

ABC Nature Walk

Outdoor / Indoor Activity

Curriculum: Literacy, Science, Art, Wellness



During this nature walk, students discover elements of nature that represent letters of the alphabet. For example, A is for ant, B is for bud. Through journaling or photographs, student discoveries are captured for further reflection and learning extensions.

Materials:

- Writing journals
- pencil, crayons, pencil crayons
- camera (optional)
- various reference guides (flowers, trees, birds, insects)
- paper

Instructions:

- Divide your students into small working groups of 2-3 students. Assign each group 2-3 letters ensuring all letters of the alphabet are used and difficult letters are spread out amongst the groups.
- Take your students out for a nature walk in a local park or nearby natural area. An hour walk is ideal but can easily be shortened or lengthened based on available time.

- Challenge your students to find anything in nature that starts with their letter. Provide a few examples to get them started. For example, D is for dandelion or F is for Fairy Slipper Orchid. Students will naturally become curious about the specific names of their observations. If you have a few guidebooks, you can try to sleuth this out together; otherwise, keep it general.
- Students can write and sketch their discoveries in their journal. Alternatively, if you have cameras, they can also take pictures of their findings.
- Have each group present their findings.
- Reflect on and celebrate the diversity of lifeforms students discovered (plants, insects, animals etc.). In the classroom, provide time for students to create a poster for one of their assigned letters. Have them draw a picture to accompany their letter.
- Promote numeracy and have students sort student posters into identifiable groups. Many options exist, for example, sort by colour, species or size (smallest to biggest).
- Compile all student posters to create a classroom alphabet book or tape them to your classroom wall, creating your personal classroom alphabet line.

Learning Extension – Research a Discovery

Promote student literacy by providing time and resources for them to research their nature/alphabet discovery. Have students incorporate 1-2 pieces of information on their discovery to their alphabet poster.

Discussion:

Spending time in nature and observing “nature neighbours” supports student awareness of whom they share their world. When students learn names of their “nature neighbours”, this fosters a relationship with the plants, animals, insects and others they discover supporting a deeper awareness of Alberta’s biodiversity.