EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GATEWAY: NESTS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what park rangers do.
- Discover different birds, insects, and other animals, what their nests look like and what they are made of.
- Be introduced to how birds and animals take care of their babies.
- Make a bird feeder allowing them to explore even more about birds.

VIEW:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Gateway-Nests and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover in nature, such as animal families and the nests they live in.

Afterwards, ask children questions such as: What are some things that park rangers do? What kinds of nests did Elmo and Murray learn about at Gateway? How did the mom and dad birds take care of their babies? What kinds of animals and nests did Elmo and Murray explore at their own local park? If you were an animal, where would you build your nest? What would you build it out of? Why?

MATERIALS:

- Milk or Juice Cartons (enough for multiple groups of children)
- Construction Paper
- Crayons or Markers
- Hole Puncher
- Old Shoelaces or Rope
- Tape or Glue
- Scissors (or safety scissors if children will be cutting)

DO:

1. Cut out a square section from the front side of the carton with scissors. Leave at least three inches from the bottom of the carton to hold the seeds.
2. Trace and cut construction paper to match the square cutout on the outside of the feeder.
3. Split your class into small groups and give each group a construction paper cutout for decorating.
4. The children can tape or glue the decorated construction paper to the cartons.
5. To hang the bird feeder, use a hole puncher to make a hole on the lip of the carton. Help the children string the shoelace through the hole, and tie a knot to secure it.
6. To make the perch for the birds to sit on, carefully poke a sharpened pencil just below the opening you previously cut.
7. The children can help place birdseed inside the bird feeder.
8. Look for a place outside to hang the bird feeder so that it is up high where other animals won't bother the birds while they eat. It can also be placed outside on a windowsill.
9. Become bird watchers and observe the birds as they visit your feeders!

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GATEWAY: NESTS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Encourage children to draw pictures of all the birds that they observe in their very own nature journals (web link). Also, keep track of how many birds come to the feeder each day. Notice the differences between the birds that come to the feeder. How many different types of birds do you see?"
- Talk about how parent birds need food to stay strong and healthy, so that they can take good care of their baby birds. Also talk about how the parents take food back to their nests to help feed the babies.
- Split your class into small groups and have them pretend to be bird families building nests and taking care of baby birds.
- Choose a local bird and learn about their nests. Encourage children to go outside and collect those same materials (e.g. fallen sticks or grasses) and build their own nest.
- Ask children again where they would build a nest if they were a bird and what it would be made of. Encourage them to draw pictures of their nests in their nature journal.
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks and nature.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GATEWAY: SEASONS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what a park ranger does.
- Learn about spring and the changes it brings.
- Make nature explorer tools (binoculars and amplifiers) to promote investigation and observation of the seasons using their senses.

VIEW:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Gateway-Seasons and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover in nature using different types of explorer tools.

Afterwards, ask the children questions such as: What kinds of things do park rangers do? What did Elmo and Murray learn about the animals migrating to Gateway? What changes happen during springtime? What do you hear, see, smell, feel outside now? What season do you think we are in?

MATERIALS:

- Toilet Paper Rolls
- Paper Cups
- Crayons, Markers
- Old Magazines or Newspapers
- Safety Scissors

DO: BINOCULARS

1. Reuse toilet paper rolls to create pretend binoculars.
2. Give two toilet paper rolls to each child.
3. Encourage children to search through old magazines or newspapers to find images of nature, or take a nature walk outside to collect things from the ground to decorate with, such as flowers, twigs or leaves.
4. Have children decorate each roll with their names, drawings, magazine cutouts, or items collected.
5. Help the children tape the two rolls together, so that they look like binoculars.
6. Have the children use their pretend binoculars to explore the seasons and nature up close!

DO: NATURE AMPLIFIERS

1. Reuse clean paper cups to create personal sound amplifiers.
2. Cut out the bottom of paper cups and give one to each child.

(cont. on next page)

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GATEWAY: SEASONS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DO: NATURE AMPLIFIERS

3. Encourage children to search through old magazines or newspapers to find images of nature, or take a nature walk outside to collect things from the ground to decorate with, such as flowers, twigs or leaves.

4. Have children decorate each cup with their names, drawings, magazine cutouts, or items collected.

5. Encourage children to decorate their cup with their names and images of things found in nature, such as flowers, animals and birds.

6. Have the children hold the narrow end of the cup to their ears to listen closely and observe the sounds of the seasons!

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Reference the Nature Words vocabulary sheet included in the More About This Topic section and talk to children about what the words tools, amplify and magnify mean.
- Explore the season outside and encourage children to record what they saw and heard using their tools in their very own nature journals. Based on their observations, have them brainstorm what season it is.
- How does your family adapt to the different seasons? Do you wear different clothing? How do you think animal families adapt to the different seasons?
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GATEWAY: HABITAT

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what a park ranger does.
- Discover different habitats and the animals that live there.
- Explore their neighborhood habitat and count the number of animals they find there, also called a census.

VIEW:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Gateway-Habitat and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover in nature, such as different habitats and the animals that live there.

Afterwards, ask the children questions such as: "What kinds of things do park rangers do? What is a habitat? What did Elmo and Murray learn about the salt marsh at Gateway? What activity did they do in their local park? How do the habitats Elmo and Murray discovered compare to the habitat where you live?"

MATERIALS:

- Nature Journal
- Crayons, Markers
- Paper
- Safety Scissors
- Poster Board
- Coloring Sheets of plants and animals (optional, not provided)

DO:

1. Discuss with children that today they are all going to be park rangers, explore their neighborhood habitat and take a census to count the number of the animals that live there.

2. Split your class into three groups and give each group an animal to look out for, such as a squirrel, dog or bird, and then head outdoors to find and count them.

3. Encourage children to tell you each time they find their target animal, and then record it in your class nature journal.

4. Return to the classroom and create a chart on a large piece of poster board. Include a title, such as "Spring Nature Census." Draw three columns, one for each animal that you searched for. At the top of each column, include a picture and the name of the animal.

5. Tell each group of children how many animals they found and encourage them to draw that many pictures in the column for their animal. Help them cut out their pictures and use as tally marks for your census chart. Or, you can print out pictures of the animals for the children to color in and use those as tallies.

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GATEWAY: HABITAT

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DO: (cont.)

6. Have the children count how many animals there are all together in each column. Explain to them how to read the chart. Ask, "Which animal has the most tallies?"

7. Do this activity again in different seasons throughout the year with the same three animals and compare how the answers have changed and talk about why they may have changed.

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Talk with children about what a census is (a count of how many things are in a certain area) and have them count how many people are in their family.
- Go to the library or search online to find out more about the animals you took a census of, and why your neighborhood makes a good habitat for them.
- Discuss how habitats change from season to season.
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GRAND CANYON: FAMILIES

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what park rangers do.
- Discover animals and their families.
- Discuss what a family is and understand the similarities and differences between human families and animal families
- Draw their own family portrait and an animal family portrait.

VIEW:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Grand Canyon-Families and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover in nature, such as animal families.

Afterwards, ask children questions such as: "What is a family? Who makes up a family? How do people in your family take care of each other? Do animals have families? How do animal families take care of each other? What did Elmo and Murray learn about the California Condor family? What kinds of animal families did they observe in their local park?"

MATERIALS:

- Photographs of children's own families (optional, as a reference)
- Paper
- Markers/crayons/colored Pencils

DO:

1. Take children outside and search for animal families. Encourage them to record and draw any that they find in their nature journal (insert address).

2. Return to the classroom and give each child two pieces of paper.

3. On the first piece of paper, have them draw the animal family that they observed outdoors or pick an animal and draw what they think the animal's family would look like.

4. On the second piece of paper, have them draw a picture of their own family. Children can use their photograph for reference if necessary.

5. In groups, have children share their pictures with everyone and compare and contrast the differences.

6. Hang the animal and human family portraits around the classroom to display different kinds of families!

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GRAND CANYON: FAMILIES

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Go to the library and find books or search the Internet to learn more about animals and their families.
- Talk about animal and human families. "How do family members take care of one another? How are animal and human families the same? How are they different?" (refer back to the pictures during this discussion)
- What are things the children love to do with their families?
- Condor babies usually have one parent who is out "working" (finding food) while the other parent is home taking caring of them. Does that ever happen to you?
- Explain to children what a family tree is and encourage them to create their own by drawing pictures of their family members and grouping them together. Encourage them to ask their parents or caregivers for help.
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks and nature.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GRAND CANYON: SEASONS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what park rangers do.
- Learn about the four seasons.
- Use their senses to explore each of the four seasons and create a class journal.

VIEWING:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Grand Canyon-Seasons and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover during the four seasons.

Afterwards, ask children questions such as: "What are some things that park rangers do? What are the four seasons? What did Elmo and Murray learn about the seasons at Grand Canyon? What is the weather like outside right now? Guess what season you're currently in!"

MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Crayons, Markers
- Glue, Tape
- Hole Puncher
- Yarn, String, or Binder Rings
- Paper Bags

Note: This activity will be done over the course of one school year. If you are visiting a national park, encourage children to leave things where they are and only draw pictures or take photos.

DO: NATURE WALK

1. Hand out a paper bag to each child (for collection purposes) and go on a nature walk outside with your class. Encourage them to observe using all of their senses.

2. Have children collect nature items they find outside that relate to the season that you're currently in, such as leaves, acorns, flowers, twigs etc. Remind them to respect nature and only collect things found on the ground.

DO: NATURE COLLAGE

1. Return to the classroom and instruct each child to glue or tape their object/s on a piece of paper to add to the class' four seasons journal. They can also draw pictures of nature elements they observed on the walk and the names of these elements.

2. Join the children together in a large group and have each child present what they found.

3. This nature walk and collage-making can be done once during each season, repeating the above steps each time.

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GRAND CANYON: SEASONS

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DO: CLASS NATURE JOURNAL

1. Once this has been done for all four seasons, it will be time to put the journal together to make a Four Seasons Class Journal!
2. Hole punch each page and use the yarn, string or a binder ring to combine all of the pages into a journal.
3. Join the children together again in a large group and share and compare what was found during all of the four seasons. How are the things the same and different?

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Discuss what children found during the different seasons. Why were you able to collect more items during some seasons than in others? What did you feel/smell/see/hear during each of the seasons?
- Talk about how the weather felt during each of the seasons and play a fun game figuring out the appropriate clothing to wear. Make pictures of different clothing (shorts, jacket, raincoat, snow boots etc.) and pull them out of a bag, having the children guess which season they'd wear it in.
- How does your family adapt to the different seasons? How do you think animal families adapt to the different seasons?
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks and nature.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GRAND CANYON: HABITAT

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

CHILDREN WILL:

- Learn what park rangers do.
- Discover different habitats and the animals that live there.
- Explore a tree habitat outside and then do an art activity to create a tree habitat in the classroom.

VIEW:

Watch Sesame Street Explores National Parks: Grand Canyon-Habitat and help children learn that there are so many wonderful and interesting things to observe and discover in nature, such as different habitats!

Afterwards, ask the children questions such as: "What kinds of things do park rangers do? What is a habitat? What did Elmo and Murray learn about the different habitats at Grand Canyon? What habitats did they discover in their local park? How do those habitats compare to the habitat where you live?"

MATERIALS:

- Large Pieces of White Paper
- Crayons, Markers
- Fallen Leaves and Twigs

DO: BINOCULARS

Talk with your class about how a tree can be a habitat or part of a habitat for many different animals, bugs, or birds. Then take them on a nature hunt and explore the different trees in your local park or neighborhood. Encourage them to examine the different parts of the tree like the leaves, branches, and roots. Then have them record and draw what they observe about these trees in their nature journal (add link). They can record what the trees look like, what bugs they found or if there were any nests. Also, have them collect different fallen leaves and twigs to help make your classroom tree.

1. Tape together many large pieces of white paper and draw an outline of a tree.

2. Have children tape or glue the leaves and twigs they found outside onto the branches of your classroom tree.

3. Encourage children to work together to color in the tree and draw other things they observed, such as bugs, birds or animals, or the texture of the bark.

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EDUCATOR VIEW AND DO

GRAND CANYON: HABITAT

SESAME STREET EXPLORES NATIONAL PARKS

DISCUSSION/ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Have a discussion about your classroom tree. What do children notice about the tree? How is it the same or different from the trees outside? Which animal, bugs, or birds might it make a good habitat for?
- Talk with children about the different leaves they found outdoors. What color are they? What do they smell like? What is the same? What is different?
- Count how many points the different leaves have. Does each leaf have the same number of points?
- Go outside and encourage children to make bark rubbings of the trees using a crayon and paper.
- Discuss how habitats change from season to season. Are there different animal families that live in the different habitats?
- Talk about park rangers and why everyone should take care of their parks.
- Earn Nature Explorer Badges! Print out badges and give one to each child to color in. Then tape the badges to the children's shirts so that they can proudly wear them.

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