

Instant Program: Hikes and Walks
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ABC Hike - The unit is divided into groups which attempt to find natural objects beginning with each letter of the alphabet. The group finding the most wins.

Animal Hunt - Find six animals that share your environment & discuss how & where they live.

Animal Pretend - Divide the group into 2 or 3 smaller groups. Discuss how the world looks different from different heights. Each team picks an animal to work with. (Be sure all are different & are commonly found in the area - squirrel, insects, birds.) The team figures out how tall their animal is & then moves around at that height. For example, ants would get down close to the ground & observe from this level. Each group looks for other plants & animals to compare themselves with. Allow about 10-15 minutes for this group discussion. All teams get back together to discuss what they found. How were different animals the same? Different? What was the most interesting thing each group found?

Animal, Vegetable, Mineral Hike - While on a hike or using a store window, identify & list materials that are animal, vegetable, or mineral.

Blind Hike - Pair campers with buddy & blindfold one - the other will carefully lead her on your prepared trail. Activities on this type of hike uses senses of touching, smelling, & hearing.

City Safari - (can adapt to Safari Bingo - get 5 in a row)

* Find a tree that has blossoms on it & watch them turn into seeds.

* Find a nest & 2 insects in a tree.

* Draw a picture of a tree.

* Watch a tree in a windstorm.

* Watch a tree in a rainstorm.

* Collect seeds from a tree & plant some.

* Find a tree that has changed something else.

* Eat a food that comes from a tree.

* Find a tree shaped by man & a tree shaped by nature.

* Take a photograph of a tree.

* Do a leaf & bark rubbing.

* Estimate the height & circumference of a tree taller than you are.

* Plant a tree & care for it.

* Write a poem about a tree.

* Make something useful from a piece of wood.

* Watch a tree in a snow or s& storm.

* Do something to help a tree.

* Name 3 things that a tree needs in order to grow.

* Examine tree scars to find evidence that the tree has repaired the injury.

* Find the oldest & the youngest trees in your neighborhood.

Colors - Choose one or two colors & list all things seen in these colors along the way

Compass Hike - Learn to follow directions with a compass to find your way in the woods.

Cookout Hike - Go hobo style with all equipment packed in large bandannas hanging from sticks.

Curiosity Hike - Find some odd curious object such as bark, stone, stick, etc. By using imagination tell what animal, etc., the object represents.

Describing -

* The crow (43 cm), robin (22 cm) & sparrow (13 cm) are common birds used for size comparison. Try making mental comparisons with other birds seen. For example, a jay is larger than a robin but smaller than a crow.

* One member of the group describes an object that cannot be seen by the group. The others draw a picture of the object from the verbal description. Compare drawings! Compare drawings to the real thing!

* Describe the "feeling" of a favorite place.

* Imagine a tree or bush as a clock face. You can tell someone else where a squirrel, bird, nest, or something else is located by saying "It is near two o'clock".

* Drop a stick or leaf into a stream. Follow it downstream. See where it speeds up, slows down, gets caught. What other things are floating on the water? What happens to them?

Directions in the Sky - The sun or stars can be used to find directions. In the morning, the sun is in the east. If you stand with your left shoulder toward the sun, you will be facing south. In the afternoon, the sun is in the west. If you stand with your left shoulder toward the sun, you will be facing north. Whenever you are facing north, the east is to your right, west is to your left, & south is behind.

Doors - Find 3 different doors each to human & animal homes.

Evening Hike - Find North by stars. Learn to recognize some constellations. Tell stories about them. Try flashlight signaling.

Feeling:

- * Feel something inside a paper bag. Can you describe it without seeing it?
- * Try the textures of bark, leaves, soil, feathers, pebbles, a turtle shell, your sneakers.
- * Feel with your fingers - the back of your hand & - your cheek.
- * How do you feel in the shade? In the sunlight?
- * How many ways can you feel the wind? Can you find things that the wind has changed?
- * Lead a blindfolded friend on a trust walk to feel things.
- * When trying to get closer to an animal for a good look, try hiding, crawling, walking slowly, straight toward it, diagonally toward it. Get a "feeling" for when the animal senses that you are in its territory.

Focusing Sight -- * Limit the area of looking - use a wire coat hanger stretched into a circle. Put it on the ground & examine carefully what you find within.

- * Put a bug in a pill bottle. Look closely at all its parts. Watch its activity & let it go!
- * Looking through a cardboard tube helps you to focus on a single object or area.
- * Look for movement, evidence of change, cycles. Take a picture with your eyes. Look at a scene & try to remember everything about it. Look at a pebble, seed, bird; try to remember everything about it. Use a magnifying glass, binoculars held upside down, or a water drop to magnify the details of something small. try counting the rings in a tree stump.
- * Can you follow your own trail back to where you started? What clues did you use?
- * Lie on your back & look up at the clouds, branches, stars, meteors.
- * Lie on your stomach & look down.
- * Crawl & look at things from an animal point of view.
- * Look for colors, patterns, textures, curves, lines.
- * Look for shapes - squares, circles, triangles. Plant stems come in each of these shapes. Can you find one of each?
- * Look for the same thing in different sizes - shells, waves, clouds, leaves. Try different places: Under eaves of buildings, in mud or snow for tracks. At an outside light at night check to see what is attracted.

Focusing Your Sights - Divide into groups of 2 or 3 people. Assign an area. Limit the area of looking. Use a coat hanger stretched into a circle or a length of rope (about a meter in length) to form a circle. Carefully examine what can be seen within the circle. Insects? Plants? Rocks? Soil? Seeds? Leaves? What else? Share with the group what each group has found. Using cardboard tubes from paper products, make a viewer to observe an assigned area. While sitting in one spot, describe how the area looks without using the tube, & then, how it looks through the tube. Does one or the other make the area appear shaper in view? Why? Change the viewing position (stand, lay down, stand on rock). Look at the same view now. How is it different? The same?

Gypsies - Wear bandannas. Have a treasure hunt with gypsy treasure of candy & fruit. Have slips such as "Go to oak tree 100 yards away where gypsies gather." At tree, have another set of instructions & so on.

Hobo (Gypsy) Hike - Group hikes to a predetermined site for lunch. Their lunch is tied in a bandanna on the end of a stick or on their belt.

Have you thanked a tree today? Trees in our cities need human caring.

- * Can you find evidence that trees? absorb noise; attract birds, squirrels, & insects; give off oxygen & reduce air pollution; provide beauty; cut down the wind; separate cars from people; hold soil in place to prevent erosion; provide shade & cooling.
- * Then, how can you help a tree? help protect the tree from harmful insects & other parasites; water it; fertilize it; trim off dead limbs; help prevent smog, which hurts trees; loosen the soil around the roots; find out which department in your city is responsible for tree care; don't carve on a live tree, or pull off its bark; cover wounds with tree tar; protect trees from being injured by cars, lawn mowers, bikes, & careless people; don't cover the soil around the base of a tree with bricks, asphalt, or cement; covering the soil cuts off the tree's water supply, & blocks air circulation to the roots.
- * Do a tree survey to find: healthy trees that should be preserved; dead trees that should be removed; diseased trees that need attention; areas where new trees are needed; remember that trees need sun!

Incher Hike - Collect as many objects as possible that are one inch high, wide, long, etc. Measure treasures on return & see who brought in the largest number of one inch things.

Indians - Practice walking like Indians as quietly as possible in single file.

International - Identify trees, plants, & shrubs, & discover the country of their origin.

Listening Hike - Hike to areas where there is running water, insects, or animals making noise.

Looking, Listening, Feeling, Smelling & Describing Your Environment - There are many ways of sensing our environment which help tune in our brains & help us perceive more & remember more. These focusing techniques also make us more aware of things we would normally walk by without noticing. Try a few of these on your next outdoor experience. Use them constantly to heighten your awareness. One caution: Know the poisonous plants & animals in your area & what they look like in all seasons!

Map - make sketch of your route.

Map hike - Divide into two groups - one then maps a trail then has the other follow it.

Micro Hike - This hike is less than 5' long & may be used with wheelchair bound campers. Use string 3-5 feet long, have campers stake in over interesting group. Use magnifying glass for group level work.

Miniature or Inchers - Look carefully to find tiny, lovely things less than one inch tall. Take a magnifying glass.

Monogram Hike - find three or more objects beginning with your initials.

Nature Hike - Purpose for watching or finding birds, insects, wildplants, trees, bushes, water, & l& animals.

Night Hike - OF COURSE!! Use red plastic over flashlight lenses - if the group is quiet, animals will remain nearby.

Passive Hike - LET THE CLOUDS DO THE WALKING!! Lie on your back & observe what walks overhead.

Penny Hike - Decide direction such as - Heads, go east; Tails, go west - flip penny to determine direction

Pioneer Hike - Go cross-country with map & compass.

Rain Hike - Take a rain hike & notice the differences in the environment. WHY NOT!! - "Be Prepared" is our motto!

Rainbow Hike - Find & list as many colors in nature as possible. Good especially after a rain. May be used as a contest.

Scent Hike - Run objects along a trail with onion & a second group follows the scent.

Sealed Orders - Group lays trail using notes that give directions on how to go & what to do on the way.

Silent Hike - Have your group walk carefully in silence & point out interesting objects or animals.

Smelling -

* Inhale deeply outdoors.

* Smell a flower, leaf, soil, mud, water, bug, fern.

* Follow a scent. Where does it lead?

* What does rain smell like? How does your world smell storm or shower?

* Pinch a leaf, stem or root. Then smell it.

Sounds & Colors:

1. Choose a place in the woods or in a field where the girls can lie down safely.

2. Have the girls lie on their backs with both fists held up in the air.

3. Everytime someone hears a new bird song she lifts up one finger.

4. Then listen for other sounds besides birds. See if you can count to 10 without hearing a bird song.

5. Have the girls sit up. Ask then how many different colors & shades of colors they can see in front of them without moving from where they are sitting.

6. Talk about what you have heard & seen.

Trail Markers - There are special trail signs for hikers. Girl Scouts have used these signs for many years. Notes can also be used to lay a trail that people will use for a day or two. For example, a starting note could say, "Go straight ahead 50 paces & look for your next note under the large grayish-tan rock." You can make up & agree upon your own trail sign language. Just be sure that you remember all safety rules & have an adult to help you. Practice laying different kinds of trails.

Trail Sign - One group leaves first & lays a trail using twigs, grass, etc. & other groups follow the signs. Be sure to not disturb nature & to return the "trail signs" when finished

Treasure Hike - A trail laid with a treasure at the end.

Trees - See how many different kinds of trees you can find; get descriptions of bark, seeds, leaves, etc.

Turn-over Hike - Turn over rocks & logs to see what comes out

Unnatural - Look for items that are foreign to the area or hidden on or near the trail. Girls make a sketch map & mark location of each object with an "X".

Unnature Trail - This game introduces the concepts of camouflage (protective coloration) & adaptation. It is also a good way for the girls to sharpen their observation skills.

1. Choose a 40-50' section of trail.
2. Place 10-15 man-made objects along the trail. Some of them should stand out, like flashbulbs or balloons. Others should blend with their surroundings & be harder to pick out. Keep the number of objects you have planted a secret.
3. The camper walks over the section of trail one at a time allowing plenty of space between them.
4. Ask them to look for the unnatural objects that have been planted along the trail.
5. When the girls reach the end of the trail have them whisper in your ear how many items they saw.
6. If no one saw them all, tell everyone how many were seen, but that "There are still more." Let them start over.
7. At the end, discuss.

Water - Follow a stream or brook. Look for all sorts of water life such as a "skater", tadpoles, fish, etc.

Youngest & Oldest - Discuss who is the oldest & youngest in the group. Look for mature trees & plants on your site. Look for seedlings (youngest) trees & other plants. Compare how leaf size & root spread patterns are different. Look at how height, plant diameter, dead branches, leaf shape & any other special characteristics compare in older & younger plants. Don't forget the mosses & lichens growing in the area.

