

WATERDROPS

Special Nature Issue

Teacher's Guide

Welcome to this special Nature Issue of WaterDrops, provided by the Southwest Florida Water Management District's in-school education program. This issue focuses on a visit to a nature center. The newsletter is correlated to grades 3-5 of the Sunshine State Standards and provides an interesting way for students to increase their awareness and respect for our precious water resources.

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) is charged with preserving and protecting west-central Florida's water resources and the natural systems that sustain them. Nature centers and parks play a valuable role in educating children and their families about the importance of protecting natural areas. Trips to nature centers also allow children to see firsthand the close relationship of water resources with plants, animals and insects.

Other free educational materials are available from the Southwest Florida Water Management District. Please contact us if you have any questions or suggestions about our water resources education programs.

Sincerely,



Beth Bartos
In-School Education Coordinator
Southwest Florida Water Management District
1-800-423-1476, ext. 4771
beth.bartos@swfwmd.state.fl.us

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Hello Readers!

Exploring nature can provide students with a valuable learning experience. Ask students to describe any experiences they have had at a nature park or nature center. Emphasize to your students that water plays an important role in sustaining all aspects of our natural environment.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.1

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Water Drips & Drops

It's fun to learn interesting facts about water. Trees are an important part of the hydrologic cycle, commonly called the water cycle. Transpiration is a process in which vapor is created when plants and trees give off moisture. Other parts of the hydrologic cycle include solar energy, evaporation, condensation, precipitation and percolation. If you need additional information, please contact the District.

Sunshine State Standards: SC.B.1.2.1

Pages 2 & 3

Feature Story

Before reading the story, ask students if they have ever visited a nature center. Allow time for students to share their personal experiences. Then read the story together. Ask students to predict what it may be like to visit a nature center they have never been to before. Ask them to tell about various living and nonliving things they would expect to see there. Discuss the similarities of visiting a nature center and taking a journey. Then ask students to complete the writing activity.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.5, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.5, SC.G.1.2.1, SC.G.1.2.2, SC.G.2.2.1

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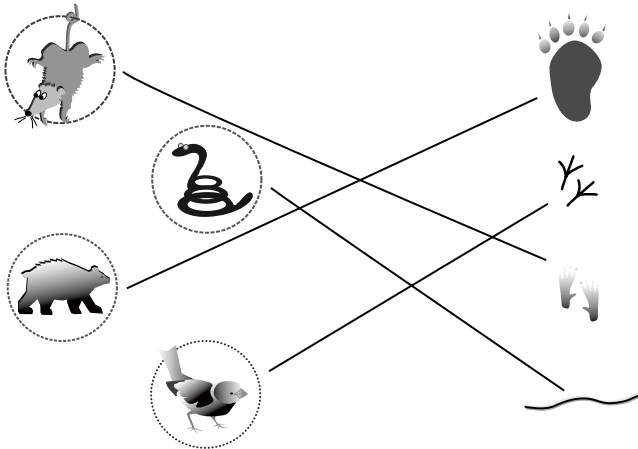
Take It Home

Discuss the important role water plays in keeping living things alive and healthy. Ask students what it means to be a nature observer. Provide examples such as watching a turtle cross a path, noticing the types of plants in different areas, seeing tracks made by an animal, etc. Using the chart, explain the different categories of living things and how they depend on water to stay alive and remain healthy. Explain the different sections of the chart and ask students to take it home and complete it. Ask students to compare their observations with other classmates. For an additional activity, combine all of the observations on a large poster and display it in the classroom.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.1, LA.B.2.2.3, SC.G.1.2.2

Select two students to play the roles of Darrell and Water Cycle Wanda. Ask the students to read their parts. Ask students to name places where they may find additional information about trees and the process of transpiration. Their answers may include the Internet, radio, TV, library, media center, etc. Try the experiment with your class and discuss the results.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.5, SC.G.1.2.3



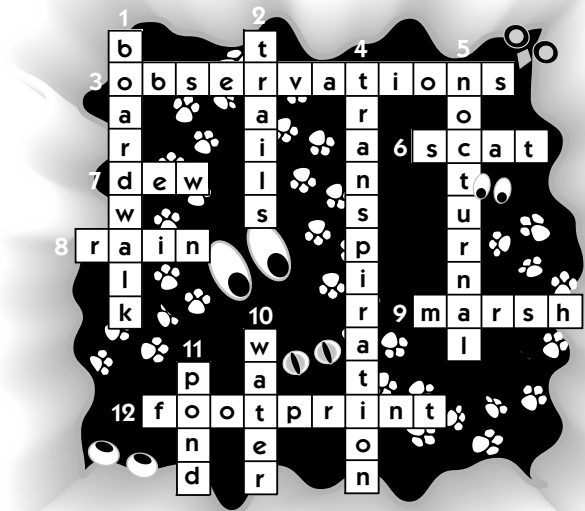
Before reading the background information about tracking animals, ask students if they have ever identified animal tracks outdoors. Let them share their personal experiences. Read the background information together and ask students to match each animal with its footprint. Help students to explain how they matched the animals with their tracks. Ask students why rainfall could affect animal markings.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.5, LA.B.2.2.3, LA.B.2.2.6

Before reading the article, ask students what it means to be a welcome visitor. Discuss the differences between being a welcome visitor and one who still needs to learn the right way to behave. Then read the article together and ask students to complete the sentences at the bottom of the page.

Sunshine State Standards: LA.A.2.2.1, LA.A.2.2.5, SS.C.2.2.2

Fill-in-the-Blank Answer Key:
pick (remove), paths (trails), noisy



To learn more about wildlife that can be found in a backyard, visit www.LindsaysBackyard.com. This site, which was developed by a fifth-grade student, also includes a place called WildlifeChat. On this page, visitors can post questions or let others know what they've seen in their backyards. As an extended activity, explore a few of the other activities associated with this Web site.

Discuss several reasons why nature parks are important to us. Then ask students to complete the activity. This closing activity can be submitted by an individual student or as a classroom set.

Many other free materials are available from the Southwest Florida Water Management District. We also offer water resources workshops for teachers in your county.

Please contact us at 1-800-423-1476, ext. 4757, if you have any questions or suggestions about our water resources education program. Visit our Web site at www.swfwmd.state.fl.us.

Southwest Florida
 Water Management District

