

# Lesson Plan: Allegra, Viviana, and Florence's Woodland Adventure

## Materials Needed

- Child-safe scissors
- A small bag or bucket for each child (Allegra, Viviana, and Florence)
- Sturdy paper or cardboard for art projects
- White craft glue or a glue stick
- Magnifying glass (optional, but very fun)
- Washable paint (in fall colors like brown, red, yellow)
- Paper plates for paint
- A picture book about forests or animals (e.g., "We're Going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen or "Owl Moon" by Jane Yolen)
- A special "forest snack" (e.g., pretzel sticks for "twigs," green grapes for "berries," gummy worms)

## Lesson Plan and Activities

### Part 1: Getting Ready - The Explorer's Circle (10 minutes)

**Goal:** To build excitement and introduce the concept of exploring with our senses.

1. **Gather the Explorers:** Sit together in a circle on the floor. Say, "Today, Allegra, Viviana, and Florence are going to be brave woodland explorers! What do you think we will see in the woods?"
2. **Talk About Our Senses:** Point to your eyes, ears, nose, and hands. Ask simple questions to get them thinking:
  - "What will we **see** with our eyes? (*Trees, leaves, squirrels*)"
  - "What will we **hear** with our ears? (*Birds chirping, leaves crunching*)"
  - "What will we **smell** with our noses? (*Dirt, pine needles*)"
  - "What will we **touch** with our hands? (*Bumpy bark, smooth stones, soft moss*)"
3. **Introduce the Mission:** Give each child their collection bag. "This is your official Explorer's Bag. Your mission is to find interesting treasures that have fallen on the ground. We only collect things that are already on the forest floor, so we don't hurt the living plants."

### Part 2: The Nature Walk - A Sensory Scavenger Hunt (20-30 minutes)

**Goal:** To practice observation skills, use descriptive language, and develop gross motor skills.

1. **Begin the Walk:** Head outside to your "woods" (this can be a backyard with trees, a local park, or a safe trail). As you walk, model curiosity and wonder.
2. **Sensory Prompts:** Guide their exploration with "I wonder..." statements and sensory questions.
  - "Let's all stop and be quiet for 10 seconds. What can you hear?"
  - "Find the biggest tree and give its bark a gentle pat. How does it feel? Is it bumpy or smooth?"
  - "Find a fallen leaf. Does it make a sound when you crunch it? Let's try!"
  - (If you have a magnifying glass): "Let's look at this tiny bug/moss/leaf up close! What do you see?"
3. **Treasure Collection:** Encourage them to collect a few interesting items in their bags. Suggest finding:
  - A crunchy, brown leaf

- A smooth, gray stone
- A bumpy pinecone
- A sturdy stick or twig
- A colorful leaf (yellow, red, or green)

### Part 3: Creative Exploration - Nature Art Two Ways (25 minutes)

**Goal:** To apply learning by using natural objects for creative expression and developing fine motor skills.

1. **Sort the Treasures:** Back inside, have the children empty their bags onto a mat or table. Ask them to sort their treasures. "Let's put all the leaves in one pile and all the sticks in another pile." This introduces early math concepts like sorting and categorizing.
2. **Activity A: Nature Collage:**
  - Give each child a piece of sturdy paper or cardboard.
  - Let them choose their favorite treasures and arrange them on the paper.
  - Help them apply glue to the back of their items and press them down. Talk about their choices: "Viviana, I see you put the big red leaf in the middle! It's so beautiful."
3. **Activity B: Nature's Paintbrushes:**
  - Keep a few items aside, like a pinecone, a leafy twig, and a sturdy piece of bark.
  - Put some paint on paper plates.
  - Show them how they can use these items as paintbrushes! "Let's see what kind of mark the pinecone makes when we roll it in the paint. Look! It's bumpy." "What about this leafy branch? It makes soft swipes."
  - Let them experiment freely on another piece of paper. This is about the process, not the final product.

### Part 4: Snack & Story Time (10-15 minutes)

**Goal:** To transition to a calm activity and reinforce the theme through literature and food.

1. **Wash Hands:** Clean up from the art activity.
2. **Enjoy a Forest Snack:** Serve the "twigs" (pretzels), "berries" (grapes), and other themed snacks. This makes the theme fun and memorable.
3. **Read Aloud:** While they snack, read a book about the woods. Pause to point out things in the book that you also saw on your walk. "Look, the character in this book found a red leaf, just like Florence did!"

### Wrap-Up and Assessment (5 minutes)

**Goal:** To review the day's discoveries and assess learning through simple conversation.

Look at their nature collages together. Ask each child a simple, open-ended question:

- "Allegra, can you show me your favorite treasure that you found today?"
- "Viviana, tell me about one sound you heard in the woods."
- "Florence, what was the most fun part of our woodland adventure?"

Praise their hard work as explorers and artists. Display their beautiful nature collages proudly!

### Differentiation and Notes for the Teacher

- **For Focus and Support:** If a child is overwhelmed, simplify the scavenger hunt to finding just one or two specific items (e.g., "Let's just look for a brown leaf"). Guide their hand gently during the gluing activity if needed.
- **For Extension and Challenge:** Encourage more complex sorting (e.g., "Let's sort our leaves

by color," or "Let's find the roughest rock and the smoothest rock"). Ask "why" questions: "Why do you think that leaf is crunchy?"

- **Safety First:** Before the walk, check the area for any hazards. Remind children not to put anything in their mouths and to wash hands thoroughly after handling natural materials. Supervise closely during collection and art-making.