

Classroom extension activities to do before and after first arboretum field trip (Spring)

Before and after your first field trip to the Arboretum have conversations with children about the trip (see plans for pre and post-visit discussions). Some ideas for these conversations include:

- ❖ Use the Arboretum photos in the packet to talk with children about the Arboretum
- ❖ Talk with them about what they will see and do/what they saw and did
- ❖ Make a list of living things they think they will see/they did see
- ❖ Address any fears they may have (there are no bears at the Arboretum!)
- ❖ Talk about Spring and signs of Spring they may see/have seen
- ❖ Address safety issues for field trips

Ideas for related extension activities to do with children before and after the first field trip (Spring). Begin with outdoor experiences and then introduce indoor activities.

Outdoor experiences

Support children to:

- ❖ Notice and describe trees and other outdoor plants and their parts; trunks, branches, stems, leaves, and flowers. Draw them.
- ❖ Visit a florist or plant store and look at, discuss, and compare/contrast different types of plants. Take a notebook with you and jot down children's observations.
- ❖ Look for birds, squirrels, insects, worms, and snails in and around trees and other plants, and look for evidence that these creatures have visited.
- ❖ Notice and describe the physical characteristics and behavior of creatures they find. Draw the creatures and write down their observations.
- ❖ Talk about interesting questions like "How are the leaves on this tree the same or different as the leaves on the other tree?" and "How do you think this creature is using the plant?"

Indoor experiences

Support children to:

- ❖ Make a leaf collection. Sort and categorize leaves by size and shape.
- ❖ Observe leaves with magnifiers and draw them. Label drawings by where you found the leaves and what trees they came from.
- ❖ Collect seeds from different fruits; compare and categorize them by physical characteristics.
- ❖ Plant bean seeds indoors in moist paper towels. Observe for sprouting and think/talk about the parts children notice as they appear.
- ❖ Keep a plant journal and make observational drawings of growing plants over time. Label the parts with words like seed, root, stem, and leaf.
- ❖ Compare and contrast indoor plants and plant parts to plants found outdoors.
- ❖ Read books about spring and growing things (see resource list.)