

OUTDOOR LEARNING LESSON PLAN

SUSTAINABLE INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Objective: Students play the role of “sustainable investigative journalist” and create individual newspaper articles, which will be compiled into a class newspaper.

Curriculum: This exercise can be adapted for grades 7, 10 and 12. See cpawsemb.org/curriculum-connections for Manitoba curriculum connections.

Learning Goals:

- Students investigate plant and animal organisms in a local ecosystem
- Students record qualitative and quantitative data
- Students use critical thinking, independent research and creative writing skills
- Students will be able to use scientific vocabulary to describe natural observations

Resources:

- [Scientific Observation Activity](#)
- [What is Journalism? - Definition, Roles & Issues](#)
- [Writing a Newspaper Article](#)
- [Learning About Writing a News Report](#)
- [Go Wild Manitoba](#)
- [iNaturalist app \(Manitoba\)](#)

Materials:

- Clipboards
- Lined paper
- Pencils
- Phones/tablets to use ID apps (i.e. iNaturalist, etc.)

Time: 60 minutes+

Activate:

1. Introduce the boreal forest in the context of science and/or social studies curriculum; see cpawsemb.org/outdoor-learning-program/boreal-forest/ for resources.
2. Introduce students to journalism and how they will be acting as journalists in the context of this project.
3. Go over the process of making scientific observations in nature, i.e. observing nature and asking questions, taking notes in a field journal, collecting qualitative and quantitative data, exploring and identifying organisms, etc.
 - Example of leading questions for field journals:**

- What do you sense?
- What do you know based on what you sense?
- What do you think based on what you know?
- What do you wonder based on what you think?
- What do you feel based on what you think?

Acquire:

4. Students get 60+ minutes of independent time in a local green space (school yard, neighbourhood park, etc.) to make observations, identify species they discover, take notes and/or collect data.
 - Make sure students are provided with clipboards, pencils, tablets, worksheets and/or lined paper.

Apply:

5. Students are responsible for reviewing their notes and coming up with a question or topic to write a newspaper piece on. This will require some additional class and/or homework time to conduct research and/or interviews and write the piece.
6. Pieces are compiled by the teacher into a class newspaper, which is shared with the class to read.
7. As an entire class, or smaller groups, review and discuss the newspaper:
 - Did anything surprise them?
 - What was one new thing they learned?
 - What is “fake news”?
 - What are the limitations of journalism?

Conclusion: Evaluate individual students based on their participation and creativity as well as their contributions to group discussions. For extended engagement, the newspaper can be shared with the entire school.