

ABC Hike

Unit divides into groups which attempt to find natural objects beginning with each letter of the alphabet. The group finding the most wins.

Animal Stories

The girls follow a map to meet up with different animals that are indigenous to the area. When they reach the location of a particular animal (preferably in its natural habitat) they spent some time listening to the animal's story and asking questions before moving on to the next animal. The 'animals' can be adult volunteers or older girls, dressed up in costumes. Each volunteer is given information on their particular animal to relate to the girls.

Back to Back Hike

Gather items found on the ground near the campsite, such as rocks, sticks, or leaves. Pair the girls up and have them stand back to back. Give one girl an item and have them describe it to their partner. The partner guesses what the item is.

Blind Hike

Blindfold the girls or have them close their eyes. Have them form a line, holding hands. Lead them on a hike. They cannot talk while hiking, but they can find other ways to communicate if they need to step over something or around something. Have them listen to things they would not hear if they were talking.

Bubble Gum Hike

Equipment:

- Bubble Gum
- Paper Plates

Pick a theme for a hike: eg, trees, rocks, bugs - anything you would find outdoors that relates to whatever you are studying. Give each girl two or three pieces of gum to chew. Take them on a hike (around the neighborhood or around the campsite). While they are hiking they can pick up interesting "stuff" - leaves, rocks, bark, etc. - whatever you choose for the theme of your hike. When they find something to pick up they attach it to their paper plate with a wad of chewed gum! When you get back to the meeting place, compare "stuff" and discuss their discoveries.

Catch a Raindrop

As you hike along in the rain, catch a "drop" of rain water in your hands and taste it. Walk along with your tongue stuck out to get a taste of rain water.

Color Swatches

Cut small squares of construction paper and hook them together. Give each girl a set of color swatches to use during a walk. They should try to find something in nature to match the colors. After the walk, talk about what each person found for the different colors.

Thanks very much to Liz for sending me this idea! She writes:

"A variation to the construction paper color hike is to use paint chip samples from the paint store. They come in more interesting and unusual colors. It's surprising how many shades of purple and pink are in nature!"

Crayon Hike

Have each girl select 3 or more crayons from a box. Take a hike and try to find as many things that match the color of the crayons as possible.

Drippy Walk

Take a walk during a rain and explore different smells, colors, and tastes. Look for animals that like the rain and places where soil is eroding. Discuss with the girls ideas on how to prevent soil from eroding.

Friends

On a hike, girls find a leaf, a rock, a stick or a pine cone—something that can be their friend. After the hike, have each girl share why she chose that object to be her friend.

Gathering Hike

Take the girls on a hike, having them gather items they find on the ground. When they get back to the campsite, have them glue the items to paper to make a collage.

Images

You will need leaves, rocks, etc. In a circle, pass around an object. As each girl sees it, she says something different than anyone has said about the object. When object has been seen by all, it is returned to its natural world.

Magnifying Hike

Give each girl a 3' piece of string and an inexpensive magnifying glass. Have girls put their string over an area. Tell them to pretend they are the size of ants. They must crawl on their bellies to view their own special area. Ask questions: What kind of wood are you traveling through? Who are your neighbors? What is the spider going to do? Eat you or take you for a ride? Ask any fun, thought provoking questions girls can enjoy.

Extension of activity: For your older girls, have them draw maps of their area. The more advanced the girls, the more advanced the map they should draw. Start with simple line drawings for maps and eventually graduate to topographical type maps.

Meet a Tree

Pair the girls off by two. One girl is blindfolded and her partner leads her to a tree. The partner helps the "blind" child to explore her tree and to feel its uniqueness. Specific suggestions are best. For example, can you put your arms around the tree? Is the tree still living? Animal signs where branches have been? When the blindfolded girl is finished exploring, her partner leads her back to the starting point by an indirect route. Remove the blindfold and let the girl try to find her tree.

Monogram Walk

On a hike have each girl see, hear, touch or smell objects that begin with the initials of her name. After the walk, have girls share what they found.

One Hundred Inch Walk

Assign each group of two or three girls a plot of land about 100 inches square (10" x 10"). Have them spend at least 10 minutes doing an intensive exploration and writing down what they found in their 100" area. Try to pick an area that will have a variety of conditions (ant hill, plant variety, a tree, etc.)

Onion Hike

You will need some onions. One group rubs onions on trees to indicate the trail for another group. The second group follows the trail by sniffing around!

Pass It Back

On a hike, the leader picks up several objects. Objects are then passed back down the line of hikers for all to see. The last person then places the object on the ground.

Penny Hike

Give each girl a penny. Have them go on a hike and find items that will fit on a penny. Remind them that they are not to pick anything that is alive.

Rain Scents

Walk out into a nearby area while it is raining. As you walk along, take a deep breath and smell the rain; get very nosy. Breathe in as deeply as you can, then let your breath out slowly. What kinds of smells can you find on the breezes?

Sharing Walk

You will need a number of blindfolds. Divide girls into pairs. One person will wear the blindfold, the other will be the guide. Discuss safety rules. In silence, the guides take their partner on a local hike, hearing, smelling, feeling nature. After 5 minutes, switch. Have girls share after all have had a turn.

Sketching Walk

You will need crayons and paper for each girl. Decide on a destination and upon arrival pass out paper and crayons and let girls draw what they see. When you get back, have an art exhibit.

Smell Rain Tree

Have everyone put on rain gear and head for an open area in the rain. Have girls become trees by taking off their hoods, hold their bare arms out and let the rain fall on their faces. Have them sway as the wind blows. Share how they feel about the experience.

String Nature Hike

Divide the girls into pairs. Give each pair a piece of string 6 to 8 inches long. The first girl takes the string and tosses it to the ground then proceeds to take the other girl on a tour along the string.

Symphony

Make a fist with each hand. Right hand will count sounds of nature; left hand will count sounds made by mankind. Talk about the sounds you might hear, then with silence have girls listen and count. After a minute have girls share what they heard.

Treasure Hunt

You will need paper and pencils. Make a list of things to see. Send two patrols off in opposite directions to see which can find them all first.

Walking in the Woods Game

Teach the girls how to walk quietly in the woods by taking steps going from the outside of the foot to the inside, slowly. Have them practice while they are on the hike. When you reach an area that has a lot of forest floor litter (twigs and old leaves are great), but is open enough to move around in, you can play a game using the technique to move quietly. One person is chosen to be a sleeping animal, and one person is a referee. Everyone else spreads out in a circle then tries to sneak up on the animal. As the animal hears a noise she can point towards it (without opening her eyes) and the referee determines whether the animal has heard someone sneaking up on them. The caught 'sneaker' sits down in place and is out of the game. The game continues until either the animal has caught all its predators or until a predator has caught the animal by getting close enough to tag it. At first the girls will give themselves away by either moving noisily or giggling. But as you repeat it, they will improve and the animal will get caught. It leaves a great impression on the girls and future hikes will provide more nature experiences as the girls learn the importance of hiking quietly.

Egg Carton Walk

Give each girl an egg carton to carry during the walk. In the bottom of each egg cup, have a description (i.e. hard, smooth, rough, etc.). The girls collect items along the way, then compare at the end. They can take their souvenirs home as a reminder of their outdoor experiences.

Name Walk

Walk in a line with your hands on the shoulders of the girl ahead of you. Each girl must find something that begins with the first letter of her name, and call it out.

Scent Walk

Buy inexpensive sponges (all the same color) and cut them into small squares. Soak equal numbers of squares in different scents (eg. 6 vanilla, 6 mint, 6 soy sauce, etc). Each patrol will have a specific scent. Have the older girls lay trails for each patrol - use trail signs with a scented square at each sign. This way, when the patrols follow their trail, they can smell the sponge to make sure that they are going the right way!

Un-Nature Walk

Plant 15-20 man-made items along the trail (they could all be items relating to a theme). Have the girls work in pairs, leaving a few minutes between groups. The girls are not to disturb the items, just write down what they see.

Unusual Object Walk

Give each girl a bag to place an unusual object in during the walk. At the end, compare objects - anything that is the same as what someone else has is disqualified. The most unusual objects win!