

SIGNS, SIGNS EVERYWHERE THERE ARE SIGNS

Activity Description:

Using the classroom and/or outdoor space students are introduced to the concept of observing for signs of life.

OBJECTIVES:

STUDENTS WILL:

- * IDENTIFY SIGNS THAT HUMANS LEAVE BEHIND IN A SPACE
- * MAKE COMPARRISONS WITH SIGNS ANIMALS WILL LEAVE BEHIND

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- * RUBBER ANIMAL TRACKS
- * IND PADS
- * PLAIN WHITE PAPER
- * CRAYONS OR MARKERS

AZ SCIENCE STARDARDS

Strand 1. Inquiry Process
Concept 1: Observations, Questions, and Hypotheses

Concept 2: Scientific Testing (Investigating and Modeling)

Concept 3: Analysis and Conclusions

Concept 4: Communication

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

1) Have the students look around their classroom or other indoor space and see if there are way to tell that people have been in the area. If they need help, point out indicators such as the room lights are on, backpacks are hanging on wall-hooks or there is trash in the garbage can. Keep a record of their observations. Explain that what they have listed are signs or indicators that human beings have been on the room.

2.) Working in groups, ask the students to create a list of signs that an animal might leave behind. Some ideas might be a birds nest, tracks, or scat but there are many, many more. Write their ideas on the board.

3.) Take the students outside onto the school grounds. In the same groups, have the students slowly walk around and look for animal signs. One member of the group should be assigned to be the recorder for the group. Even if your school property does not have any trees or grass there are always animal signs around the property for the students to observe (bird droppings, feathers, ant hills, spider webs etc.)

4.) Return to the class and make a list of all the animal signs that the students found while out on their walk.

5.) Have the students hypothesize about what type of animal might have left/made each sign and explain why.

TRACK STORIES

In this activity students will use their knowledge to tell a story using animal tracks.

Each student should receive one piece of white paper (11" by 14" works the best.)

Somewhere in the room make available crayons, markers, pencils and any other art supplies the students may need to tell their story. Also, supply a wide variety of rubber animal tracks as well as ink pads.

Explain to the students that they are going to "tell a story" animal tracks and drawings rather than using words.

Using the materials provided they will draw and stamp a story about an animal interaction. (Example: mouse tracks around a cactus/cactus fruit eaten/mouse droppings/coyote tracks intersecting mouse tracks at cactus/coyote tracks are the only tracks leading away from the cactus)

Have students stand at the front of the room and tell the story of their drawing.

Display the drawings in the room as artwork and for other students to view.

