

Natural Resources & Conservation Education Programs
Fall 2009-Spring 2010

Kindergarten- Trees

This program will share the importance of trees with the students and will help them realize what role trees play in our everyday lives. The program will also help students understand basic parts of a tree and differences in trees. The students will create a tree craft to conclude the lesson.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12.B1a: Describe and compare characteristics of living things in relationship to their environments.

Kindergarten – Butterflies

The students will learn about the four stages in the butterfly's life cycle, and practice remembering those stages in the correct order. They will also understand that there are many different species of butterflies. They will end the program by making a butterfly craft.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12.A: Know and apply concepts that explain how living things function, adapt and change.

1st Grade - Circle of Earth

This introductory conservation program touches on the basic principles of cycles on the Earth: soil, water, air, humans and animals, and plants. As an activity, students make a simple "Circle of Earth" bracelet from beads, with each color representing a different requirement for life on our planet. As the students make their bracelets, they will discuss how each component repeats or creates a circle.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12B. Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

1st Grade - Bats

This program introduces students to bat characteristics and habitats with an age appropriate video. (VCR needed, please) Students will learn the importance of these mammals and why we should help protect them. The program will end with a demonstration of bat echolocation, and coloring and reading a small booklet about bats.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12B. Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

2nd Grade -The Incredible Edible Landfill

Students will learn about landfills as well as recycling to reduce the amount of waste that we send to landfills. The children will build their own "landfill" from edible components as we discuss how a sanitary landfill is constructed. At the end, they get to eat their creations!

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal: 13B. Know and apply concepts that describe the interaction between science, technology, and society.

2nd Grade - Birds

This program will share the wonder of birds with the students. The students will learn more about the backyard birds of Illinois, and how beaks, feet, feathers and the food they require varies. The students will learn what they can do to help our feathery friends and will be making bird "snacks" to take home and hang outside for them.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12B. Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

3rd Grade - Animal Tracks

This program will introduce students to Arthur Dorros's book Animal Tracks. Participants will be better able to match an animal with its track. The students will participate at activity stations that will enable students to see the tracks that animals make and create animal track imprints that they can keep.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12.B2b Identify physical features of plants and animals that help them live in different environments.

3rd Grade - Just a Dream

This program will introduce students to Chris Van Allsburg's book, Just a Dream. After the story is read, students will discuss the problems in our environment that are presented in Mr. Van Allsburg's book. The children will then create drawings to emphasize the importance of taking care of our environment now to make their "dreams" of a beautiful future come true.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal: 13.B.2f Analyze how specific personal and societal choices that humans make affect local or regional ecosystems.

4th Grade – Illinois Prairie

The children will learn about how the Illinois prairie was formed, and the plants and animals found on our prairie lands. Students will learn the names and information about a number of our native plants and animals by engaging in learning games. The concepts of carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore will be used in the animal discussion, and forbs and grasses in the plant portion.

One 50 minute lesson

State Goal: 12.B2b. Identify physical features of plants and animals that help them live in different environments.

4th Grade – Illinois State Symbols

Students will learn the symbols of our state, facts about each, and the environments in Illinois where they are found. The lesson will conclude with a game to review the symbols.

One 45 minute lesson

State Goal: 12B.2a Describe relationships among various organisms in their environments.

3rd, 4th, or 5th Grade – Soil (As the topic fits in your Science curriculum)

Students will learn about the important role soil plays in our lives. Soil formation, and differences in soil will be discussed, as well as the three components of soil: sand, silt, and clay. The lesson will conclude with children creating their own edible soil horizon.

One 45 minute lesson

State Goal: 12.E. Describe and explain short term and long term interactions of Earth's components.

5th Grade - Enviroscope Model

The Enviroscope demonstrates a watershed containing houses, roads, a factory, golf course, and a farm. Students add "pollutants" to these areas and are able to see how one's actions on the land can affect the water of a community. Possible solutions for the problems created are discussed and the activity is repeated to demonstrate a cleaner environment.

One 50 minute lesson.

State Goal: 13B. Know and apply concepts that describe the interaction between science, technology, and society.

6th Grade - Trash Crisis

Students will see how much trash is being thrown away and the problem trash has become. Solutions to the problem, such as source reduction, recycling, composting, waste-to-energy, and sanitary landfills will be discussed. Students will work in small groups to create a poster to further explain one of those solutions and its advantages and disadvantages. Group posters will be shown to the rest of the class, and if time permits, a class discussion will follow the presentations to help to determine if one method is better than all of the rest, or if they all need to be used to help keep our communities clean.

One 60 minute lesson.

State Goal: 13.B. 3e Identify advantages and disadvantages of natural resource conservation and management programs.

6th Grade – Career Critters

Problems in our environment are presented, as well as a selection of plants, animals, and insects which might be able to solve those problems in a more environmentally friendly way. Students will work in small groups to determine which plants, animals, and/or insects can help with several different environmental problems presented to the students. Their conclusions will be discussed to end the lesson. Through a small group activity, students evaluate how wild animals and plants can be used to manage some environmental problems.

One 45 minute lesson.

State Goal 12B. Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.
