

Outdoor Field Trips with Preschoolers: Follow Up!



After the class returns from an outdoor field trip, the teacher might offer a variety of follow-up activities to help the children build upon the experience.

Invite the children to recall their field trip experiences.

- To begin, involve the class in a casual conversation about the trip. What interesting things did they see and hear?
- Suggest to the children that they draw something they remember from the trip. Then they can dictate or write a few words about their drawings. The drawings can be the basis for more discussion about the trip.
- Let children report on specific tasks they carried out or any items they collected during the trip. If KaChuan and Micah collected acorns and pine cones and Sierra and Ben interviewed a park worker, be sure that they all have time during class meetings to share their experiences and findings and to answer classmates' questions.
- Help the children revisit the questions they asked before the trip. What answers did they find? If they predicted what some of the answers might be, ask how their findings compare with those predictions. What new questions do they have?

Help the class share information from the field trip with others.

- Work with small groups of children to create a book, Web page, or wall display about the trip. If the trip was part of project work, the display can be part of their project documentation. They might include specimens they collected; graphs of data; drawings, notes, and photographs; and a list of new vocabulary learned during the trip.
- Invite children to dictate the story of their trip while an adult writes their words on large paper or the computer. Encourage them to discuss the order of events. Display the completed story for parents and others to see.
- If the children collected objects during the trip, help them set up a table where they can label the items and explore them further.

Plan other activities to build on what the children learned during the field trip.

- Help the children write thank-you notes to the staff at the field trip site.
- Photocopy children's field sketches, then offer them paint and other materials so they can add details to the copies of their sketches. Provide clay, boxes, and other materials so they can make models of things they observed during the trip.
- Let children create a backdrop for dramatic play depicting the place they visited. Add some related props to the dramatic play area.
- Encourage children to look nearby for the kinds of animals, plants, rocks, etc., they saw during the trip.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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