

Hibernation and Migration

*Waldorf Curriculum
Preschool Newsletter*

October 16, 2006

ACTIVITIES

As you well know, spending time with children is always rewarding. It can help you to see the world around you in a whole new way and to value things that you may take for granted or consider perfectly ordinary. On the other hand, when you are entirely responsible for their care, even small children can be intimidating. Just what do you do with them all day? This newsletter is here to help – whether you're a parent, grandparent, babysitter, caregiver, neighbor, or anyone acting as a substitute teacher and spending the day with a preschool-aged child.

The following sections will give some suggested activities for this week's theme.

"Hibernation and Migration"

Yesterday Natalie and I saw a perfect V of wild geese flying overhead. We have already seen several turtles crossing the road near our house and I told her they were going into the woods to bury themselves in mud and sleep through the winter, staying nice and warm. She also knows that the geese were flying far away because they don't like cold weather. And we see the trees changing colors so we know that winter is coming! The perfect topic for this week, to follow up on the geese we saw, is the different ways animals spend the winter... specifically, the ideas of hibernation and migration.

Share your ideas for this topic with the Group. It's easy! Simply email waldorfcriculum@yahogroups.com.

Introduction

Introduce this topic by reading the following poem by Rachel Field:

**Something told the wild geese
It was time to go;
Though the fields lay golden
Something whispered, -- "snow".**

**Leaves were green and stirring,
Berries, luster-glossed,
But beneath warm feathers
Something cautioned, -- "frost".**

**All the sagging orchards
Steamed with amber spice,
But each wild breast stiffened
At remembered ice.**

**Something told the wild geese
It was time to fly --
Summer sun was on their wings,
Winter in their cry.**

Or this less well-known one by Aileen Fisher:

Who Tells the Swallows?

Who tells the swallows
the woodchucks and skunks
the wrens
and the beetles
and bears
it's time to be packing
their handbags and trunks,
or shaking the feather-beds out
for their bunks,
and settling their summer affairs?

Who tells the chippies
the warblers and bees
the frogs
and the turtles
and bats
it's time to be moving
before there's a freeze,
or time to stock cupboards
with crackers and cheese
in snug little winterized flats?

Parent Background on the Canada Goose:

<http://www.geocities.com/naturenotes/cangoose.htm>

Music & Movement

Be the wild geese; hold play silks in your outstretched hands and fly all around the playroom. Honk!

If you like, one person can play a drum (for more honking) and the other can fly with the silks, then switch roles. We like the Singing Drum from Magic Cabin.

Stories

[Amy's Goose](#)
[Grandmother Winter](#)

by Efner Tudor Holmes
by Phyllis Root

Nature

Take a Nature walk and look for goose feathers. Or pull a few feathers out of a down jacket or comforter and look at them. Talk about how the down keeps the geese very warm as they are flying high up in the air. We use down in our blankets and coats to help us stay warm.

Handwork

Turtles don't have wings to fly south for the winter; they burrow deep into the mud to sleep through the winter and keep warm. Talk about turtles that we have seen heading into the woods, looking for the perfect spot. Make the turtle finger puppet from [Around the World with Finger Puppet Animals](#) (page 105) by Suzanne Down. Use a brown silk and the finger puppet to act out a turtle finding a place to sleep for the winter.

Infant & Toddler

With my two younger children (1 and 2) I am choosing to do the "Autumn Bear" story from [Autumn Tales](#) by Suzanne Down. This makes a good circle time activity, as the bear travels from one child to the next, and can be done with any type of figure (a wooden bear, a beeswax figure, dry-felted bear, or a felt finger puppet); I am choosing to make the brown bear on page 91 of [Around the World with Finger Puppet Animals](#).

Stories

[Blueberries for Sal](#)
[Bear Snores On](#)

by Robert McCloskey
by Karma Wilson

Cooking

Blueberry recipes:

Banana Blueberry Smoothie

<https://www.marthastewart.com/page.jhtml?type=content&id=recipe3240020&contentGroup=EDF&layout=edf>

Double Blueberry Muffins

<https://www.marthastewart.com/page.jhtml?type=content&id=recipe3770063&contentGroup=EDF&layout=edf>

Blueberry-Grape Relish

<https://www.marthastewart.com/page.jhtml?type=content&id=recipe3770067&contentGroup=EDF&layout=edf>

Or substitute your family's favorites.

Art

Using clay, shape a bear sleeping in his den. This is a wonderful way for your child to sculpt curves. Begin with the bear, all curled up asleep. Make bear about the size and shape of your fist. Then curl your hand into a ball and mold clay around the outside of your fist, shaping it to your knuckles and smoothing it all around. Finally, place the bear inside his cave. This is a wonderful addition to the Nature table or you can use it for storytelling. Let your child pretend to be a bear in his den during imaginative play time. Make a cozy place under a table or pile up pillows in the corner. Add some blankets and books and hot chocolate and have a quiet rest time together.

Conclusion

To give your own little sleepy bear sweet dreams, make a dreamcatcher together. This is a nice use for some of the feathers you may have picked up on your Nature walk. Find directions here: <http://www.nativetech.org/dreamcat/dreminst.html>

When it is complete, place the dreamcatcher above your child's bed.

The Dreamcatcher Story: <http://www.treaty3.ca/pdfs/grandchief/gct3/dreamcatcher.pdf>

Parent Background on the Origin of the Dreamcatcher:
<http://www.nativetech.org/dreamcat/dreamcat.html>

Read this bedtime poem (also from I Wonder How, I Wonder Why by Aileen Fisher):

Who's Sleepy?

Who's sleepy?

Not me.

Who's sleepy?

Not I.

Not the owl in the tree,
the stars in the sky,
the bat on the wing,
the cat on the prowl,
the frog near the spring,
the dog with a howl.

Not the sickle of the moon,
the trickle of water,
the skunk, the raccoon,
the mouse and her daughter.

Who's sleepy?

Not deer.

Not crickets I hear.

Not rabbits and such.

Not me . . .

very much.

RESOURCE GUIDE

Introduction

- "Something Told the Wild Geese" from Treasury of Children's Poetry
- "Who Tells the Swallows?" from I Wonder How, I Wonder Why?

Music & Movement

- playsilks
- drum

Stories

- Amy's Goose Efner Tudor Holmes
- Grandmother Winter Phyllis Root

Nature

- goose feathers
- down comforter

Handwork

- Around the World with Finger Puppet Animals Suzanne Down

Infant & Toddler

- Autumn Tales Suzanne Down
- Around the World with Finger Puppet Animals Suzanne Down

Stories

- Blueberries for Sal Robert McCloskey
- Bear Snores On Karma Wilson

Cooking

- Banana Blueberry Smoothie
- Double Blueberry Muffins
- Blueberry-Grape Relish

Art

- clay

Conclusion

- "Who's Sleepy?" from I Wonder How, I Wonder Why?

Waldorf Verses for Circle Time and Play

<http://www.waldorfhomeschoolers.com/VERSES.htm>

MATERIALS LIST

Finger Puppets:

from [Around the World with Finger Puppet Animals](#) by Suzanne Down

Turtle page 105

- pure wool felt (green, dark brown)
- unspun wool for stuffing
- embroidery floss
- seed beads
- basic sewing supplies
- transfer paper (for making the patterns)

Brown Bear page 91

- pure wool felt (light brown)
- unspun wool for stuffing
- embroidery floss
- seed beads
- basic sewing supplies
- transfer paper (for making the patterns)

Dream Catcher:

<http://www.nativetech.org/dreamcat/dreminst.html>

- soaked willow or grapevine (or purchase a grapevine wreath from a craft store)
- string (strong but thin)
- a bead
- several feathers

Daily Schedule

7 am wake up, morning verse, get dressed, walk the dog
8 am breakfast
8:30 am outside play time

Morning Schooltime 10 – 11:30 am

❖ opening verse 10 am
❖ daily activity 10:05 am

Monday art (watercolor painting, dance)
Tuesday visit farmer's market, make vegetable soup
Wednesday library, go to the park
Thursday bake bread & churn butter
Friday handwork project (beeswax modeling, coloring, seasonal crafts)
Saturday field trip (visit nature center, art gallery, museum, concert, dance)
Sunday housekeeping (waxing, washing, polishing, mending)

❖ circle time 10:45 am
❖ prepare lunch 11:00 am
❖ lunch 11:30 am

12 pm nap
2:30 pm snack

Afternoon Schooltime 3 – 4:30 pm

❖ story, puppetry, drama 3 pm
❖ independent play 3:20 pm
❖ clean up 4:10 pm
❖ closing verse 4:25 pm
❖ nature walk 4:30 pm

5 pm inside play time, prepare dinner, set table
5:30 pm dinner
6 pm bedtime routines
7 pm bedtime