



SPRING FEVER

A Teacher Conducted Field Study for
Kindergarten Students

FISH CREEK
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTRE

FishCreek.Education@gov.ab.ca

www.Fish-Creek.org

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH PARKS

FISH CREEK
ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING CENTRE



Alberta Parks



Introduction

This is a curriculum-connected, teacher conducted half day study with multidisciplinary preparatory and post-visit resources. The intent is to offer a hands-on experience for students that naturally immerses them in the Kindergarten Program Statement components and the vision of Alberta’s Plan for Parks.

Fish Creek Provincial Park is one of Canada’s largest urban provincial parks, stretching from the western edge of the city to the Bow River. The park has a strong vision within its visitor services program plan to support and foster environmental and cultural education.

Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.



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Facility & Rules

THE FACILITY

The Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre (13931 Woodpath Road SW) is located at the west end of the park and offers five indoor classrooms, bathroom facilities, an outdoor picnic area, an accessible trail system and an extensive variety of natural ecosystems: an old growth spruce forest, grasslands, riverine forests, a creek and several wetlands as well as disturbed (urban) areas.

1. Each teacher will be given a classroom to use as a home base for the day's activities.
2. Some equipment for the day's activities will be available at the Park. It is your responsibility to count all equipment and return it at the end of the day. **There is a fee charged for missing or broken equipment.**
3. Washrooms and water fountains are located in the building. There are no vending machines or coffee/tea available.
4. A short orientation (about 15 minutes) will be provided to the entire group upon arrival to welcome and introduce everyone to the park, its rules, the program for the day and what the students may discover outside.
5. A snack break will take place *after* the group orientation. Please ensure that the students are supervised by teachers during this time.
6. Volunteers will have a separate orientation (~10 minutes) on the day of the field trip during student snack break. This will introduce them to the equipment provided, to a map of the activity area (maps provided), to the general flow of the day and answer any questions that they may have.
7. **There are NO indoor activities available. Please bring your own activities and/or DVDs when planning for inclement weather.**



SNACK BREAK PROCEDURES

Please challenge your class to bring a litterless snack to the park for their program.

INSIDE THE BUILDING

Your class may eat inside the facility, within their assigned room.

- Students must be supervised by an adult at all times while they are in the building (including classrooms, washrooms and hallways).
- Classes from other schools and parks staff may be in the facility at the same time as your class(es). Please respect them and keep noise to a minimum, especially in the washrooms and common areas.
- Help us keep the Learning Centre clean. There are garbage and recycling containers in the brown built-in cabinets in each room.
- Leftover fruit and vegetable materials, such as banana peels and apple cores, are collected in a white compost bucket in each room.

OUTDOOR FACILITIES

There are several picnic tables and a fire pit behind the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre. This area is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Plenty of additional picnic tables are available just north of the Learning Centre building about a 2 minute walk up the trail.

- Students must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Fish Creek Provincial Park is a public park and the facilities in an around the Learning Centre are for everyone to use. Please respect other park users.
- Leave no trace: All garbage, recycling and compost must be put in appropriate bins (outside or in the building)
- **DO NOT FEED OR DISTURB WILDLIFE.**
- If you choose to use the fire pit you must bring your own firewood. **Do not use branches or deadfall from the park.** Have a bucket of water nearby and check that the fire is out before leaving the fire pit area.

Before the Visit

PREPARATION

The following steps and materials will assist you in preparing for your field trip to Fish Creek Provincial Park. Please take the time to review the following pages carefully.

1 Site Visit Teacher Orientation

Attending a teacher orientation prior to your class visit is mandatory and essential for familiarizing yourself with the facilities and the surrounding trails. Returning teachers are not obligated to attend but are welcome. Dates for the teacher orientations will be sent to you via email so you can register for an orientation on a date of your choice.

2 Preparation Checklist

A full, detailed teacher checklist for your field trip preparation is available on the next page.

3 Program Start and End

Program start and end times are flexible to accommodate bus availability and travel distance to the park. In general, programs start between 9:30- 10:00 am and finish between 11:30 am - 12:00 pm.

4 Field Trip at a Glance

Group Orientation (15 minutes)	Overview of park rules, safety and behaviour expectations for the day.
Student Snack Break Parent Volunteer Orientation (10-15 minutes)	Overview of program activities for adult volunteers.
Educational Activities	Students explore the park in small, parent-led groups. Environmental Educator will be available to answer questions and provide support.
Groups return to the Learning Centre for Program Wrap-up	Debrief by staff educator. Final washroom break, head count, and gather personal belongings.

Program Wrap-up should take place at least 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure.

TEACHER CHECKLIST: Preparing for Your Day at the Park

Prepare yourself

- Read the teacher package thoroughly: phone 403-297-7926 if you have any questions.
- Register for and attend a Teacher Orientation date on site before your field trip.
- Book your bus(es).
- Give every driver - including the bus driver - a copy of the route map (found in the Appendix). Make sure all drivers know you are coming to the west end of the park, near Woodbine!
- Check student health forms, looking for allergies in particular to bee/wasp stings
- Bring a first aid kit and a few band aids with each adult.

Prepare the students

- Discuss how Fish Creek Provincial Park is a wild environment.
 - Do not feed or disturb wildlife: Quietly observe all wildlife from a comfortable distance.
 - Leave only footprints: Share discoveries, but leave everything as they found it.
 - Pitch in: Litter should be placed in the rubbish bins provided or in a pocket.
- Discuss behavioural expectations. Explain that the field study will be another school day, just at a different place. All the school rules apply.
- Discuss the purpose of provincial parks and protected areas. Have the class make a list of ways they can show respect for living things during their visit to the park. *Possibilities include:*
 - Stay well back from the banks of Fish Creek
 - Leave ant hills, nests and rotting logs alone and intact. They are animal homes.
 - Walk with care and mindfulness to minimize your impact.
- Discuss outdoor safety. Students need to:
 - Stay with an adult all times.
 - Walk, do not run.
 - Keep feet on the ground: no climbing.
 - Leave dead branches on the ground:
- Discuss what to wear on the field trip
 - Hats, sunscreen, insect repellent.
 - Runners, comfortable boots (no sandals/high heels). Dress in layers and bring extras.
- Complete some preparatory activities, either the ones in the next section of this package or your own.

Prepare the adults

Please follow the recommended adult to student ratios as outlined in your school board regulations.

- Provide the following to adult volunteers and review with them: Key Messages, Chaperone Letter, access map, they will be provided an orientation and information booklet on the day to assist them during the program.
- Emphasize the following: there is nowhere to buy anything here, including coffee.
- Ensure adult volunteers are aware that their role is to lead a small group of students outside on a walk and to assist with supervising students during indoor times.

FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK: Key Messages

Please review and be sure everyone understands the following information before your visit the park.

- Our vision: Alberta's parks inspire people to discover, value, protect, and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.
- Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.
- Alberta's parks and protected areas belong to all Albertans and contain many different natural landscapes that are home to numerous plant and animal species as well as significant cultural and historic resources. The province's network of parks and protected areas helps to ensure that Alberta's natural and cultural heritage is preserved for future generations.
- There are a wide variety of visitors and users of our parks. Everyone must respect and share the park and its facilities and resources.
- Stay on designated trails while moving through the park and participating in group activities. Staying on designated trails reduces impact to the natural habitats of the park. Please share the trail with other users.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited. The park's ecosystems provide all the food and habitat wildlife require for their basic needs. Feeding wildlife can cause wildlife to associate humans with food. Quietly observe wildlife from a safe and comfortable distance so as not to disturb them or put them or you at risk.
- Everything in the park – living and non-living is protected. Students are welcome to share their discoveries, but must remember to leave everything as they found it. Do not remove anything natural from the park.
- Litter must be placed in garbage cans or packed out.
- Use only designated fire pits. The collecting and burning of park vegetation is not permitted. You must ensure fires are fully extinguished before leaving them.



PRE-FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES

Preparatory activities will enhance your students experience and learning at the park.

See the Change

This game will allow students to hone their observation skills and reinforce the concept of change.

1. Stand in front of the students and ask them to look at you very carefully.
2. Then tell them to cover their eyes and you will tell them when they can look again. While students eyes are closed change something about your appearance. Change possibilities include adding or removing sweater, hat, glasses, jewellery, name tag, etc. As the students' skill levels increase, make the changes more subtle.
3. Tell the students to look again. The first person to spot the change could come up and be the next person to change something. You can assist the student with this.

Touch Patterns

This activity will assist students in thinking about textures, patterns and their sense of touch.

1. Gather together 6 - 8 objects that are different textures. Depending on the skill level of your students, you may want to start the game very simply by ensuring the objects are consistent in other properties (e.g. colour, temperature, moisture etc).
2. Set the objects down in a pattern, for example, rough, rough, smooth, rough, smooth, rough, rough.
3. Challenge the students to discover the pattern using their sense of touch only. As the students' awareness grows, vary texture, temperature or moisture of the objects. Ask them to create their own pattern and have other students try to guess the pattern.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

This exercise will help the students practise the skill of listening and identifying sounds in nature.

1. Find or make recordings of common sounds, both at school and around the home. Start with sounds that will be the easiest for the students to identify. Be sure each sound is clear, is long enough to be identifiable and is only one distinct noise. Home sounds could include running taps, doorbell ringing, theme music from familiar children's television program, washing machine running, dishwasher being emptied, floor being swept.
2. Play the recording asking the students to identify the source of each sound.
3. This activity can be extended by having students close their eyes and playing sound from different places in the room. Students then need to point to where the noise is coming from and identify it.
4. Once students have become familiar with the common sounds, try with nature sounds.

Growing and Changing

This activity will give students an opportunity to watch plant growth and change.

Materials:

- Alfalfa seeds
 - Jar
 - Cheese cloth or screen material
 - Elastic or String
1. Soak 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of alfalfa seeds in a bottle with a screen tied around the jar mouth. It is important to keep the bottle in a dark place until the last day.
 2. Drain the water the following day and rinse the seeds twice a day for the next three days.
 3. On the last day, put the sprouts in a sunny location.
 4. Discuss with the students how the seeds changed in only a few days.

Your Day At the Park

FIELD TRIP ACTIVITY SUMMARY

The following outdoor field trip activities are curriculum-connected and focus learning, in an experiential way, on the natural environment. A student journal is available in the Appendix (p.A2) to photocopy for each student to record their findings.

1 Shapes and Perspectives

- Students look for shapes in nature related to their viewers.
- Students identify the shapes in their viewer and think about size differences.
- The shapes in the viewer can then be used as a frame, testing out how perspective changes as the viewer is moved closer and further away from the student's face.

2 Scratch N' Sniff

- Students will scratch different objects they find in nature, then take a whiff! Encourage scratching/smelling at all levels (ground to nose level).
- This activity is designed to enhance students' awareness of the properties of objects in the environment.

3 Touch N' Feel

- Groups will collect enough objects in nature for one object per student.
- Students will sit in a circle and pass the objects around with eyes closed. Students are asked to identify when they believe they have their original object in hand.
- Students will discuss textures.

4 Signs of Spring

- This activity is designed to enhance students' recognition that some events occur at particular times (e.g. seasonal changes) and that there are changes in weather and the ways animals adapt to the seasons.
- Students will look for signs of spring in nature. Changes in plants(buds and seeds), birds, insects, animals, seeds and the creek will be evident.

5 Sounds of Spring

- Students will discuss how to describe the sounds, how to draw a sound, how to act out a sound.
- This activity is designed to enhance students' awareness of the properties of objects in the environment and to enhance their listening skills.

6 Old/New

- Students will look for evidence of the different life stages of trees from seeds to a dead tree or snag.
- Students will investigate changes beyond a seasonal cycle, looking at the entire life cycle.



PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

The Learning Centre will provide your students with the following equipment and resources to utilize during the day.

1 Magnifying Container

Students can examine found objects more closely with the magnifying container.

3 Magnifying Glass

Students will use the magnifying glasses to examine the seasonal changes and discoveries.

4 View Finder

Students identify the shapes in the viewer and also look for those shapes in nature. The various shapes in the viewer can also be used as a frame, testing out how perspective changes as the viewer is moved closer and further away from the student's face.

2 Seasonal Scavenger Hunt

Students will seek signs of the changing season with kinaesthetic, auditory and visual objectives. This is not meant to be a competition, rather it is a fun way for students to hone their observation skills.

All equipment must be returned prior to departure.
PLEASE NOTE: There is an additional fee for broken or missing equipment.

INFORMATION BOOKLETS

The Learning Centre will provide your adult volunteers with an information booklet to help guide them on the outdoor exploratory activities which they will lead their smaller group of students on.



The Learning Centre will provide your adult chaperones with an information booklet with all of the field trip activities outlined and explained in full detail. These booklets will have pictures and information that will support and enhance your students' learning.

These booklets will be provided at the Park for your field trip.

By providing laminated copies, at your field trip we hope to reduce the amount of photocopying and wasted paper.

Important Notes:

- We greatly appreciate all feedback to strengthen our resources; please let us know if you have any recommended changes

After Your Field Study

POST TRIP ACTIVITIES

In addition to a class discussion about trip highlights and favourite activities, students may need class time to complete their journals or to share information about their discoveries.

Spring is in the Air

In the winter, animals have adaptations to protect themselves from the cold. In the spring, animals that migrate are returning back to their summer home. As the temperature increases in spring, the animals that hibernate are starting to emerge. The animals that stay and cope over the winter are starting to change their bodies and behaviours to suit the warmer weather.

Divide the students into small student groups and assign an animal group. With guidance, brainstorm the ways their animal groups adapt to the change of seasons.

Encourage them to choreograph actions to show the rest of the class how the animals adapt for spring (for instance, students curled up in little balls could be hibernating ground squirrels almost ready to wake up).

Student Journals

RESOURCE: Appendix p. A2-A5
If students did not use the Student Journals at the park, they can be printed and used as follow up activity.

Invite the students to share their completed journals with their classmates either verbally during a sharing circle or by adding them to the class “library” so others could look at them any time.

Winter or Spring?

RESOURCE: Appendix p. A1
Use the worksheet in this package. Make a copy for each student. Ask them to colour-in the items that belong in springtime. This can be used as an assessment tool to determine students’ understanding of seasonal changes.

Winter or Spring?

Develop a class experience chart that begins with students experiences in the park.

Have each student contribute something they experienced at the park to the list. Beside each response print the student’s name. When everyone has had a chance to contribute, start back at the beginning of the list and, for each response, invite the contributing students to come up and draw the body part used to make that discovery. Can they also name the sense?

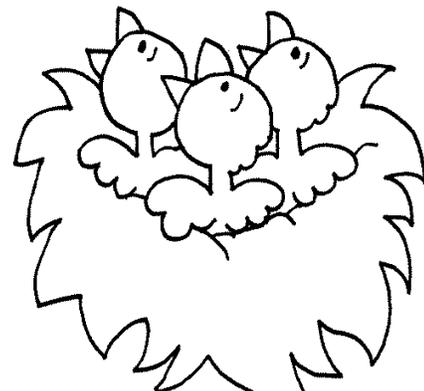
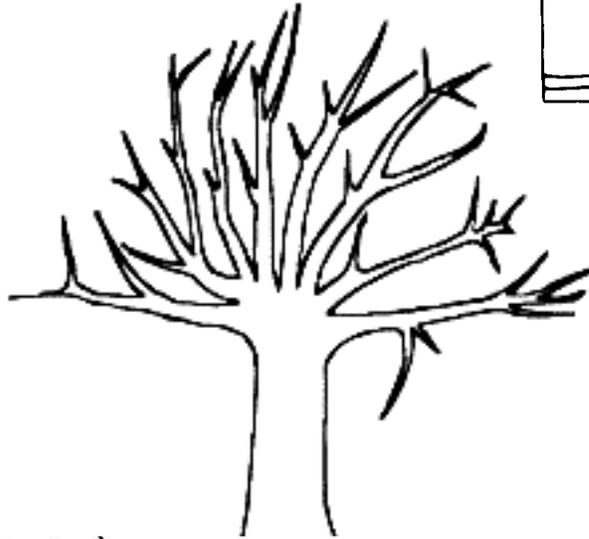
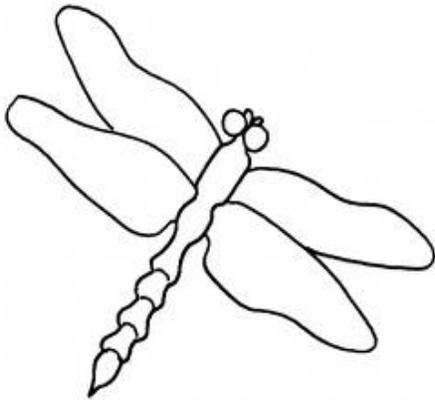
Example: Squirrel – Mary; she would draw eyes and say sense of sight.

A new section or additional chart can also be made for experiences in different environments or seasons and the class can compare and contrast.

Appendix

WINTER OR SPRING?

Colour the pictures that can be seen in spring!



Spring Is ...

Draw a spring landscape you saw in the park. What does spring look like to you?



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STUDENT JOURNAL

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Name: _____

Date: _____



Shapes and Perspectives

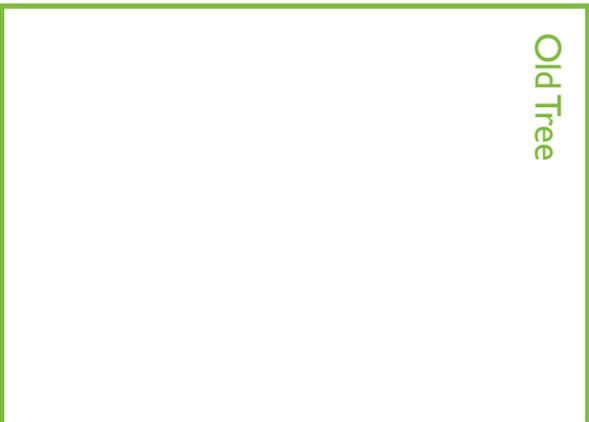
Draw or write about what you saw in your viewer:



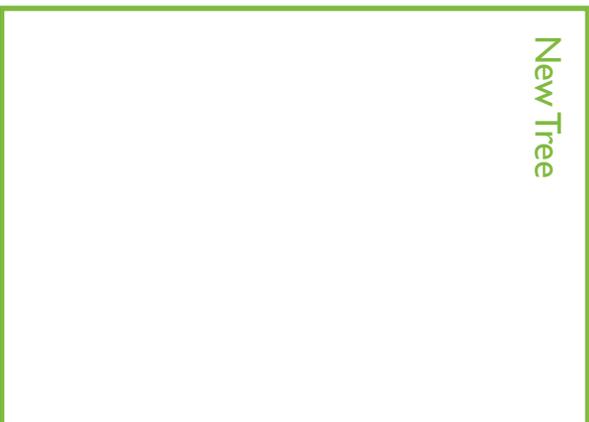
Old/New

Draw one of each of the following.

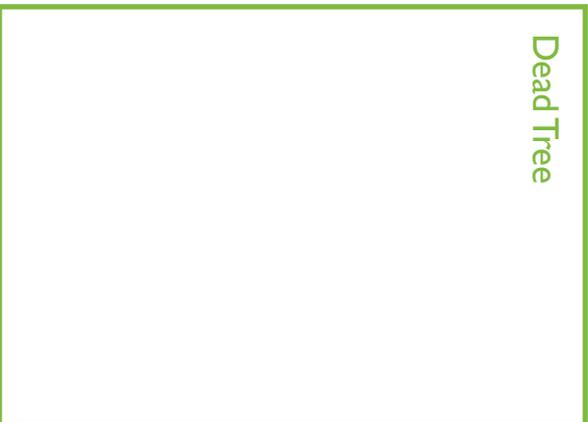
Old Tree



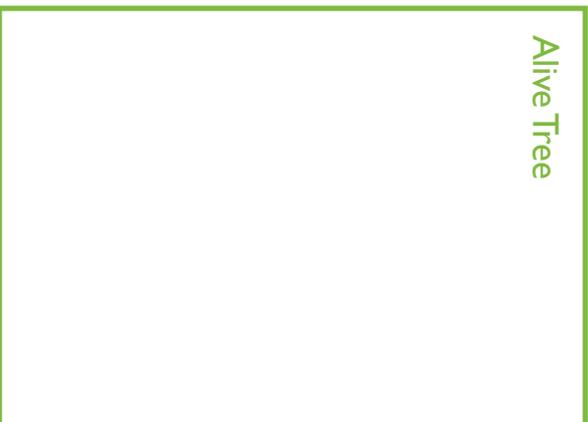
New Tree



Dead Tree

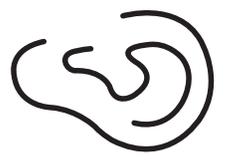


Alive Tree



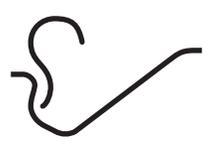
Sounds of Spring

Draw some of the sounds you heard.



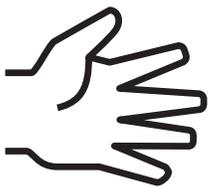
Scratch N' Sniff

Draw some of the things that smelled outside.



Touch N' Feel

Draw some of the things you touched.



Signs of Spring

Draw some of the things that you saw.



Dear Adult Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering for a field trip to Fish Creek Provincial Park! This excursion allows students to explore, discover and learn in one of the largest urban parks in North America.

Here are a few tips that may help you enjoy your visit:

- Pack a hearty and healthy snack and water too!. There are no vending machines or stores on-site to purchase food.
- Please dress appropriately for the weather. We will run our programs rain, snow or sunshine.
- Ensure that you are aware of what part of Fish Creek the program is taking place. We host educational programs at the WEST end (near Woodbine) and the EAST end (near Deer Run).

Our staff will be available throughout the day to ensure that you and your group have a safe and educational experience in the park.

You are not expected to be a naturalist or history expert, but a positive attitude goes a long way!

Thank you again, we are very excited to see you in the park soon.

Warmest regards,

Environmental Education Team

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FISH CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL



Directions Map

Access Map - Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre

13931 Woodpath Road SW, Calgary, Alberta



DIRECTIONS

From Anderson Rd SW heading west:

- Follow signs to Tsuut'ina Trail and follow exit onto Buffalo Run Blvd
- Follow Buffalo Run Blvd past the gas bar and Costco complex to 130 Ave SW
- Heading east through two traffic circles to continue onto 130 Ave SW
- Turn right onto Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park

From south of 130 Ave SW on northbound Tsuut'ina Trail:

- Take the 130 Ave SW exit and keep right at top of ramp onto eastbound 130 Ave SW
- Turn right on Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park

