
Prep Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create species ID sheets for common schoolyard tree, plant, or animal species you would like your class to concentrate on, and mark them in your field guides so they are easier to find		
Degree of Need for Extra Teacher or Parent Helper: Medium		
Journal Prompt: What is important for us to include in our Orchard Field Guide?		
Lesson Sequence: Expectations & Safety: (10 Minutes) Outdoor learning can be powerful or it can be chaos. To avoid chaos, you must make your expectations very clear. Remember, be firm in the beginning and you will have fewer discipline problems as the year progresses. Here are some important points to be sure you include: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. You will be taking the class outdoors when the weather allows it.2. They need to wear outdoor clothing when going outside.3. When the class goes outside it is not recess. All classroom rules apply. (Have them go over what the classroom rules are.)4. Have the children come up with a list of other rules. If they participate in this process, the rules will have meaning to them. Be sure to mention the five senses, and that in each		

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lesson, you will let them know which senses to use in order to be safe with themselves and each other, AS WELL AS with the things they find residing outside.

5. Differentiate between picking and observing – there will be times for each. Introduce the rule of 100. When we are picking, we pick only items that you can see at least another 12 of, so that we are sure to always be leaving some for other people, animals, and plants to use and enjoy.
6. Talk about treating materials with respect, like the gloves we will be using today.
7. **Bee respect:** Introduce/remind students that bees are not mean or bad but that they only sting when they are scared or mad. Ask the students what might happen if a bee is flying near them and they start screaming and waving their arms around. (Chances are the bee will get mad or scared and will sting.) The thing to do to avoid being stung is to stand still. Ask the children to repeat after you – “See a bee, be a tree.” If you are standing still like a tree, a bee isn’t likely to sting you.
8. Summarize: RESPECT. Respect for oneself (comfortable clothing), each other (listening, staying close, not interrupting, not pushing...), and plants and animals (no grabbing, pulling off, ripping, breaking...). Anyone who can’t follow these rules will have to leave the outdoor classroom

Introduction (15 minutes)

A big part of the field guide idea/project is to indulge what students find themselves drawn to in the schoolyard, so everything “planned” should take the backseat to an inspiration that strikes.

Talk with students about what a field guide is. Show them the examples. Ask if they have ever used one before and/or how they think (or have experienced) that they are useful. A field guide is meant to provide more information about the resources of a particular place, so brainstorm a list of the resources in the schoolyard. Explain that the goal of the field guides WE will be making is to create as complete a picture as possible of the schoolyard, so that in the future people can know what to find in it as well as learn about the way it changes.

Remind students that the field guide will be as complete *as possible* but that there will be things that are left out, or will be added in later. A field guide is never 100% accurate though, and that’s perfectly OK. Explain that for them, this will mean compromises about what we do and don’t study.

The field guide might (and hopefully will) include any of the following “non-traditional” items:

- Poetry
- Artwork
- Recipes
- Stories
- Personal histories

Exploration of Schoolyard (15 – 40 minutes, depending on class length)

Take students out into the schoolyard and tell them that although it is a familiar place, they need to view it with new eyes. Tell them to pay attention to EVERY DETAIL and think about how they would explain it to someone who had never seen it before. What would be important to mention? What is less relevant? Ask them to think about where they would like to start? Should we make a rough outline of the ENTIRE schoolyard or start with a smaller area in more detail?

Take some basic measurements/data

- Trees
 - o Fruiting
 - o Deciduous
 - o Coniferous
 - o Heights
- Other plants
 - o Varieties
 - o Stage in life cycle at this date
 - o Colors
 - o Shapes
- Area
- Structures
- Uses
- Personal histories

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Depending on what is in the schoolyard, present options for food preparation or art project involving the plants in the schoolyard. Remind students that the *idea* behind a field guide is to offer an explanation of what a place can be used for, so every time we think of or create a use for the schoolyard we are adding to the wealth of knowledge of the field guide.

Vocabulary

Categorize
Field Guide
Reference
Species

Vocabulario

Clasificar
Especie
Guía de Campo
Referencia

Extensions / Homework Ideas:

- Pick more specific locations to feature in the field guide and have students do stream of consciousness writing or drawing for 5 – 10 minutes.
- Select a particular plant for each student to observe in detail for the Field Guide over the course of the year (see *Orchard Trees Through the Seasons* lesson). Have students make guesses about how it will change in the coming months.
- Take a sensory tour of the schoolyard and have students select to observe with only ONE sense, then ask them to write about what they noticed.