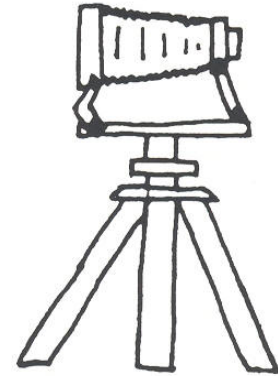


CAMERA

Activity 6

AGE LEVEL = 10-12 (8-14)
DURATION = 30-45 min.
LEARNING STATION = Outdoors
RELATED ACTIVITIES = None

WHEN =



UNDERSTANDING: Visual awareness can be increased by looking at natural objects in new ways.

MATERIALS:

For each child:

- Clipboard ([see Activity A](#)) and paper
- Pencil, pens, crayons
- Empty toilet paper or paper towel roll
- Blindfold ([see Activity A](#))

For the group:

- 35 mm camera (optional)

PREPARATION: Gather the necessary items and review the activity.

LESSON:

Warm-up: Discuss how we normally see the world. Explain that when walking in the woods we usually look at our feet. Why? Tell the children that they will explore the world as if they were a camera. They will focus on light, shade, shapes, sizes, angles and compositions to create pictures.

Activity: Have the children spread out, then bend at the waist and look between their spread legs. Ask them what they see. (Most will hint at an upside-down world.) Explain that a camera reverses all images when it takes a picture. Processing the film corrects this, just as our brain, in conjunction with our eyes, corrects images for us.

Hand an empty toilet paper or paper towel roll to each child. Have them close one eye, put their “telephoto lens” on and slowly look at a tree from top to bottom concentrating on light, shade, shapes and empty space. Have them repeat the activity lying down under a tree. Substitutions for a cardboard lens are two fists placed together with an opening or a leaf with an insect hole. Experiment with different size fist or leaf holes to illustrate aperture size and new perspectives.

Have the children work in pairs, with one person the photographer, the other the camera. The camera closes their eyes (or is blindfolded) and is carefully guided by the photographer to a chosen subject such as wildflower, pond, mushroom, deer track, the sky and so on. The photographer positions the camera for the desired “shot.” Once in position, the photographer gently squeezes the camera’s earlobe (shutter); the camera opens their eyes (or removes their blindfold) for a second (much like a shutter), closes them, and is carefully led to the next subject. After two or three subjects, the camera draws or describes to the photographer what images were shot. Have the children switch roles and repeat.

Wrap-up: Discuss the similarities between our eyes and a camera lens. What familiar objects did you see in a new way? What objects did you see that you had never seen before? Describe a pretty picture that you saw and would like to take home and hang on your wall.

OPTIONS AND FURTHER EXPLORATIONS:

Divide children into groups of four or more and choose one member as a movie or video camera. Have the other members prepare a pantomime of a natural event. Some ideas are a plant sprouting and growing, squirrels gathering nuts, forest trees swaying in the wind, or coyote preying on a rabbit. When the pantomime is ready, have the video camera move into place and shoot (rapidly blinking eyes while moving their head from side to side and up and down). Have the camera describe the movie afterward. Assign a new video camera and repeat.