OUTDOORS ❀ GRADES 3-6 ❀ FALL, SPRING ❀ ACTIVITY

Six of One, Half Dozen of the Other

DESCRIPTION

Groups of students use multiple senses to find and classify contrasting objects in the natural environment.

OBJECTIVE

To use the senses to identify and classify objects in the garden laboratory.

MATERIALS

❀ One egg carton per group of three

PREPARATION

On the bottom of each egg carton write two words. One should be a likely quality of a garden object, such as "wet." The other should be its opposite ("dry"). Use words that will encourage students to use their senses, such as dark/light, rough/ smooth, dull/colorful, scented/ unscented, scratchy/ soft, etc. Label each carton with different opposites. To discourage unsupervised tasting, avoid opposites that refer to taste.

CLASS DISCUSSION

What senses can we use to explore opposites in the garden? In this activity you will be searching for objects that have a specific quality, and those that have the opposite quality. What are some examples of opposites?

ACTION

1. Divide the class into groups of three. Tell the class that each group will get a special collecting container in which to collect 12 items. They shouldn't let any other group see the secret information on the bottom of the carton.

2. Distribute the cartons and demonstrate to each group how the opposites should be placed, with six of each category in a long row. On the bottom of the carton are secret words that tell what category of objects to collect. Every group will be collecting different opposites.

3. Remind students to handle everything gently and to take only small specimens. Allow enough time for students to explore the site and gather the items.

4. When groups are finished, have them exchange cartons and try to determine the opposite categories that the other group collected without looking on the bottom of the carton.

5. Discuss strategies that groups used for identifying the other group's classification.

WRAP UP

What things that you collected felt the scratchiest, looked the most colorful, had the strongest scent, etc.? *(Include an answer from each group about the best example in each category.)* How did you find objects for each category?