

Outdoor Learning Support Group Minutes – Thursday, February 16th

Present: Rebecka Riddell-McKay, Megan Arlt, Tena Milne, Caren Nagao, Margot McMullan, Margo Reinders, Sandra Beckett

Walk and Talk (or was it Slip and Slide?) – walk on trail beside the Kicking Horse River

Rebecka – Walk-stop-walk back and address group; talk about something you see/observe; focus it further i.e. by natural items

Margot Mc – Single file on trail with hidere and findere; hidere have 5 minutes to hide on trail and then can't move; findere move forward with stops (but not backward) and then tell leader how many they found

Extensions: “un-nature” trail placing human-made objects on the trail and have students notice “un-natural” things (Rebecka); place plastic animals on trail (Sandra); observe tracks; look for ten natural things and discuss why these things are located where they are (Margo R)

Discussion on how to control disturbance to natural environment/ park's ethics/ whose place is it?

Megan – Visualization activity to remember oral stories

Choose a place that is meaningful to you and that you can travel through with 8 specific locations

1st – Forest

2nd – Fire

3rd – Animal running, birds flying overhead

4th – Stream

5th – Hummingbird

6th – Dripping water

7th – Rabbit

8th – Bear

Story: The Flight of the Hummingbird

The story begins with the Great Forest catching on fire. The terrible fire raged and burned. All of the animals were afraid and fled from their homes. Above them, the birds flew in panic. They huddled at the stream at the edge of the forest. All of the creatures gathered and stared at the fire in fear. All but one. The tiny hummingbird, Dukdukdiya, would not abandon the forest. She flies to the stream, picks up a single drop of water, and drops it in the raging fire. Again and again she continues her efforts against the inferno at great personal risk. The other animals watch on the outskirts, warning Dukdukdiya of the dangers; they insist that there is nothing they can do in such a situation. The rabbit wanted to help but was scared of the heat from the fire. Dukdukdiya listens, but persists with her task. Finally, the Bear, one of the biggest creatures in the forest, asks her what she was hoping to accomplish. Without stopping, she looked down at the animals and said, “I am doing what I can.”

(Lessons: taking small steps towards action; committed to making change.)

Based on the stories “The Flight of the Hummingbird” and “The Little Hummingbird” by Michael Yahgulanaas and the Dalia Lama

-Retrace the events of this story in your personal space

Rebecka – face the mountains (or something of beauty) so children are inspired by nature even if they are not fully participating

- Resource - Five Minute Field Trips: Simile Stroll, Make-a-Park

<http://www.abcee.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/5min-fieldtrips.pdf>

Other discussions/ideas:

- revisiting same spots/areas to observe seasonal changes
- challenge of recent cold weather
- benefit of full days outside, Confluence (Caren)
- how to get additional adult support/supervision
- Wetlands (Margot Mc)
- risk assessment and requirements around water
- Thursdays @ Horseshoe Club activities: signs of animals in snow, shelters for local animals using stuffies; camouflage of animals in snow using polar bear; games; creating snow animals/ Monday walks: various routes (Tena)
- Inclusion – looking for a resource to be proactive (Caren)
 - parents (and O.T.) as resource; make a plan of what child can/can not do; list of places with greater accessibility would be helpful (Rebecka)
 - need for common understanding of what inclusion means – that it we adapt so everyone is able to participate regardless of behavioural or physical challenges (Margo R)
 - this might be a suitable topic for a future meeting**
- Would like to increase participation of high school teachers. Suggestion of an after school session during August professional development days.
- Please forward any book suggestions to Sandra Beckett and she will ask Cheryl Lenardon to purchase for the EE Library. Contact Sandra if you would like to borrow any books.

Next Meeting : Hosted by Nicholson Staff in early Spring

Thank you to Rebecka Riddell-McKay and Megan Arlt for planning this session! Thank you to everyone who was able to participate.