

First Grade / Winter Walk / At A Glance

Animals and How they Survive Winter ☐ 30 minutes

Goals

- Observe changes in schoolyard since the fall
- Learn how animals survive in the winter (migrate, adapt, hibernate)
- Discover resources available to animals that stay and note changes in resources
- Look for animals and their signs – scat, tracks

Ask Questions to Begin the Walk

☐ 2-3 minutes

- *How has the schoolyard changed since last fall?* (air, water, flowers, trees, sun, ground)
- *What do all living things need to survive?* (6 basic needs of life)
 - Air - *Is everyone breathing?*
 - Warmth - *Are you wearing a coat?*
 - Food - *Who had breakfast?*
 - Water – *How long would you last without water?*
 - Shelter - *Who woke up this morning in a house or apartment?*
 - Protection - *Is anyone's house in the middle of a highway?*
- *How do changes of winter affect animals that live near the school?* (Harder to meet basic needs)
- *What happens to animals if they can't find these basic needs?*

Discuss Ways Animals Survive the Winter

☐ 2-3 minutes

- Migrate: travel to warmer places (Birds and monarch butterflies)
- Hibernate: body slows down, temp drops, slower breathing & heart rate. Prepare in fall by eating extra and storing extra food as fat to be used as they hibernate (Woodchuck, jumping mouse, brown bat).
 - * Bears, skunk, raccoons, chipmunks sleep for part of winter but do not really hibernate.
- Lay eggs / leave larva and die: (spiders, insects)
- Adapt & Stay active: grow extra fur, gather extra food in the fall, eat different foods in winter
 - Mammals: rabbits, squirrels, mice, fox, coyote, dog, skunk, hawk, raccoon, opossum
 - Birds: Chickadees, bluejays, sparrows, woodpeckers, crows, Canada geese, red-tailed hawks, juncos, starlings, cardinals

Transition: *What animals stay active around school during the winter? Where can they find food, water and shelter? Let's go look.*

Explore Various Sites Around the School

☐ 20 minutes

Look for the Basic Needs of Life

- *What kinds of food will animals find here?* (berries, nuts, seeds, acorn, pine cones, larva in tree barks and galls, dead animals, prey)
- *Water?* (melting snow, puddles, brook)
- *What kinds of shelters can they find here?* (burrows, holes in trees or ground, brush piles, nests, mouse tunnels under snow)

Look for Evidence of Animals:

- Tracks: *What animal made these? Which way was it going (toes)? Was it Running? Hopping?*
- Scat: guess which animal based on size
- Owl Pellets: these are not scat, thrown up, found under tree
- Shelters: nests, burrows, etc

Snow Blanket

☐ 2-3 minutes

Work with the children to identify the tracks and discuss how these animals cope with winter.

Wrap up

☐ 2-3 minutes

What did you discover about changes to plants and animals in the winter?

This summary does not replace the Walk Guide.
Activities, their order, and duration will vary depending on your group dynamics and weather.