



Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Projects

and the

Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

Developing and using a wildlife habitat area can assist your students in meeting several of the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. The items listed below are suggestions. Please do not be limited by them. The interdisciplinary nature of the habitat area can allow you to incorporate many standards into your lessons.

Language Arts

A wildlife habitat garden can be a source of inspiration for language arts activities in all of its stages: planning; implementing; maintaining; and enjoying. Students can use their observations and experiences as the sources for questioning, recording, writing, relating and other language-based lessons.

- 1.A.ECa Follow simple one-, two- and three-step directions.
- 1.A.ECb Respond appropriately to questions from others.
- 1.A.ECc Provide comments relevant to the context.
- 1.B.ECa Use language for a variety of purposes.
- 1.B.ECb With teacher assistance, participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about age-appropriate topics and texts.
- 1.B.ECc Continue a conversation through two or more exchanges.
- 1.C.ECa Describe familiar people, places, things and events and, with teacher assistance, provide additional detail.
- 5.B.ECa With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating or writing to express an opinion about a book or topic.
- 5.B.ECb With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating or writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
- 5.B.ECc With teacher assistance, use a combination of drawing, dictating or writing to narrate a single event and provide a reaction to what happened.
- 5.C.ECa Participate in group projects or units of study designed to learn about a topic of interest.
- 5.C.ECb With teacher assistance, recall factual information and share that information through drawing, dictating or writing.

Mathematics

The wildlife habitat garden can be used for many mathematics-related activities. Counting seeds or plants, estimating numbers needed or plants that will grow, comparing shapes, spacing plants, measuring growth by using tools, sorting, questioning, gathering data, organizing data and making predictions are all benchmarks that can be a part of learning about the plants and animals in your wildlife habitat area.

- 6.A.ECa Count with understanding and recognize “how many” in small sets up to 5.
- 6.A.ECd Connect numbers to quantities they represent using physical models and informal representations.
- 7.A.ECa Compare, order and describe objects according to a single attribute.
- 7.A.ECb Use nonstandard units to measure attributes such as length and capacity.
- 7.A.ECc Use vocabulary that describes and compares length, height, weight, capacity and size.
- 7.A.ECd Begin to construct a sense of time through participation in daily activities.
- 7.B.ECa Practice estimating in everyday play and everyday measurement problems.
- 7.C.ECa With teacher assistance, explore use of measuring tools that use standard units to measure objects and quantities that are meaningful to the child.
- 8.A.ECa Sort, order, compare and describe objects according to characteristics or attribute(s).
- 9.B.ECa Show understanding of location and ordinal position.
- 10.A.ECa With teacher assistance, come up with meaningful questions that can be answered through gathering information.
- 10.A.ECb Gather data about themselves and their surroundings to answer meaningful questions.
- 10.B.ECa Organize, represent and analyze information using concrete objects, pictures and graphs, with teacher support.
- 10.B.ECb Make predictions about the outcome prior to collecting information, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

Science

Nearly all of the science-related standards can be supported with a wildlife habitat area. Students can explore, ask questions, make models, compare textures and shapes, experiment, observe, measure, record and analyze data, note changes over time, use tools, learn safety techniques and report on what they have discovered. They can use the garden to study the plants as well as the animals that are attracted to the area and the physical factors of the area, too.

- 11.A.ECa Express wonder and curiosity about the world by asking questions, solving problems and designing things.
- 11.A.ECb Develop and use models to represent their ideas, observations and explanations through approaches such as drawing, building or modeling with clay.
- 11.A.ECc Plan and carry out simple investigations.
- 11.A.ECd Collect, describe compare and record information from observations and investigations.
- 11.A.ECe Use mathematical and computational thinking.
- 11.A.ECf Make meaning from experience and information by describing, talking and thinking about what happened during an investigation.
- 11.A.ECg Generate explanations and communicate ideas and/or conclusions about their investigations.
- 12.A.ECa Observe, investigate, describe and categorize living things.
- 12.A.ECb Show an awareness of changes that occur in oneself and the environment.

- 12.B.ECa Describe and compare basic needs of living things.
- 12.B.ECb Show respect for living things.
- 12.C.ECa Identify, describe and compare the physical properties of objects.
- 12.E.ECa Observe and describe characteristics of earth, air and water.
- 13.A.ECa Begin to understand basic safety practices one must follow when exploring and engaging in science and engineering investigations.
- 13.B.ECa Use nonstandard and standard scientific tools for investigation.
- 13.B.ECb Become familiar with technological tools that can aid in scientific inquiry.

Physical Development and Health

Planting and maintaining the wildlife habitat area provide regular opportunities for children to work cooperatively on a project while engaging in beneficial physical activities.

- 19.A.ECb Move with balance and control in a range of physical activities.
- 19.A.ECc Use strength and control to accomplish tasks.
- 19.A.ECd Use eye-hand coordination to perform tasks.
- 19.B.ECa Coordinate movements to perform complex tasks.
- 19.B.ECc Combine large motor movements with and without the use of equipment.
- 19.C.ECa Follow simple safety rules while participating in activities.
- 21.A.ECa Follow rules and procedures when participating in group physical activities.
- 21.A.ECb Follow directions, with occasional adult reminders, during group activities.
- 21.B.ECa Demonstrate ability to cooperate with others during group physical activities.
- 22.A.ECc Identify and follow basic safety rules.

The Arts

Most of the art-related standards can be applied to the habitat area. Students can use the garden as a focal point for drama, dance, music and visual arts.

English Language Learners

The students can learn the names of tools, plants and animals of the garden in more than one language and use their knowledge to communicate with family, friends and classmates.

Social/Emotional Development

Working cooperatively with others on the development and maintenance of the garden can help children develop positive self-esteem and friendships.

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