

Parks, People, Plants, and Animals

Field Study

This is a field study that you can complete in a local natural area or nearby nature. It explores, human use, life cycles and food webs. Activities can be split up and done over multiple visits or you complete them in a single extended visit. Use the accompanying Student Journal to assist in guiding student explorations of the area.

Instructions

Scout out a local greenspace or natural area that you can visit with your class. Consider boundaries and distances for students to be allowed to explore and work in.

1. Before the field study discuss and explore the following topics with your students:
 - a. Human use and impacts of use on natural spaces.
 - b. Basic life cycle stages of plants, mammals, birds and insects and things you might discover in nature representing the various stages of these life cycles.
 - c. Discuss food webs and define herbivore, carnivore, and omnivore.
 - d. Research as a class common plants animals and insects of the area you plan to visit.
2. With your students at the selected natural area:
 - a. Set physical boundaries and timelines for the visit.
 - b. Have students record information as outlined in the Student Journals.
 - c. Students may work in small groups or individually.
 - d. Decide based on your timeframe what studies will be completed on each visit.

Materials:

Student Journals – See Link
<https://albertaparks.ca/media/6498311/nature-source-parks-people-plants-and-animals.pdf>

Field Guides/ID Guides

Optional Equipment:

Magnifying glasses

Bug containers

Digital camera

Discussion

The information collected by students on the field study may be used in a variety of ways in follow-up lessons.

Observations on human uses can be used to create a variety of charts or diagrams to represent the positive and negative impacts of people on the landscape. Information gathered can be used to create an action plan for a class project to improve the green space or natural area visited (e.g. litter clean-up).

Life cycle observations can be used to review life cycles of various groups of organisms as well as seasonality of growth and development.

Food web observations can be used to create a variety of food webs or chains to represent the organisms discovered in the natural area explored.