

Along the Severn Shoreline



*A Playground
Expedition*

Along the Severn Shoreline is a program designed to engage Playgrounders in an exploration of objects and organisms found along a sandy shore and exercise their powers of observation and capacity to compare and contrast living things. Playgrounders are asked to predict, make comparisons, and observe living and once living organisms within this explorative investigation. Shells, fossils, horseshoe crabs, terrapins, fish, and waterfowl are some of the organisms and objects that the students will view and discuss.

Along the Severn Shoreline emphasizes the process and investigative and provides opportunities for counting and drawing. In the conduct of this lesson Playgrounders:

- learn about organisms found along a shore
- explore items found on a sandy beach
- a shoreline is any place where land and water meet
- many non-living things can be found along a shore
- utilizes appropriate senses in order to gather observational data
- utilizes developmentally appropriate equipment during investigations
- utilizes various communication techniques (oral and pictorial) in order to report investigation results
- classifies objects by comparing their similarities and their differences to other objects

Resources

Beach Organisms

Sand box prepared with hidden beach objects

Books about life along the shore.

Art supplies to make a “shore” mural.

Lesson Plan

(5E Format: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate)

Engage

Playgrounders using connections to their prior knowledge are asked to identify some of the animals around the Playground, or in the Nature Lab. A discussion is elicited about the needs of animals, including where they live. Some animals will be identified as living in or near a salt water environment while others live near or in fresh water. The distinction will be made between the shoreline at the seashore and the shoreline (bank) along a pond, river or stream. Students will be asked to share some shore places that they have visited.

Explore

Introduce several vocabulary words including shore, pond, river, stream and bank. Some of the animals discussed at the beginning of class will be referred to as egg-laying animals found along a shore. Counselors should evoke predictions what might be found at Robinhood Beach, or Terrapin Beach located at the headwaters of Brewer Creek (Idle River).

Playgrounders should then form a ring around the Playground sandbox. The sandbox is prepared

ahead of time with numerous seashells and other common shoreline objects. Playgrounders are permitted to search the sandbox for objects. Counselors coach Playgrounders on points of participation and cooperation and conduct ad hoc conversations about their findings. Discussions should elicit observation descriptions (size, color, identification, markings).

Playgrounders then come together to discuss their findings. Questioning should not only be on a catalog of what was found, but also what was not found that might be found along Sherwood's shoreline. Use this to peak interest in taking a *scientific expedition* to Dog Beach (adjacent to Little John Pier), or Terrapin Beach.

Playgrounders conduct their exploration of Dog and/or Terrapin Beach. All counselors provided 360 degree security during this shoreline trip. Ample time should be allowed so that no Playgrounder feels rushed ("Americans on vacation"). Playgrounders should be allowed to keep all safe and appropriate finds such as small rocks & shells. On-going dialogue should be encouraged between Playgrounders and with staff in discussing their finds, notions of the shoreline, and sharing of prior knowledge. All academic features of the lesson are subordinate to the enjoyment of exploring the shoreline.

Elaborate

The next day discuss the trip to the shoreline. Discuss findings, observations, and prior predictions. Elicit responses related to similarities and differences between the sandbox and the shoreline, between the shoreline and a stream bank. Ask students if they would like to go back and perhaps explore what lives in the water. Use this to capture interest for a follow-on expedition to investigate things that live in the water.

Evaluate

Evaluation is measured informally throughout the lesson. Playgrounder assessment is in accordance with the 8 learning objectives listed above and their level of cooperation using the below assessment tool. Counselors should provide comment to the Playground Director for improvement of this activity.

Cooperative Learning Self - Evaluation

1. Did I take turns and do my job?
2. Did I get along with others?
3. Did I follow directions?
4. Did I listen to others?
5. Did I clean up?