

Nature experiential trail



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Aim of the experiential nature trail

Live nature trail is a good way to balance lessons or any activities. The trail can be done in the vicinity of the school or youth house and therefore it is easy to organize during the school hours.

With this trail young people and children can enjoy nature and outdoor activities. During the tasks, idea is to describe experiences got in forest, and to learn about himself or herself, to reveal stress, by giving a peaceful moment to himself in a pleasant environment.

During the trail children can notify versatility of the forest. This requires there is enough time given for the exercise.

Today we spend quite a lot of time indoors and with technology. We need to find a way how to spend more time outdoors. Already couple of hours outdoors, doing experiential activities in a company of other children, can raise the mood and make young people feel more refreshed.

Nature trail inspires youth to spend more time in the nature.

Guidelines for the trainer

With the guidance of this booklet, a teacher or a nature trainer can easily implement the trail activity. The group size can vary but small group is more efficient. Nature trail won't require a lot of preparations. Distance of the trail can be from 2-3 km, and the tasks can be placed freely along the route.

Number of tasks can be decided according to the time available. It is important to have a relaxed pace.

Task 1. Departure



First task helps young people to feel their level of activeness before and after the trail.

The trainer makes a question: "What kind of feelings they have right now? After this trainer asks everybody to find object from nature that describes their feelings. The object need to be taken along, for the last task.

Task 2. Balance



During this task the idea is to test what kind of balance they have. Young people should be able to see the versatility of nature.

Place should be uneven. Test can be done for example by standing with one leg, or walking on the piece of log.

Task 3. How does it taste?



Are there different tastes in the forest. Can you taste everything? Discussion of what can be eaten and which tastes are good, bitter, sour?

Don't taste anything which you don't know.

Task 4. Sounds



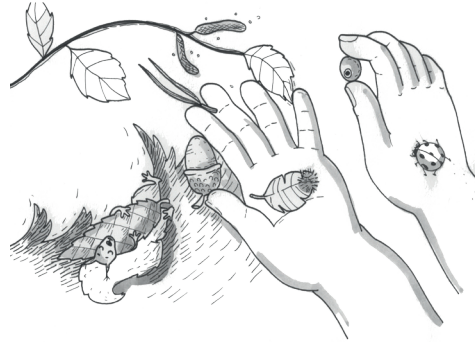
Here the hearing is tested.

OPTION 1. Participants take each others from hands and close eyes. After some time, each tells what they have heard. The next person can tell his sound, after neighbor has squeezed his hand. Do not rush with this exercise, provide enough time.

OPTION 2. All participants find their own place in the vicinity and close their eyes and listen a short time. Then the group meets again and everybody tells what they heard.

De-briefing: What was it like to be silent? Was there anything surprising? Was there anything scaring? Or was there something disturbing such as traffic?

Task 5. During this task the participants feel different objects



OPTION 1. Trainer has got three different bags, with moss, mushroom, sand, gravel... It is important these materials are different.

In a group each and everybody feel the content of each bag. But they are not allowed to tell what they feel. After all have touched the contents of bags, there is a discussion of what they think the things inside were.

Afterward the trainer tells what the real content was. It is good to discuss if the feeling of touching was pleasant, unpleasant.

OPTION 2. Participants collect something wet, soft and hard from nature in small groups. Discussion afterwards is about if touching was pleasant or unpleasant. Did all feel same?

Task 6. Favorite place



This task will help young people to respect nature, to be a moment in peace with themselves and environment forgetting sorrows and difficulties. Nature gives this excellent opportunity.

At first the group members will think about what is their favorite spot in nature. And they spend a little time silently in this spot. If they have stressful moments, afterwards they can try to get the favorite nature spot back to their mind. Hope that this task will help youth to reveal stress.

Task 7. View



Colors and shades

OPTION 1. Participants choose their favorite color in the nature. Participants who choose same color will be in same group. They can discuss why they chose this color.'

OPTION 2. Panorama Each and every one turns around 360 degrees and look at the scenery. He or she picks details and tries to find a view which is attractive,

As soon as everybody has found own view, there will be discussion about the view which is best. In the end can be discussed how differently we feel about the beauty in the eyes of people.

Task 8. Scents



All go to different directions to smell the scents of the nature. Afterwards all explain what did they smell and why it was pleasant. Discussion about how seasons affect in scents and why there are different scents?

Why other one likes something and the other one doesn't. Does spruce smell male? Do different seasons smell different?

Task 9. Final feelings



During the last task, everyone reminds himself about the feeling he had in the beginning of the trail and compare if the feeling has changed. Everyone will get a task to find a new object from nature, which describes current feeling-. After this all objects are collected together and there will be a chance to everyone to tell how feelings have changed since the beginning of the trail.

The participants will make two portraits on the ground with using branches as frame. Both objects the first and last will be placed into the portrait. One can make remarks of colors, in the portrait.

We hope all participants share positive feeling sand refreshed mind.



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