

Class Summary

Quick Facts

Outside: 1 hours 40 minutes

Grade: 4-8th

Offered: April through October

Physical Activity: 1 1/2 mile walk including a steep hill

Other: No special skills required

Concepts

- Order • Identification
- Cycle

[Minnesota Academic Standards >](#)

- Science • Math • Language Arts

[Classroom Activities >](#)

- Pre-Activity: *Ps, Cs, and Ds... Oh My!*
- Post-Activity: *Fungus Finding at Home*

STEM Components

- Test / Hypothesize
- Investigate / Study / Observe
- Predict
- Classify / Identify
- Record
- Explain / Interpret

IB Profiles

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inquirers | <input type="checkbox"/> Open-minded |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thinkers | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk-takers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communicators | <input type="checkbox"/> Balanced |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principled | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reflective |

Revised Dec 2011

Outcomes, students will:

1. Describe why fungi are placed in their own Kingdom, separate from plants.
2. Use identification keys to categorize fungi by their structure.
3. Categorize local organisms to the role they play in food chains.
4. Understand how humans depend on fungus for many of our daily needs.

Brief Synopsis:

What lurks inside the Chamber of Disgust? Only you will know after investigating the important role that decomposers play in the world. Participants will be amazed by the diversity of fungus as they search for and identify mushrooms, molds, crusts, and slime. They will witness decomposition in action and discover that our own food just wouldn't be the same without fungus.

Outline:

Mushroom Myth Match-Up (15 minutes)

Students will separate fact from myth as they learn some "weird, but true" details about fungus and how truly unique they are from plants and animals. Understanding why mushrooms are put into their own Kingdom, known as Fungi, will help students understand how the unique lifecycle of mushrooms contributes to the importance of decomposers in our ecosystems.

Slide Show (20 minutes)

Larger than life photos of local common fungi will help students understand how fungi are grouped by their shape. Students will then practice using their identification books and gather their other ID tools before heading outside.

Fungus Finders (1 hour and 40 minutes)

While exploring the forest hillsides of Eagle Bluff, students will use identification books and tools to discover which species are growing this time of year. The class may also make a stop at the Shiitake Mushroom Demonstration Site or the Chamber of Disgust (the grossest place at Eagle Bluff) to see fungus at work.

A Tribute to Fungus (15 minutes)

The end of class will focus on the importance of fungi in our ecosystems through playing an energy cycle game. Class will conclude with building a favorite American treat. Discussion will focus on how each part would not be possible without fungus before everyone gets a taste.