Family Forest Night Lesson Plan

Activity Title: Seed Sock Hop  Topic: Seed Dispersal
Presenter’s name: Kerri Lynne Roepke  Age group: K-2

Sources consulted:

Objectives
Students will be able to:
1. Define “seed.”
2. Discover different kinds of seeds outside.
3. Explain why it’s better for seeds to get away from the parent plant.
4. Name 3 seed “get-aways”----wind, fur/feathers, hitchhikers, being eaten (coming out as ‘scat’)
5. List what plants need to grow.

List of Materials Needed:
Wool socks, plastic bags, seed hunt or bingo cards, newsprint, markers
Fresh fruits & vegetables with seeds: apples, berries, tomatoes, peppers, bananas, oranges, plum, cherry, etc.

Introduction: (5 min) Introduce self and tell what department and major and give examples of the kinds of jobs people do with your degree.

Today, we will be learning about seeds.

- What is a seed? A package containing all that is needed to grow another plant just like the one that the seed came from. Seeds are very important in order to grow new trees in the forest, grass in the field, vegetables in the garden, flowers. Seeds are needed to grow all new plants!
- Where do seeds come from? They start out as flowers in the spring/summer, and grow into seeds in the fall.
- What do seeds need to grow? Water, sun, space, soil, ‘vitamins’ (nutrients)
- How do seeds spread? Seeds can be spread in many different ways: wind, fur/feathers, being eaten by animals, floating on water. Seeds can get stuck on animals’ fur or feathers, or even stick to animals’ feet. Some seeds are so light, that they can fly for long distances with just a little bit of wind, or float in water.
- Why do seeds need to “get away?” So they have enough water, sun, space, soil, and ‘vitamins’ (nutrients) to grow….if they are too close to the parent plant, they may not get enough.

Activities

Seed Sock Hop: (15 min) Ask students: “Can seeds can travel? How?” Tell them to put on the socks to do the Seed Sock Hop. Make sure that a parent is accompanying each child or group of children and send them into the forest to walk around and pick up seeds with their socks. Compare sock material for effectiveness and discuss how animals have different kinds of fur and pads on their feet. TIP: If the socks don’t pick up many seeds, wrap masking tape around the feet or hands.

Seed Hunt: (20 min)
The children will look for seeds…some travel by attaching to animals, eaten, or are scattered by the wind. They will try to collect all of the different seeds from the seed hunt card. They should also be looking for bigger seeds...
such as acorns or pinecones and putting them into the plastic bags. On a newsprint page, make a bar chart of different seeds found and group by how they get away. Which did you find more of?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Fur or Animal Feet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Flying Contest: (10 min)_
The kids will then line up and see how far they can get the lightest seed they found to fly. They can blow on it and use their hands until their seed finally hits the ground.

_Let’s Eat Seeds! (10 min)_ Have children and parents sit in a circle. Pass around whole fruits and vegetables, so that every child has one. Have parents and children discuss where the seed is and the name of the fruit/vegetable. Have each child in the circle share their fruit/vegetable. Eat pre-cut samples of each fruit/vegetable!

**Learning Assessment** (5 min)
1. Define “seed.”
2. Discover different kinds of seeds outside.
3. Explain why it’s better for seeds to get away from the parent plant.
4. Name 3 seed “get-aways”----wind, fur/feathers, hitchhikers, being eaten (coming out as ‘scat’)
5. List what plants need to grow.

**Summary**
Seed dispersal is very important. A seed is the beginning of a new plant. Since plants do not move, there needs to be other ways to spread seeds so that seeds continue to be planted and grow. Tell them to ask their parents if they can plant a seed somewhere to see if it will grow.

**Extension:** sometime “weed” seeds that we don’t want, can travel the same way = invasive plants and animals.

OPTIONAL: plant grassheads or a bean seed in a cup of soil.

**Cleanup:** Be sure that the children remove all of the seeds from their socks, so you can easily reuse the socks.

**Safety Considerations:** Make sure that there are parents in each group of children walking around in the woods.
When you find a seed that fits, show it to your leader and they will put a star in the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A seed that travels in the WIND</th>
<th>A seed that STICKS to animal fur (or to our shoes &amp; socks!)</th>
<th>A seed head with LOTS of seeds (more than 20!)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A seed inside of a CONE</td>
<td>A seed BIRDS would like to eat</td>
<td>A seed inside of a FRUIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A seed that people can eat.</td>
<td>A seed that is COLORFUL</td>
<td>A seed an ANIMAL would like to eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If YOU were a SEED, would you want to be the kind that:

... blows in the wind?
... gets eaten by an animal?
... gets stuck on an animal’s feet?
... sticks to an animal’s fur?
... floats in the water?
Seed Scavenger Hunt

1. A seed that you can eat.
2. A seed carried by the wind.
3. A seed that sticks to an animal’s fur.
4. A seed head with more than 20 seeds on it.
5. A seed that animals might eat.