



Learning *In, About* and *For* the Environment

Learning *In* the Environment

- direct observation of and interaction with different environments, both natural and built
- experiential (hands on) learning in every season, in all weather
- making connections to and between local environments
- learning about all forms of life on earth (human, animal, insect, plant, etc)

Inspirations: Richard Louv, Joseph Cornell, Herbert Broda, David Sobel, Rachel Carson

Strategies:

- take children outside of the classroom as often as possible, building time into your weekly schedule (eg Walking Wednesdays)
- implement place-based learning by using your schoolyard as a learning resource
- explore natural and built aspects your local community
- engage with local residents, experts and other forms of life

Learning *About* the Environment

- focusing on how nature works in systems (life webs, energy flows, matter cycles)
- exploring ecosystems in urban and rural settings
- discovering the interdependence of all life forms on this planet
- reinforcing the concept of systems-thinking

Inspirations: Art Sussman, Barbara Kingsolver, the Center for Ecoliteracy, Green Teacher Magazine,

Strategies:

- integrate learning about local ecosystems into all parts of the curriculum (beyond science)
- study *local* ecosystems to see examples up close and in action firsthand
- use drawing, photography, video and journals to record and share what is found

Learning *For* the Environment

- examining human impact on different environments (positive and negative)
- advocating and acting for positive environmental change
- discovering how to reduce negative impacts through conservation, adaptation, innovation

Inspirations: Free the Children, WWF, Greenpeace, Alice Waters, David Suzuki

Strategies:

- keep eco-actions age-appropriate (eg. 'no disasters' before grade five)
- focus on local issues to see the effects of eco-actions immediately (eg. litter removal)
- keep it hopeful by focusing on the positive of what can be done (eg tree planting, energy conservation, waste reduction, vermin-composting)
- use the arts to get the message across creatively (eg. murals, exhibits, plays, videos, etc.)