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A Year in the Forest

“A Year in the Forest” Curriculum at Troy Gardens

A Note to Teachers

The activities provided in this curriculum guide are designed to be adapted for your needs and creativity. Most activities are adaptable based on place and grade level. Please be prepared to familiarize yourself with an outdoor space and with the activities in this guide before you share with students. You will notice that some pages are accompanied by photographs of neighborhood kids and participants taken during our programs. Capture your experiences by including photos with your lessons from year to year!

Please use an overhead transparency or a plastic sheet protector to help plan and learn from the lessons you choose from this curriculum guide. Many of the lessons have spaces provided for notes and observations. Place the lesson inside a plastic sheet protector or behind an overhead transparency to take notes with an overhead projection marker or dry erase marker while in the field and revisit upon return to the classroom. Lessons can be used over and over again!

Throughout the lessons, look for references guiding you to the appendices portion of the guide: “See Appendix” and “Resources.” Each appendix is organized by category and contains extra activities you can use to craft a unique lesson. Each chapter page lists a few suggested nature games and recipes for that particular season. Each appendix includes a number of activities not included in the four first chapters. Refer to the seasonal symbol next to an activity when working to create a seasonal lesson.

Resources for lessons include complementary worksheets and information sheets. Please add to this portion of the curriculum guide as you work through lessons. You will notice that each lesson in each of the four chapters includes a supply list; familiarize yourself with the lesson and the learning site by getting creative! As you learn with your students, please share your feedback with us; this guide is a work in progress and has the potential for new learning experiences throughout the year.

The “Bibliography of Helpful & Inspiring Resources” will lead you to information we found along the way; some sources we used, others we did not. In addition, visit libraries, Internet websites, and outdoor places – sites you choose for your educational experiences. Enjoy the research you conduct, the lessons and materials you craft, and the relationship you foster between your students and nature.

Please refer to Appendix VII for descriptions of each Wisconsin Model Academic Performance Standard for agricultural education, environmental education, and science met through lessons and activities in this curriculum guide. You will find the addressed standards for each lesson adjacent to that lesson within the four seasonal chapters.

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