

Title of Lesson Plan	A Tale of Two Forests
Prepared By	Lisa Arcand
City and State	Falcon Heights, Minnesota
Grade Level(s)	Kindergarten
Keywords (subjects covered)	Habitat, diet, interdependent, snag, predator, prey
Brief Description	Children will compare two different forest pictures and engage in a dramatic arts activity to determine which forest could sustain more wildlife.
Total Time Required	30 minutes
Setting	Classroom with open area
Lesson Objectives/Goals	The children will learn that organisms are interdependent; they all depend on non-living components of the Earth. Altering the environment affects the life forms found in that habitat.
Materials Needed	Two large pictures of forests. One forest (Forest A) is quite dense with only tall Pine trees some with tassel heads and some with endemic branching. The picture should show minimal light and ground level plant growth. The other forest (Forest B) is a managed forest with diverse tree populations and ages of trees. Snags and rotting logs should be apparent. The picture should show light streaming in and ground cover, plants, and shrubs.
Standards Addressed	Kindergarten: 1. The student will raise questions about the natural world; 4. The student will understand that there are living and nonliving things.
Procedure	<p>This lesson requires a fair amount of background knowledge in order for the children to understand the interdependency of the natural world. Project Learning Tree (PLT) lessons that could help in this development are; Forest for Many Uses, We all Need Trees, To be a Tree, Trees as Habitat, Natures Recyclers, Every Tree for Itself, Web of Life, and The Fallen Log. This lesson ties many of those lessons together.</p> <p>Open up the lesson with this song, children will quickly catch on and join in.</p> <p>The Trees are Growing Tall by Beth Ruark Sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell" The trees are growing tall, (Raise hands over head) The trees are growing tall, With soil and rain and sunny days, The trees are growing tall.</p> <p>The tree are growing roots, (stomp feet)</p>

The trees are growing roots,
With soil and rain and sunny days,
The trees are growing roots.

The trees are growing branches, (extend arms to the sides)

The trees are growing branches,
With soil and rain and sunny days,
The trees are growing branches.

The trees are growing leaves, (flutter fingers)
The trees are growing leaves,
With soil and rain and sunny days,
The trees are growing leaves.

*We know that trees need sun, soil and water to be healthy. We also know that many plants and animals depend on trees and forests as part of their habitat. Let's take a look at these two pictures of forests. (Name one **Forest A** and the other **Forest B**.) What do you notice about these pictures? How are these forests the same? How are they different? If you were a bug, which forest would you want to live in? What if you were a fox, a rabbit, or a bird? What would make you prefer one forest over another? Today we are going to do an activity which will allow each of you children to act out a plant or an animal and some of you might act out two things. We are going to become these two forests. Some kids will be wildlife. (Begin choosing some children to be birds, squirrels, insects, a fox, rabbits, an owl, and mice.) The rest of us are going to be the trees. First we are going to act out Forest A. Let's look at the picture and see what we trees need to do. (Guide children to notice that the trees are very close together and then have the kids clump together similar to a group hug.) Now, let's see if we can get any animals in here. (Make the tree children stay snug together so there is very little room for animals to squeeze in. The kids will probably figure out that the birds and squirrels could live high in the trees but continue to pose question that would make them consider whether or not their animal would find food to survive in this environment.) What are we noticing about Forest A? Is the fox able to live in this forest? Why or why not? How about the rabbit?*

	<p><i>What if we made some changes to Forest A, do you think we could help get more animals in there? What should we do first? (If the children don't consider taking out some trees, the teacher should bring it up.) Let's say that these two trees are going to be cut down and turned into wood we use for building house. (Pull out 2 kids) What else do we use trees for? (Pull out a couple tree kids for paper) Is there more room now? (If the children immediately want the animals to come in, again bring up the importance of food in their habitat. Guide children to realize that the squirrels will need nut bearing trees to survive. Have some of the chopped down tree children go back into the forest as nut bearing trees.) What about the fox? Is there room for the fox? What does the fox need in order to live? (Guide children to realize that the fox need small animals, like rabbits, to eat.) What does the rabbit need to survive? (Rabbits need a home such as a hollowed out log and also needs plants to eat. Have one of the trees in the forest fall down and become a hollow log and have some of the chopped down tree children go back into the forest as plants on the forest floor. Make sure there is sunlight for the plant!) Now the forest can support a fox and some rabbits. (Note if any children realize that insects can join in around the hollow log) What about the owl? Where does it live? What does it eat? (Guide the children to realize that there needs to be a snag and have one of the forest trees become a snag.) Now the owl has a home, what does the owl like to eat? (Continue in this manner until all children have a role in the forest. Encourage questions and comments surrounding the concept of interdependence. Close by having the children return to the group area.) Let's take another look at Forest A and Forest B. What did we learn about the two different forests? (Ask similar questions as were asked in the beginning of the lesson for example; If you were a rabbit which forest would you want live in? Why?)</i></p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Informal observation. Did children make connections between the animals and the two different habitats? Formal assessment: Create a worksheet which has been divided in to two areas. One side showing the dense Pine forest, the other showing the managed forest. Show the children a chart that shows 1 owl, 1</p>

	fox, 2 rabbits, 3 mice, 3 squirrels, 4 insects and 4 birds. Tell the children that they need to find these animals a home. They need to use all the animals from the chart. They need to think really hard to find the best home for each of the animals. A rubric could be created which would measure if the students placed certain animals in areas that would best suit their needs. Are the rabbits in a forest that has plants and a hollowed log or den area? Is the fox in a forest with no small animals present?
Literature Cited/References	Project Learning Tree Pre-K Environmental Education Activity Guide by Rudy Shafer, Presentation about Environmental Education for Early Childhood by Beth Ruark, professor at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.
Forestry Tour Attended	Lake States 2008

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