ACTIVITY MODIFICATIONS FOR GROWING UP WILD™:

SUPPORTING YOUNG LEARNERS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education: Natural Science and Environmental Education.

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Project Summary

Overview

Research demonstrates that time spent outdoors has positive effects on a person's health and well-being. Children exposed to the outdoors receive vitamin D, fresh air, gross motor development, all in turn correlate to skeletal and muscle development and strong immune systems (Bento & Dias, 2017). Increased attention spans, a decrease in undesirable behaviors and data recall have been shown to coincide in young children are associated with time spent in nature (Children & Nature Network, 2016).

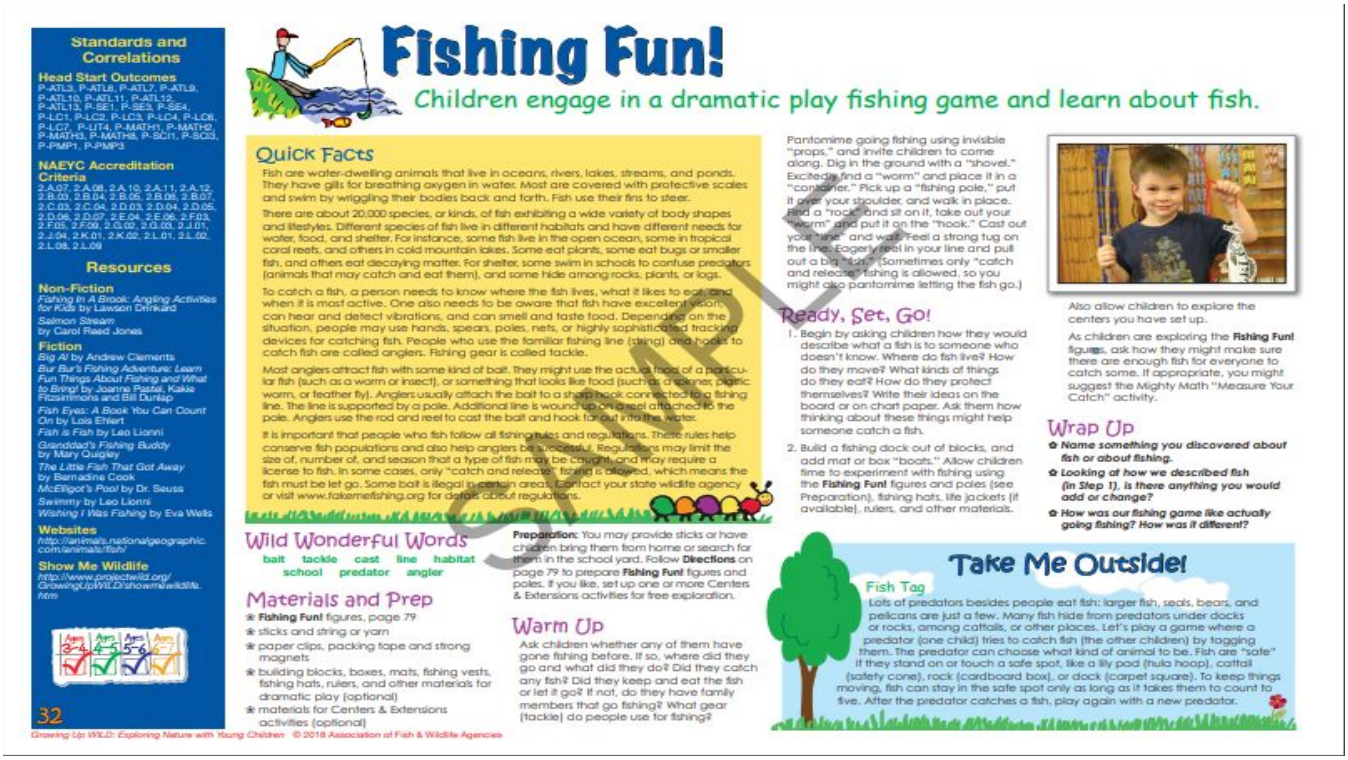
However, there are not many curriculum or activity resources available that deal specifically with outdoor learning and young children with ASD. The aim of this project was to address the research question *what are the best ways to modify the Growing Up WILD™ curriculum to best support young learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?*

The Growing Up WILD™ curriculum is designed for children three to seven years old. The curriculum guide offers 27 activities that "builds on children's sense of wonder about nature and invites them to explore wildlife and the world around them" (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, n.d., para. 1). Each activity connects children to the natural world by use of centers and extension activities, bringing nature indoors, nature play, math, language and literacy connections, music and art, and healthy snacks. Each activity is developed with developmentally appropriate practices and is correlated to Head Start Domains and connections to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). While each activity has the same format, there are age recommendations for the activities, broken down into categories of ages 3-4, 4-5, 5-6, and 6-7. Background information for the educator is given for each activity, as well

as vocabulary words, a list of materials needed for the activity, as well as home connections pages to extend learning outside of the educational setting. Each activity is flexible to be used as a standalone component or as an entire unit (Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children, 2009).

Illustrative Example of Growing Up WILD™ Activity

The following activity is a sample from the Growing Up WILD™ curriculum guide[1].



Standards and Correlations

Head Start Outcomes
P-ATL3, P-ATL6, P-ATL7, P-ATL9, P-ATL10, P-ATL11, P-ATL12, P-ATL13, P-SE1, P-SE3, P-SE4, P-LC1, P-LC2, P-LC3, P-LC4, P-LC6, P-LC7, P-LIT4, P-MATH1, P-MATH2, P-MATH3, P-MATH8, P-SCI1, P-SCI3, P-PMP1, P-PMP3

NAEYC Accreditation Criteria
2.A.07, 2.A.08, 2.A.10, 2.A.11, 2.A.12, 2.B.03, 2.B.04, 2.B.05, 2.B.06, 2.B.07, 2.C.03, 2.C.04, 2.D.03, 2.D.04, 2.D.05, 2.D.06, 2.D.07, 2.E.04, 2.E.06, 2.F.03, 2.F.05, 2.F.09, 2.G.02, 2.G.03, 2.I.01, 2.I.04, 2.K.01, 2.K.02, 2.L.01, 2.L.02, 2.L.08, 2.L.09

Resources

Non-Fiction
Fishing In A Brook: Angling Activities for Kids by Lawson Drinkard
Salmon Stream by Carol Reed Jones

Fiction
Big Al by Andrew Clements
Bur Bur's Fishing Adventure: Learn Fun Things About Fishing and What to Bring! by Joanne Pastal, Kakie Fitzsimmons and Bill Dunlap
Fish Eyes: A Book You Can Count On by Lois Ehlert
Fish is Fish by Leo Lionni
Granddad's Fishing Buddy by Mary Quigley
The Little Fish That Got Away by Bernadine Cook
McElligot's Pool by Dr. Seuss
Swimmy by Leo Lionni
Wishing I Was Fishing by Eva Wells

Websites
http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/fish/

Show Me Wildlife
http://www.projectwild.org/GrowingUpWILD/showmewildlife.htm

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Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children © 2018 Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Fishing Fun!

Children engage in a dramatic play fishing game and learn about fish.

Quick Facts

Fish are water-dwelling animals that live in oceans, rivers, lakes, streams, and ponds. They have gills for breathing oxygen in water. Most are covered with protective scales and swim by wriggling their bodies back and forth. Fish use their fins to steer.

There are about 20,000 species, or kinds, of fish exhibiting a wide variety of body shapes and lifestyles. Different species of fish live in different habitats and have different needs for water, food, and shelter. For instance, some fish live in the open ocean, some in tropical coral reefs, and others in cold mountain lakes. Some eat plants, some eat bugs or smaller fish, and others eat decaying matter. For shelter, some swim in schools to confuse predators (animals that may catch and eat them), and some hide among rocks, plants, or logs.

To catch a fish, a person needs to know where the fish lives, what it likes to eat, and when it is most active. One also needs to be aware that fish have excellent vision, can hear and detect vibrations, and can smell and taste food. Depending on the situation, people may use hands, spears, poles, nets, or highly sophisticated tracking devices for catching fish. People who use the familiar fishing line (string) and hooks to catch fish are called anglers. Fishing gear is called tackle.

Most anglers attract fish with some kind of bait. They might use the actual food of a particular fish (such as a worm or insect), or something that looks like food (such as a spinner, plastic worm, or feather fly). Anglers usually attach the bait to a sharp hook connected to a fishing line. The line is supported by a pole. Additional line is wound up on a reel attached to the pole. Anglers use the rod and reel to cast the bait and hook far out into the water.

It is important that people who fish follow all fishing rules and regulations. These rules help conserve fish populations and also help anglers be successful. Regulations may limit the size of, number of, and season that a type of fish may be caught, and may require a license to fish. In some cases, only "catch and release" fishing is allowed, which means the fish must be let go. Some bait is illegal in certain areas. Contact your state wildlife agency or visit www.takemefishing.org for details about regulations.

Wild Wonderful Words

bait tackle cast line habitat school predator angler

Materials and Prep

- **Fishing Fun!** figures, page 79
- sticks and string or yarn
- paper clips, packing tape and strong magnets
- building blocks, boxes, mats, fishing vests, fishing hats, rulers, and other materials for dramatic play (optional)
- materials for Centers & Extensions activities (optional)

Preparation: You may provide sticks or have children bring them from home or search for them in the school yard. Follow **Directions** on page 79 to prepare **Fishing Fun!** figures and poles. If you like, set up one or more Centers & Extensions activities for free exploration.

Warm Up

Ask children whether any of them have gone fishing before. If so, where did they go and what did they do? Did they catch any fish? Did they keep and eat the fish or let it go? If not, do they have family members that go fishing? What gear (tackle) do people use for fishing?

Pantomime going fishing using invisible "props," and invite children to come along. Dig in the ground with a "shovel." Excitedly find a "worm" and place it in a "container." Pick up a "fishing pole," put it over your shoulder, and walk in place. Find a "rock" and sit on it, take out your "worm" and put it on the "hook." Cast out your "line" and wait. Feel a strong tug on the line. Eagerly reel in your line and pull out a big "fish." (Sometimes only "catch and release" fishing is allowed, so you might also pantomime letting the fish go.)

Ready, Set, Go!

1. Begin by asking children how they would describe what a fish is to someone who doesn't know. Where do fish live? How do they move? What kinds of things do they eat? How do they protect themselves? Write their ideas on the board or on chart paper. Ask them how thinking about these things might help someone catch a fish.
2. Build a fishing dock out of blocks, and add mat or box "boats." Allow children time to experiment with fishing using the **Fishing Fun!** figures and poles (see Preparation), fishing hats, life jackets (if available), rulers, and other materials.

Also allow children to explore the centers you have set up.

As children are exploring the **Fishing Fun!** figures, ask how they might make sure there are enough fish for everyone to catch some. If appropriate, you might suggest the Mighty Math "Measure Your Catch" activity.

Wrap Up

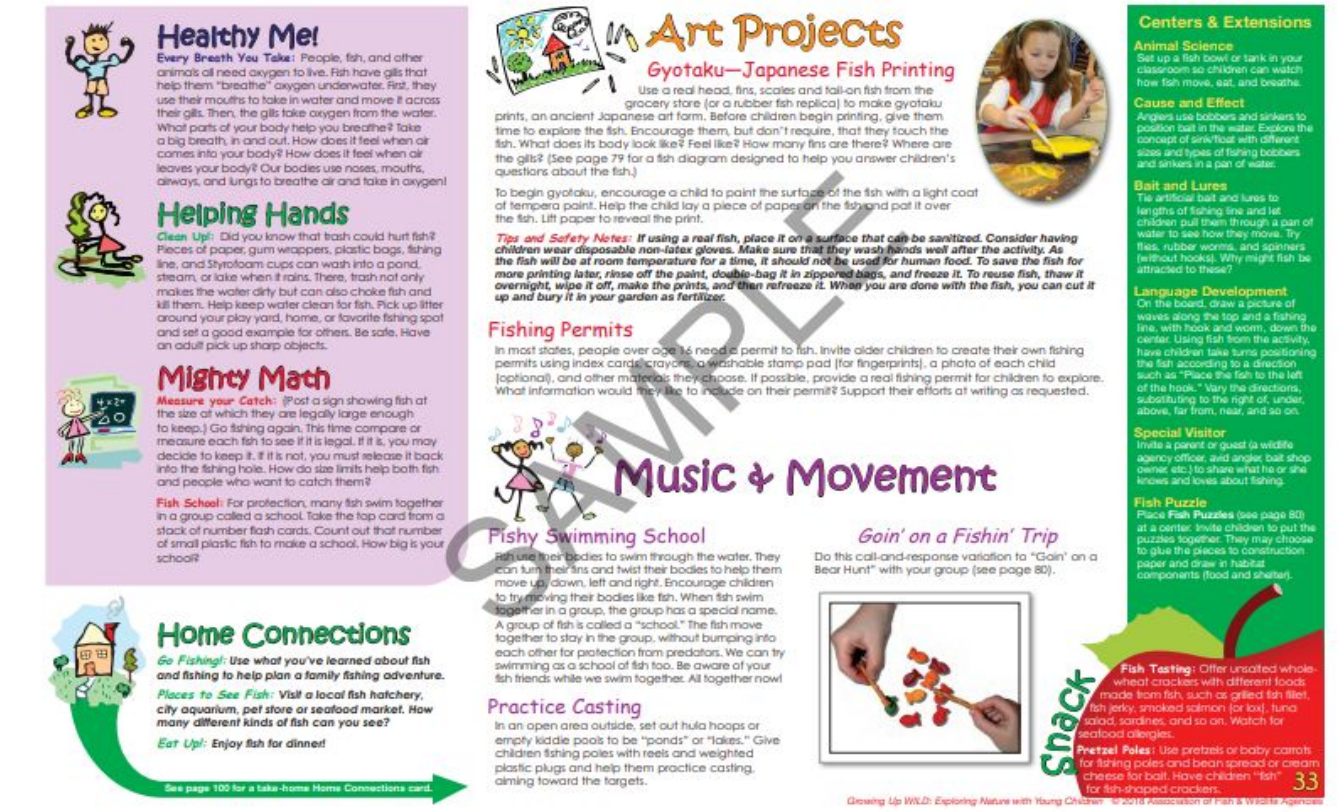
- ***Name something you discovered about fish or about fishing.***
- ***Looking at how we described fish (in Step 1), is there anything you would add or change?***
- ***How was our fishing game like actually going fishing? How was it different?***

Take Me Outside!

Fish Tag

Lots of predators besides people eat fish: larger fish, seals, bears, and pelicans are just a few. Many fish hide from predators under docks or rocks, among cattails, or other places. Let's play a game where a predator (one child) tries to catch fish (the other children) by tagging them. The predator can choose what kind of animal to be. Fish are "safe" if they stand on or touch a safe spot, like a lily pad (hula hoop), cattail (safety cone), rock (cardboard box), or dock (carpet square). To keep things moving, fish can stay in the safe spot only as long as it takes them to count to five. After the predator catches a fish, play again with a new predator.

[1] The Fishing Fun activity is included with permission from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.



Project Layout

This project is specifically aligned and is to be used in conjunction with the Growing Up WILD™ curriculum. This project modifies the 27 "Take Me Outside" activities in the Growing Up WILD™ curriculum guide and makes it accessible for children with ASD through activity modifications. I chose the "Take Me Outside!" section to modify as it directly involves outdoor learning environments. There are eight activity elements that are modified (mobility, fine motor skills, receptive communication, expressive communication, visual, auditory, sensory, social) and the modifications are included in a table format at the end of the document. Yellow highlights appear for each activity element that warrants being modified.

Assessment of the modifications are through observation and done onsite. Assessment looks different as it is individualized to each child. Generally, achievement in modifications are observed through a reduction in negative and undesirable behaviors and an overall positive demeanor. An increase in social interactions, such as increased eye contact and sitting/standing next to peers would also be part of the assessment.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Getting to Know You

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Fine Motor Skills Expressive Communication

When we learn new things about an animal, we usually feel better about it. Take a walk around the playground to look for an animal you are undecided about. When you see one, quietly observe it for a while. Try to notice something new about the animal that you hadn't known before. What did you observe? How did it make you feel? Record it in your Nature Notebook. Share your new knowledge with your friends and family. You may help others learn more about the animal and think again about why it makes them feel the way they do.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Playground Ant Colony

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Social Expressive & Receptive Communication Sensory

Ant colonies are very busy places. There are many chambers with different ants doing different jobs to help out the colony. Play "house" like an ant. Decide who will defend your colony against invaders. Who will tend to your colony's eggs, arvae, and pupae? Who is your queen? Who will find food? When one of you finds food make sure to tell your friends. Touch antennae (your arms held over your head), and then play "Follow the Leader" in a line and lead your ant friends to the food.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Spider Walk

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual Expressive Communication

Let's search for spiders and spider webs. Remember to look but don't touch. When we find a spider, tell me what you see. How many legs does it have? What is the shape of its body? What is the spider doing? Does the spider have a web? What does the web look like? What kinds of things are in the spider web? (Sketch the spiders and their webs and record children's observations. You might also record the number of web-building spiders and the number of spiders without webs. After the walk, compare the results. How many web-building spiders were found? How many spiders without webs? How many spiders in all?)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Seasonal Visits to a Special Outdoor Place

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Fine Motor Skills** **Expressive Communication**

Visit a special place Outdoors where you can observe nature. Each season, visit the same place. While there, observe and collect leaves from a variety of plants including trees. Make sure to treat plants with respect (see page 7). Observe the weather and temperature. Look for animals and insects that live in or used trees and other plants. Record your experiences in a journal (see Nature Notebooks, page 5) or create a classroom poster. As you revisit your special place during each season, record your findings. Compare journal entries or posters. Describe the changes. Make predictions each time for next season's visit. Were your predictions correct?

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Take Me Outside! Activity Title: If You Could Jump Like a Grasshopper…

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Social** **Sensory**

Grasshoppers are known for jumping. They jump about 20 times their body length. If you could jump that far, how far would it be? Find a large area outside. If the ground is grass or dirt, find rocks to use as marking stones. Use chalk on pavement. Team up with a partner. Lie down on the ground. Put a mark by your feet. Have your partner put a mark by the top of your head. Lie down again; align your feet at the spot where your head was. Have your partner put a mark by the top of your head. Repeat until you have marked 20 body lengths. This is how far you could if you could jump like a grasshopper!

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: I Dig Worms!

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Sensory**

Do you think earthworms live in our school yard? Where do you think we might find them here? How deep down do you think earthworms might be? Let's dig in a few different places to see if we can find earthworms and mark any spots where we find them. We'll dig into the soil with spoons or trowels, use our hands to carefully sift through the soil, and refill the hole when we are

done searching. Which areas have the most worms? Do you think worms prefer shade or sun? Do they prefer hard soil or soft soil? Do they like moist soil or dry soil?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Neighborhood Animal Walk

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Fine Motor Skills**

Go on a walk in your neighborhood or park to look for different animals. (Consider conducting Animal Counts. See Mighty Math.) Which are wild and which are not wild? Where do you see the animals? What are they doing? How do they act? How are the wild animals different from the tame or domesticated animals? Record your observations, drawing pictures of the animals and the places you found them. Create a bulletin board or book with your drawings and observations. Animals - both wild and not wild (domesticated) - live all around us!

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Wildlife in Our Neighborhood

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Fine Motor Skills**

Go on a walk in the neighborhood around your school or building or a nearby park to look for wildlife. Where do you see wild animals? What are they doing? How do they act? Record your observations, drawing pictures of the animals and the places where you found them. Add your observations to a new chapter of your group's big book, "Wildlife is Everywhere!"

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Could a Bear Live Here?

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Expressive Communication** **Social**

On the playground, talk about bear habitats. Could a bear live here? What would a bear need? Where would it sleep? What would it eat? Is there a water source? Choose multiple places around the playground where a bear might find food, water, and shelter. Mark these places with signs or symbols. Make believe you are a bear, looking for food, water and shelter.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: A Day at the Ocean

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Social Expressive Communication

Pretend you will spend a day at the ocean. What might you take along? You might bring a beach towel, a beach umbrella, sunglasses, sunscreen, a sun hat, flip-flops, goggles, slippers, sand toys, and a beach ball. Let's gather up as many of these things as we can, pack them in a beach bag, and take them outside for play time (consider packing a snack and drinking water). What beach games can we play? (Ask children about their experiences, both real and pretend, to spark imagination and build vocabulary.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Tree Walk

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Sensory

Let's go on a nature walk to find different things that come from trees. What kinds of things might we find? You may each carry a small bag. If we see lots and lots of something, you may put one of them in your bag. But, we should not take living parts from a tree because that can hurt the tree. (See page 7 for information about collecting in nature and safety information.) We can use the things we collect for activities in our class. (See Art Projects, Mighty Math, or Centers & Extensions activities.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Fish Tag

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Sensory

Lots of predators besides people eat fish: larger fish, seals, bears, and pelicans are just a few. Many fish hide from predators under docks or racks, among cattails, or other places. Let's play a game where a predator (one child) tries to catch fish (the other children) by tagging them. The predator can choose what kind of animal to be. Fish are “safe” if they stand on or touch a safe spot, like a lily pad (hula hoop), cattail (safety cone), rock (cardboard box), or dock (carpet square). To keep things moving, fish can stay in the same spot only as long as it takes them to count to five. After the predator catches a fish, play again with a new predator.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Freeze Birds

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Sensory Expressive Communication

Many animals stay still to help them blend into the environment and hide from predators. Even brightly-colored animals, like bluebirds, can blend in by keeping still. In "Freeze Birds" bluebirds must stay very still to hide from a hawk. A "hawk" looks in one direction and counts to 20. While the hawk is counting, "bluebirds" fly around together behind the hawk, looking for food. When finished counting, the hawk says, "Here comes a hawk!" Then, the bluebirds warn each other by calling out, "Freeze birds!" The birds "freeze" and stay very still. The hawk turns around. If the hawk sees any movement by a bluebird, that bird becomes the next hawk. Play again.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: We're Going on a Track Hunt

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Sensory

Look for animal tracks in your neighborhood or park. The best places to find them are in fresh snow, near water (such as near a puddle, pond or stream), or in muddy or sandy areas. Do you see any tracks? What do the tracks look like? Who might have made them? If you don't find any try catching animal tracks in the play yard: spread fine dirt, sand, or cornmeal in a shallow tray; sprinkle some bird seed in the middle; and set the tray out overnight in a place you think animals might live or visit. (You might also make your own giant bird tracks with a stick as you walk along a dirt trail. Then follow the tracks back "home.")

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: On the Lookout for Life Cycles

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Expressive & Receptive Communication

Let's take a walk outside to look for baby and adult animals- those from our cards and others. When we find an animal, let's see if we can tell whether it is a baby or an adult (or other life stage). Where might we look for animals? A good place to look for birds and squirrels is in and around trees. For butterflies and ladybugs we can look among shrubs, checking on the undersides

of leaves or any eggs. For grasshoppers, we can walk in areas with lots of different grasses. For frogs, turtles, and fish, we can check a nearby pond or vernal pool (a natural seasonal pool of water). What do you notice about the animals we see? Did we find more babies or more adults?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Vertebrate Safari

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Expressive & Receptive Communication**

Let's go on an outdoor Safari to look for as many different animals with backbones as we can find. What vertebrates do you think we will see? (Record responses.) Let's look with our eyes and listen with our ears, but please let's not touch with our hands. When you see or hear (bird song, squirrel chatter) a vertebrate, say what kind it is- fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, or mammal. Why do you think so? What is it doing? How is it moving? (Record responses.) (Back in the classroom) How do our results compare to what we predicted? Which group of vertebrates did we see most often? The least? Why? (Optional: make Safari Hats, page 57, and Homemade Binoculars, page 43.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Bird Watching

These activities contain the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Receptive Communication** **Social**

Let's take a walk outside to look for Birds. Walk quietly and listen for bird songs and calls. When you see a bird, watch it closely. Can you see it eating? Look carefully at its beak. What shape is it? What might this bird eat?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title, Part 2: Building Bird Nests

Different birds build different kinds of nests. Some build them on the ground, and others in trees, or under building eaves. Pretend to be a bird. Find a spot outside to build your own nest. Gather together materials, such as branches, sticks, leaves, old blankets, cardboard, or other items. What kind of nest can you build?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Follow the Turkey Leader

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Receptive Communication Social

Have you ever played Follow the Leader? Wild turkey chicks, or poults, follow the leader to learn and stay safe. When they hatch from eggs, the poults watch and mimic everything their mother does. When she moves from place to place, the poults follow behind in a single line. As the poults get older, they continue to watch the older turkeys and learn by mimicking them. Pretend we are a flock of turkeys as we play Follow the Turkey Leader. Our leader will show us how to scratch the ground for food, find water, and move through our habitat. Play again with a different leader!

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Listen and Look

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory

(Hide a life-size color picture of a screech or other small owl in a tree or bush.) Most owls are active at night and rest during the day. While they are resting, many owls hide among tree branches, surrounded by leaves, or inside a hollow tree. From their hiding places, they can see and hear what is going on around them. Let's listen like owls. Find a shady spot maybe near a tree, bush, or pile of leaves. Sit down, get comfortable and close your eyes. Stay quiet and still for a couple of minutes. What sounds can you hear? Open your eyes. Can you see what made some of the sounds? Now let's look for an owl hiding nearby. Look carefully. The owl's feathers help it blend in.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Playground Deer Herd

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Social

Imagine that there is a small herd of deer living on our playground. Think about what the deer would do here. What would they eat? Is there water for them to drink? Are there places for them to hide or sleep? What would they do if it rains or snows? Think about how the deer act with each other. How do they tell each other things? Do they play together? Do they have families?

How do they move around? Let's pretend we are the herd of deer and this is our habitat. We can prance, stroll, and play like deer while we explore our habitat! (Allow children to explore new ideas.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Plant Seeds and Watch Your Garden Grow

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Sensory

Let's plant a garden and watch plants grow into food we can eat. First we cover the bottom of a large clay pot (or pots) with small rocks. Then we add a thick layer of potting soil. Now we plant the seeds in the soil and cover them up. (Plant quick-growing plants such as radishes, beans or lettuce.) Let's put our pot on a saucer in full sun and water our seeds to help them grow. We'll need to check on our plants every day and water them when needed. (You may opt to carty the pot indoors at the end of each school day.) (**Note:** Seeds may be started in clear containers so children can watch them sprout. Once they have a root and a shoot, plants may be transplanted into pots.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Food Chain Detectives

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Fine Motor Skills

Sit quietly outside on a sunny day. (Don’t forget sunscreen.) Feel the warmth of the sun on your skin. Can you feel the sun's energy? See the sun shining on the plants around you. The plants are busy making food to help them grow. Look carefully. Can you see any animals eating from the plants (drinking nectar, chewing leaves, eating seeds, etc.)? Are there any animals that eat other animals? Create a poster, labeled “ A Food Chain on Our Playground.” Illustrate the things that are connected. Label them and include arrows showing how energy moves from one living thing to another.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Float Like a Boat?

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Fine Motor Skills
Expressive & Receptive Communication Sensory

People use all sorts of things to help them float on water- life jackets, arm floaties, surf boards, boats. Some animals can float on water, too. Fill buckets with water outside on your playground. Collect items from the ground around your schoolyard like rocks, sticks, pieces of bark, leaves, seeds or acorns. Which do you think will float? Which will sink? Test each item. Were you right? Try some things from your classroom too, such as an empty water bottle and one filled with water. Graph or chart items that sink and items that float. Make sure to return collected items to where you found them, and use the water in the buckets to water plants in your schoolyard.

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Water Quest

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Expressive & Receptive Communication

Sometimes when people want to find something, they use a map. Let's use our school grounds map (see Water Quest Map Prep in Centers & Extensions) to help us find sources of water for people and for other animals. As we find each water source, let's decide if it is safe for people or only for other animals (see Healthy Me!). (**Note:** You may opt to mark the "trail" in advance; narrate your route while children follow along, perhaps reading individual maps as you go and/or have children take turns using copies of the map to lead your group from water source to water source.)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Seasons Walk

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility Visual/Auditory Expressive & Receptive Communication

Let's take a walk around our school or neighborhood in different seasons of the year to look for any changes. Each time, we'll stop at the same plants or trees and look at their size and color. About how big are they? What do the leaves look like? What animals do we see? We'll record

our observations so we can remember them later. After taking the same walk in different seasons, let's compare our observations. How are the plants and animals the same at different times of the year? How are they different?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: State Symbols Hunt

These activities contain the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Expressive & Receptive Communication**

What are the wildlife symbols for our state? (See Resources or State Symbols on page 108.) what are the plant symbols? Let's go for a walk to look for our state symbols - either the real animals or plants, or pictures on flags, signs, buildings, etc. (You might plan a route in advance.) Which did we find? (You might also look for other wildlife symbols used in your community. What business or agencies do they represent?)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title, Part 2: Animal Trait Trek

Let's search for animals in our schoolyard (like ants, squirrels, or robins). Let's watch each animal we find and list its traits. What could each symbolize?

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Recycle Race

This activity contains the following elements:
Mobility **Visual/Auditory** **Fine Motor Skills** **Sensory** **Social**

Recycling is one way our community uses less. People save papers, bottles, and cans that can be reused to make new things. Let's have a recycling race. Each team has a box of clean items that can be recycled in our community. The box may have a soda can, a piece of foil, a plastic container, some newspaper, a magazine, and a piece of cardboard. Team members will take turns grabbing one item from their box, running to the other side of the play yard, and placing it in the right recycling bin. The team that first sorts all their items will win. Ready? Set? Go!

Activity Element	Definition of Element[1]	Modifications
Mobility	The ability to move in one's environment with ease and without restriction.	● Walking sticks ● Jogger ● Vehicle transport to/from activity ● Stick to ADA-accessible trails (if possible) ● Stay on flat, even ground ● Designate a specific role within a game (ex. Referee, recorder, etc.) ● Game rule modifications (may walk instead of run) ● Allow for fidgeting during downtime or during a high "sit and listen" portion of the activity
Fine Motor Skills	The use of precise coordinated movements in such activities as writing, buttoning, cutting, tracing, or visual tracking.	● Use larger crayons, markers, pencils, paintbrush etc. ● Modify using clay, silly putty (or similar) around the shaft of the art supply for greater dexterity ● Dictation/verbalizing to a partner or adult
Receptive Communication	Sensitive or responsive to communication.	● Repeat directions several times ● Role model directions/expectations ● Use simple, limited-language ● Allow extra time for processing
Expressive Communication	Showing or communicating meaning or feeling effectively.	● Use a whiteboard or note pad ● Use pictures
Visual/Auditory	Visual: Pertaining to the sense of sight. Auditory: Pertaining to the sense of hearing.	Visual ● For art projects: use progressive examples (what the project should look like at different stages) ● Show example of intended outcome ● Umbrella use for sunny days ● Sunglass use for sunny days ● Visual timer ● Written activity instructions ● Visual schedule of day and activity

		● Visual boundaries for activities (cones, ropes, caution tape, etc.) Auditory ● Repeat directions ● Position yourself closest to intended participant(s) ● Intentional line placement (in front) for participant(s)
Sensory	Pertaining to sensation or to the response of the senses (hearing, sight, touch, etc.) to incoming stimuli.	● Situational awareness of activities (muddy/wet/loud areas) ● Sunglasses ● Gardening gloves ● Noise-canceling headphones ● Rain poncho ● Extra pair of socks (for wet feet) ● Umbrella (for sunny days) ● Fidgets ● Baby wipes ● Facial tissue ● Hand sanitizer
Social	The social dialogue that a person has with family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances and others.	● Staff facilitation of the social interactions ● Option for breaks ● Opt-out of activity (can they describe/draw what they see?) ● Purposeful partnering
[1]Source: Mosby's Medical Dictionary, 8th edition. (2009). Retrieved from https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/		

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning

The following Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning can be utilized by non-formal educators to ensure successful inclusion and outdoor education programming. Knowing the needs of participants beforehand can greatly increase the success of both the child and activities itself.

Formal classroom educators can use information from a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or these questions can be asked of the student's parent/guardian. This can be an invaluable tool for non-formal educators, as this allows the educator to critically reflect on the program(s) offered, and to begin to adapt activities ahead of the program.

on-formal educators can use this tool to ask formal educators about the needs of their students prior to a field trip. The program can then be modified to meet the needs of the student(s).

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning	
General Information	**Notes**
Outdoor likes/dislikes	
Environmental allergies	
Outdoor fears, if known	
Preferred/non-preferred outdoor activities	
Behavioral rewards or incentives used	
Mobility	**Notes**
Assistive mobility device(s)	
Tires easily/low stamina?	
Poor balance?	
Ability to traverse difficult (uneven, hilly, rocky, etc.) terrain?	
Social	**Notes**
How does participant act in social situations?	

Participant respond better to males or females?	
Does participant share/take turns?	
How does participant interact with peers vs. adults?	
Shy or withdrawn?	
Communication	**Notes**
How does participant communicate?	
Verbally	
Sign language	
Points or gestures	
Visual aids	
Communication device(s)	
Other	
How does participant communicate hunger, thirst, tired, upset, etc.?	
Sensory	**Notes**
Participant sensitive to sensory input?	
Participant seeks certain type of input (see below)?	
Sounds	
Visual	
Textures	
Smells	

Movement	
Behaviors	**Notes**
Does participant display any need-to-know behaviors that may affect the safety or wellbeing of participant or others?	
Short attention span	
Running/wandering off	
Emotional meltdowns	
Tantrums	
Self harm or harm to others	
Verbal outbursts	
Self-stimulatory behavior(s)	
Other	
Transitions	**Notes**
What is the best way to assist transitioning from one activity to the next?	
Schedules	
Countdowns	
Warnings	
“First/Then” statements	
Visual timer	
Learning Styles	**Notes**
How does participant learn best?	
Small/large groups	

Visual	
Kinesthetic	
Auditory	
Verbal	
Safety	**Notes**
Is participant aware of safety, or lack safety awareness?	
Include any site-specific safety concerns (bodies of water, busy roads, high-traffic areas, etc.)	
Additional Information	**Notes**

Illustrative Example of Individualized Student Profile and Activity Modifications

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning	
General Information	**Notes**
Outdoor likes/dislikes	*Dislikes bugs*
Environmental allergies	*Peanuts/tree nuts*
Outdoor fears, if known	*Spiders*
Preferred/non-preferred outdoor activities	
Behavioral rewards or incentives used	
Mobility	**Notes**
Assistive mobility device(s)	

Tires easily/low stamina?	*Cannot walk at sustained fast pace*
Poor balance?	
Ability to traverse difficult (uneven, hilly, rocky, etc.) terrain?	*Unsteady on rocky or hilly ground*
Communication	**Notes**
How does participant communicate?	*Student is nonverbal*
How does participant communicate they are hungry, thirsty, tired, upset, etc.?	*Communication cards*
Does participant use a communication device?	*Pencil/paper and communication cards*
Social	**Notes**
How does participant act in social situations?	
Participant respond better to males or females?	
Does participant share/take turns?	*Difficulty sharing*
How does participant interact with peers vs. adults?	*Interacts with adults best*
Shy or withdrawn?	
Communication	**Notes**
How does participant communicate?	
Verbally	
Sign language	
Points or gestures	*X*

Visual aids	X
Communication device(s)	
Other	
How does participant communicate hunger, thirst, tired, upset, etc.?	Student will sit or lie down on the floor if very upset
Sensory	**Notes**
Participant sensitive to sensory input?	Loud noises and large crowds
Participant seeks certain type of input (see below)?	
Sounds	
Visual	
Textures	
Smells	
Movement	
Behaviors	**Notes**
Does participant display any need-to-know behaviors that may affect the safety or wellbeing of participant or others?	
Short attention span	X
Running/wandering off	X
Emotional meltdowns	
Tantrums	
Self harm or harm to others	
Verbal outbursts	

Self-stimulatory behavior(s)	Shakes hands, paces, covers ears
Other	
Transitions	**Notes**
What is the best way to assist transitioning from one activity to the next?	
Schedules	
Countdowns	X
Warnings	X
"First/Then" statements	
Visual timer	
Learning Styles	**Notes**
How does participant learn best?	
Small/large groups	Small groups 1:1 best
Visual	X
Kinesthetic	
Auditory	
Verbal	
Safety	**Notes**
Is participant aware of safety, or lack safety awareness?	Doesn't pay attention to surroundings, will get easily lost
Include any site-specific safety concerns (bodies of water, busy roads, high-traffic areas, etc.)	High traffic main parking lot, especially after lunchtime
Additional Information	**Notes**

Student has a 1:1 paraprofessional at school.
Participates minimally in specials (PE, music, art)

Take Me Outside! Activity Title: Getting to Know You

When we learn new things about an animal, we usually feel better about it. Take a walk around the playground to look for an animal you are undecided about. When you see one, quietly observe it for a while. Try to notice something new about the animal that you hadn't known before. What did you observe? How did it make you feel? Record it in your Nature Notebook. Share your new knowledge with your friends and family. You may help others learn more about the animal and think again about why it makes them feel the way they do.

Activity Modifications Integrating Sample Individualized Student Profile

Sample Student has an allergy to tree nuts, so avoid handling any walnuts or other tree nuts that may be encountered during the hike and activity. Stay on flat, even ground as much as possible as Sample Student is unsteady on uneven ground. Keep walking distances short and sporadic. Arrange for transportation for Sample Student and their paraprofessional to/from the activity location if it is a great distance away or if Sample Student cannot reach the destination. Walk to a location that is in the opposite direction of the busy parking lot, if possible. Use communication cards and a small whiteboard and marker so Sample Student can participate in the writing portion of the activity. Have a pair of noise canceling headphones available if outdoor noise is or gets too great. Sample Student likes to pace and wave hands as a self-stimulatory behavior, so allow for them to stand in the back or take frequent breaks if there is a prolonged period of listening or staying in one place. Use a five, three, and one minute countdown or warning system when transitioning from one area to another.

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