

LESSON: Earth Circle of Life

GRADE: 2

OBJECTIVES:

English Language Arts

Writing-

Text Types & Purposes

- **W.2.2** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Physical Education

- **Standard 5:** Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Large yellow ball
- 9" x 12" white paper or cardboard (each piece with a word representing elements of the biosphere: sun, plants, soil, rocks, air, rain, clouds, rivers, oceans, lakes, ponds, wetlands, stars, moon, people, life and death)
- Additional writing paper and pencil for each child
- Markers or crayons

PRESENTATION:

American Indians used the circle symbol to represent the unity of all things and the balance of cycles that perpetuate life: cycles of life and death, nutrients, tides, stars, moons and seasons, water, gases, and of giving and receiving. Explain that in this activity, we will be honoring the Earth for what it gives us, and pledging ways that we will take care of the Earth. List the elements of biosphere/Earth (as listed in materials) where students can see. Have students participate in describing what each of element does, and list this next to the word. (A list of suggestions is available at the end of the lesson.) If the class is large, a few children can share a part.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pass out cards or paper with the elements of Earth written on it.
2. Have students write on the back of the card the function of that particular element. Then make a picture or symbol of it, using crayons or markers on the front.
3. Gather the class into a circle, holding their part of the Earth paper.
4. Have the sun (a child carrying the yellow ball) enter the circle and tell what the sun provides to all living things. The ball should be left in the center of the circle.
5. Have each part of the Earth come into the center one at a time, telling what their element or part provides to the system of Earth. The cards will be left in the center near the sun, and children will return to the edge of the circle until all cards are in the center.
6. Pass out writing paper and pencils, and while still in the circle, have students write one or more things he or she promises to do to take care of the Earth.
7. Also on this paper, have students write a poem, short letter or short story expressing thanks for the gifts the Earth gives us.
8. One at a time, each child will come into the center and read their promise or story.

TIME:

100-120 minutes

PROCESSING THROUGH THE SIX PILLARS:

WHAT HAPPENED?

- How do the different parts of the Earth work together?

SO WHAT?

- What will you do to care for the Earth?

NOW WHAT?

- Who can you tell about the parts of the Earth and how they work together?
- How can you share your story or poem about the Earth?

DESCRIPTIONS FOR CARDS:

- sun – gives light, heat and energy for plants to grow
- plants – use sun to make food and oxygen for living things
- soil and rocks – feed plants to make them grow
- air – gives breath of life to living things
- water – quenches thirst and brings life to all plants and animals
- seasons- spring, summer, fall and winter bring change: heat and cold, wet and dry, sleep and wakefulness, new life and old
- animals – feed people and each other, pollinate flowers and sow plant seeds,
- stars and moon – light the night sky, guide the way and bring the tides
- people – care for the Earth
- life and death – Life brings living things where there were none before. Death makes room for new life.