



INSECT NATURE PARK

Purpose

This activity encourages children to look at the world from an ant's point of view. It can be used to reinforce concepts of habitat and ecosystem.

Materials

100 inch long pieces of string (one per pair of students)
10-15 toothpicks with colored tape "flags" (cut into triangles)
Folded 3"x5" note cards to use as trail guides
Pencils and/or colored markers
A nice indoor or outdoor area
Kids!



Procedure

This activity is a nice follow-up to a reading of Two Bad Ants by Chris Van Allsberg. Go to a nice area and explain that the group will design a new national micro-park. Each group of two children will make a trail in the park. They should have a "kit" which includes string (with a flag at each end), extra flags, a blank trail guide and a pencil.

Have them select an area for their trail and survey it for interesting attractions. They should create a micro-trail for the animal of their choice - after all ants, spiders and slugs might not all like the same attractions. The groups should use the string to mark their trail. Suggest that they mark special attractions with flags so their visitors won't miss them.

They can use the note cards to produce a trail guide, noting all the special attractions. When they are finished, they can offer other groups tours though their trail. Acting as tour guides, they can explain the natural wonders of their new micro-park.

Extensions

This activity can be used for lessons in math and geography as well. Students can charge admission to guided trail tours using peanuts. Separate the one seed nuts and two-seed nuts and call them 5's and 10's. Make admission something that requires calculation and change-making. If you don't want to use peanuts (some children have severe allergies to them), you could use "Creepy Crawlies" the gummi-bearish fruit candy.

Have the students investigate the geographical wonders of their trail. They can research the types of rock or make some comparisons between different kinds of soil. They can make an overall guide to the micro-park. An interesting art project might be to make papier-mâché globes and painting on them the mini-worlds you have created.

Your class can produce a map of the new park, with each student group doing their own trails. You could also suggest they produce a field guide of local plants and insects in their park.