

Oak Tree Gnomies Lesson Ideas

Look inside this pack for
some ideas of simple ways
to use the Oak Tree
Garden with your class!

Mindfulness

Activity: Use the Garden as a calm place to incorporate our school goal, mindfulness! Bring your Mindfulness packet (thanks Lauren & Carla!) outside, and conduct...

- Mindful Breathing
- Body Scan
- Heartfulness/Positive Thoughts
- Coping and Mindfulness
- Mindful Seeing/looking
- Mindful Cooperating
- Mindful Thinking
- Mindful Movement



Reading Stamina

Activity: Bring your class outside with a book or their book bins. Allow the students to sit on the benches or somewhere in the garden, and practice reading stamina!



Partner Reading

Activity: Bring your class outside with a book or their book bins. Pair the students up, and allow them to sit on the benches or somewhere in the garden with a shared book. Students can partner read and practice expression & fluency without a concern for high volume in the closed walls of the classroom.

Senses in Writing

Activity: Bring your class outside with writer's notebooks, clipboards & paper, or a template of your own. Review the five senses with your students, and brainstorm where we might use our senses to see, hear, smell, touch, taste (use your discretion) to better describe the garden. Allow students time to explore the garden, then write about the five senses they experienced using adjectives to describe their senses.

Measurement - Area and Perimeter

Activity: Bring your class outside with rulers and/or yard sticks, math notebooks or scrap paper. Review how to calculate area and perimeter. Have students measure the length and width of various parts of the garden. (For example: Plant boxes, garden fence, plant stick labels, rectangular stepping stones) Then, have students calculate the area and perimeter of the items they measured.

Measurement

Activity: Snow measuring sticks! When the weather is calling for snow, go out into the garden and place “paint sticks” in various places of the garden. After the snow fall, go back out to the garden and mark where the snow reaches to on the stick. Take the sticks back to the classroom, and measure the various lengths of snowfall. Discuss - Why do some places in the garden receive more snow fall than others? You could also do this several times throughout the winter, depending on snow fall, and make graphs or charts to show the various snow data.

Math Story Problems

Activity: Review writing math story problems. Allow students to explore the garden and make a list of items that they might use for a story problem. Then, provide students the opportunity to write math story problems using the items they found in the garden. For example, "Mrs. Shea had 3 tomatoes from the garden. Mrs. Winther had 5 zucchinis. How many vegetables do the teachers have in all?"

Health - Nutrition

Activity: Students can make a list of all of the vegetables or plants they find in the garden. Then, students can go back to the classroom and research the health benefits and vitamins that each plant can provide.

Reader's Theatre

Activity 1: The teacher can write a reader's theatre about a garden related topic. For example, a story from the point of view of the vegetables in the garden and their growth. Then, students can perform.

Activity 2: The students can visit the garden to get inspiration, and brainstorm ideas a class or in small groups. Then, the students can write their own reader's theatre and perform it.

Writing

Activity: Informative: Students can write an informative sentence, paragraph, or essay about the Oak Tree Garden, or about the lifecycle of one of the plants growing in the garden.

Opinion: Students can visit the garden, and then write a sentence, paragraph, or essay to respond to, “Why should schools have a garden?”

Poetry: Students can write a poem inspired by the garden.

Economics in the Garden

Activity:

1: Discuss producers and consumers with the students. Then, visit the garden and identify whether the items there are producers or consumers. Discuss why growing food is important in economics.

2: Visit the garden and gather a list of items that are being grown. Students can make a "shopping list," then, go back to the classroom and research the cost of buying these items from the grocery store. Students can add up the cost of their "shopping list" from the store versus growing their own food.

Flower Bookmarks

Activity: Gather flowers and leaves from the garden. Then, bring them back to the classroom and show students how to press and dry flowers. After they are dried, analyze the different parts of a flower. Then, provide strips of cardstock and allow students to glue the pressed flowers on them to dry. Then, either use clear contact paper or laminate the book marks to secure the flowers.



Garden Scavenger Hunt

Activity: Create a scavenger hunt for the students to look for various items and plants in the garden. For example: “Find Three types of vegetables...Find 2 different types of spices...Find one example of a gardening tool used when planting.”