



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

4344 Shaw Blvd. | St. Louis, MO 63110 USA | +1 (314) 577-5100 | mobot.org

Early Childhood (Preschool, Pre-K)

Objective: Introduce young children to the concept of an eclipse and its effect on insect behavior.

- Introduction
 - Read a simple storybook about eclipses and insects.
 - Books about Eclipses:
 - "Someone is Eating the Sun" by Ruth A. Sonneborn - This book is a classic and explains solar eclipses in a way that is engaging for young children.
 - "The Moon Seems to Change" by Franklyn M. Branley - Part of the 'Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science' series, this book explains the phases of the moon and includes information about lunar eclipses.
 - "Sun, Moon and Stars" by Mary Hoffman - A simple and engaging book that introduces young children to the wonders of the sky, including eclipses.
 - Books about Insects:
 - "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle - A classic children's book that not only introduces young readers to the life cycle of a butterfly but also to the days of the week and healthy eating.
 - Bugs! Bugs! Bugs!" by Bob Barner - This book is a fun introduction to the world of bugs, perfect for young children with its bright and colorful illustrations.
 - "Diary of a Worm" by Doreen Cronin and Harry Bliss - This book offers a humorous look at the daily life of a worm, making it a fun and educational read for early childhood students.
 - "Miss Spider's Tea Party" by David Kirk - A charming story about Miss Spider who just wants to invite her insect friends over for tea.
 - Discuss what an eclipse is in very basic terms.
 - Solar Eclipse: This happens when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, blocking the Sun's light partially or fully. The shadow cast by the Moon can cause the sky to darken during the day. There are different types of solar eclipses, like total, partial, and annular.
 - I for the Moon, and a flashlight for the Sun) to demonstrate how a solar eclipse occurs. This visual aid can help them understand the alignment of the Sun, Moon, and Earth.



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- For early childhood friendly resources on eclipses, you can explore the following:
 - [Kids Discover](#): Offers kid-friendly illustrations, animated graphics, and concise explanations about eclipses suitable for children.
 - [Britannica Kids](#): Provides a simple explanation of how solar and lunar eclipses occur, with easy-to-understand language ideal for young children.
 - [NASA Space Place](#): Offers various resources like games and activities to help children learn about eclipses in an interactive way.
 - [NASA's Educational Content for Grades K-4: Specifically](#) designed for young learners, it includes simplified explanations about eclipses.
- [Prevent Blindness](#): They provide a "Preschool and Early Childhood Solar Eclipse Lesson and Book" which is suitable for children aged 3 to 5 years old. This lesson focuses on eye health and safety during eclipses.
- Observation Activity
 - Pre-Eclipse Insect Observation
 - Take the students to a designated outdoor area.
 - Provide bug-catching equipment to the students.
 - Ask the students to look around and notice any insects they can find.
 - Encourage them to be gentle when handling insects and to share their observations with each other.
 - Solar Eclipse Viewing
 - When the eclipse is happening, have the students gather in the outdoor area.
 - Explain that the sky may get darker, and the temperature might change slightly during the eclipse.
 - Encourage the students to continue observing insects during this time.
 - Ask them to pay attention to any changes in insect behavior. Are insects more or less active during the eclipse? Why do they think this is happening?
 - Supervising adults should ensure that children do not look at the sun directly.
 - Post-Eclipse Insect Observation
 - After the eclipse, guide the students to continue observing insects.



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- Encourage them to share their observations and discuss any changes they noticed.
- Ask open-ended questions to prompt their thinking, such as "Did the insects start behaving differently when the eclipse ended?"
 - Emphasize the importance of handling insects gently and releasing them afterward.
- Discussion and Reflection
 - Gather the students for a group discussion.
 - Ask them to share their observations and thoughts on how the eclipse affected insect activity.
 - Encourage them to express their ideas and listen to each other's observations.
- Conclude the lesson by reinforcing the idea that nature can respond to unusual events like a solar eclipse, and it's exciting to learn about these changes.