

INDEPENDENT FIELD TRIP FOR GRADES K-2



This independent field trip can be completed during any 1+ hour hike on the Whitefish Trail, other local trails, or even in your backyard!

Kindergarten - 2nd graders will practice spelling, writing, math, critical thinking, and use their imagination while they explore their local trails and forest through hands-on interactive lessons, games, and activities with their family or caregivers.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Something to use as a blindfold (handkerchief, scarf), string/yarn/ribbon, scissors, paper and pencil. Optional: magnifying glass.

EXPLORATION: ABC SCAVENGER HUNT

DIRECTIONS: Search the layers of the forest/trees for things in nature that start with each letter and move through the whole alphabet while you hike. To make it more challenging, look for shapes on trees and in branches or roots that make each letter.

OBSERVATION: MEET A TREE

DIRECTIONS: Find an area with several trees. Blindfold one person and spin them around several times. Then carefully lead them up to one of the trees. Have them observe the tree using their senses other than sight.

Try to observe: How big is the tree? What does the bark feel like? What does it smell like? Is there anything growing on the tree? Do you feel branches or just trunk? Does it have leaves or needles?

Then, carefully lead the observer back to where they started, spin them around several more times and remove their blindfold. Have them guess which tree they met based on their observations.

PLAY: PICK UP STICKS

DIRECTIONS: Gather sticks together of similar size in a mixed pile. Each person takes a turn trying to remove a stick from the bottom without moving other sticks. If any sticks move they lose their turn until after the other players take their turn. Players try to collect the most sticks.

PROCESS: FOREST POET-TREE

DIRECTIONS: Think about your time exploring the trail: what you saw, what you did, how you felt. Then, using your pencil and paper write a poem about your experience! To make it more challenging, make it a haiku with three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables.

DISCOVERY: STUMP HOTEL

DIRECTIONS: Find a stump or a fallen log and imagine it is a full-service hotel for forest critters. Discover up close (using magnifying glass if you brought one) what is happening on this stump.

Questions to consider: Is anything growing on or in the stump? What insects can you find? Why do you think this tree fell, died, or was cut down? Does it have holes? Who made the holes and why? What sources of food for critters are there? Where can critters hide and sleep in the stump? What do you think is happening to the stump? What will it look like next year?

Get creative and make a home or nest in the stump using natural materials.

CREATIVITY: STICK MOBILE OF SIZES

DIRECTIONS: Cut a long piece of string/yarn/ribbon. Find 3 sticks of similar length. Keep one its full length, break the second in half, and break the third into quarters. Try to make different combinations of the broken sticks to equal the length of the full stick.

Then, using one long piece of yarn/twine and simple knots, create a balanced mobile. Start by finding the center of each length of stick. At the top of your string, start by tying a knot around the center of a 1/4 length stick. A few inches down add a 1/2 length stick, then a few inches below that, the full length stick. Repeat with another 1/2 length stick and 1/4 length stick. Your goal is to balance each stick so they lay horizontally when the string is hung vertically. Add any other decorations you find in the forest to your mobile, like leaves, pine cones, or feathers. Take it home to hang inside or outside of your home!