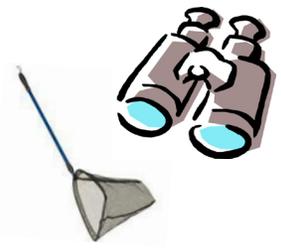


School in the Woods Field Notes

April 2020



Dear Parents:

We want to let you and all our naturalists know how much we miss everyone. We hope everyone is staying safe and healthy while finding ways to help with our situation. We are in new territory and must adapt to the ever-changing conditions we are living through; conditions that are impacting many aspects of our lives. As we know, the COVID-19 pandemic not only affects our School in the Woods, but our district, city, state, country, and our world. How many of us could have imagined the circumstances facing our children and their education? This is the first SITW Field Notes we have ever written that will be going home to students and parents who are participating in eLearning. We want you to know that your SITW staff remains dedicated, positive, and hopeful.

Families across the country find themselves struggling with our new method of schooling. We educators are learning innovative methods of instruction and are tapping into a multitude of electronic resources as we strive to create a curriculum that addresses the various academic and social-emotional needs of the students. Our goal is to provide programming that is adaptable to the circumstances of our families, and engages students through technology, home-based activities, and outdoor learning.

Our School in the Woods staff had an especially steep learning curve. Despite utilizing technology to some extent in our programming, we have always limited the degree of its use, and have instead engaged our students with the outdoors. We understand the importance of getting children outdoors and know that you, our naturalists' parents, understand that, too. We all recognize a need for the outdoors in education and wellbeing.

Our SITW eLearning Model

Our SITW Team started before Spring Break to learn about and create eLearning that we could deliver to our naturalists using Schoology. Our first week provided some successes and also some struggles, confusion, and stress. We are working to check in with all the naturalists to see how things are going. Reach out to teachers and Ms. Seidenberg with questions. Please be patient with us and understand that we know that there will be challenges along the way. All naturalists will have different experiences and will accomplish varying amounts of the assignments. Please know that there are also "enrichment" activities and

discussion boards that allow for other diverse ways to learn and share.

Spring Field Projects (Modified)

We know that our naturalists are looking forward to doing their Spring Field Projects. Our team has been working on plans that will provide related SFP activities that span the academic areas. There will be reading opportunities, videos, online and in-person conversations, writing expectations and a variety of creative ways for naturalists to learn about their chosen topic. Our hope is that we can still offer some of the types of learning that may have occurred out at SITW. We are even reaching out to experts to see how they may still be involved, as many have indicated their wish to help.

These independent projects will bring together the academic skills and scientific concepts that we have worked on throughout our school year. Collaboration is still encouraged, so any family members that wish to join their naturalist may be quite helpful and learn quite a bit as well. After we get started, please check in with your child each day and have them explain what they have been doing and learning from their Spring Field Project studies. Ask them what they need to be working on, or what writing needs to be done. The final project will be done as a Google doc. A template will be put in each naturalist's Google account folder so it can be accessed anywhere they have a device connected to the Internet. We will explain the formatting and content areas with your naturalist. They will have an example in their red SFP Folder. More details about the final published project and deadlines will be shared as the project progresses.

SignUp Genius for Supply Pick-up this Wednesday!

We are pleased to say that we have a **second opportunity** for naturalists to get their things from school. This will be a great time to pick up their journals, art pads, math books, field guides, and even Spring Field Project supplies, some which will be on loan. Please read through the SignUp Genius carefully, as it addresses which items can be kept and which can only be borrowed.

SITW Library books and other borrowed things

Please continue to enjoy any School in the Woods library books and other things that you have borrowed this year until we are back in our building. We are looking forward to the time when we can be back together once again!