



AGE: 3+

DURATION: 10-15 minutes

GOAL: Deeper appreciation and wonder of the natural world as well as heightened observation skills.

RESOURCE PAGES: *Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature*, p. 25

Description

Children will spread out and find a special spot in nature. While in their special areas, the children will be invited to make observations of the natural world around them having the time, space, and permission to observe and reflect. This is a great activity to repeat different days/weeks/months so the children develop a deeper relationship with their special area and become in-tune with how it changes over time. Each time you allow yourself to spend time in one spot, your special place, you see and feel something different.

"Open the door of the world most humans never know--the private world of wildlife, the language of birds, and the beauty of being accepted into the expansive natural world where other life begins to feel comfortable having humans present. There is a magic that happens when this world opens up to us, and we begin to see things from a different perspective than the one we have in our other daily routines." --Jon Young, *Coyotes Guide*

Key Concepts

- Appreciation for and relationship development with nature
- Sensory awareness
- Observation skills
- Focusing attention

Materials

- Nature journal (optional)
- Pencil or pen (optional)

Preparation

- N/A

Opening Activities and Safety

- Opening circle
 - Discuss the activity. Each child will get to choose their own special space to observe the world around them and connect with nature.
 - Have them imagine that they are trees trying to silently root themselves in the ground.
 - Remind them to try and stay quiet and still - just like a tree!
- Never assign the sit spot. Have the children find their own area that they are comfortable with and drawn to.

- Educators may walk around quietly prompt the kids and/or pose questions such as:
 - Take time to notice the smell.
 - Feel free to close your eyes and pay attention to what you're hearing.
 - What does the ground feel like? Hard? Soft? Wet? Dry?
 - Do you feel the wind on your cheeks?
 - Take time to look for animals around you, some are tiny!

Questions to Pose

***** These should be asked after the sit spot time so the quiet atmosphere remains. *****

You can pose questions that help children form their own learning from direct observations outdoors. The purpose of these questions is not to explain or give answers, but to encourage children to listen, observe, inquire, discuss with each other, and arrive at conclusions on their own.

Questions may include:

- How did you feel before this activity? How do you feel now?
- What did your spot smell like?
- What else did you notice?
- Did you hear or see any animals? If so, which ones? What do you think they were doing?
- How would you describe your spot to someone who couldn't see it?
- What does the ground feel like?

Transitions

- Draw a map of your special place.
- Reflect and remember your special place and draw something you saw.
- Write a story or poem about what you felt or saw during your sit spot.

Closing Activities

- Closing circle
 - Invite the children to tell stories and share their experience while at their Sit Spot.
 - Use questions above to guide the discussion.

Background

An important note: Sit spots should be something that children are excited about and look forward to! They should never be used in place of a time out or punishment, this defeats the purpose.