

'Children of the Forest' IFSA LC Activity at International Day of Forests

Introduction

The 2019 International Day of Forests (March 21) will address the theme “**Forests and Education**” - **learning to love forests** - and where better to start than with kids!

This is why we want to encourage IFSA Local Committees (LCs) to go out and have a fun day with kids showing them how amazing forests and trees are. Sowing a seed of love and appreciation for forests.

Below you can find a short guide with some ideas for fun activities with school children.

I. Description:

Take children into the forest or bring the forest to children. We invite LCs to visit primary schools or children-centred NGOs to teach kids basic knowledge on forests. The primary objective is to increase awareness of how forest contribute to their everyday lives and increase interaction and connection with nature.

- **Format:** 30 minute to 1 hour workshop led by forestry students
- **Target audience:** 6-12 years old (flexible)
- **Timeline:** To be conducted around International Day of Forests (March 21)

II. Suggested Activities

Activity 1 - Everyday products from forests displayed and explained to young ones

- E.g. toilet paper, corks, paper, fruits, nuts, honey etc.

Activity 2 - Basic forest knowledge

- How can forests mitigate climate change?
- “Forests are the lungs of our planet.” – explain to children BASIC photosynthesis
- Forest fun facts that would spark children’s interest in forestry and the environment

Activity 3 - Forest game to play with kids, e.g.:

- Three sticks: Lie down three sticks parallel to each other (30 cm apart). Everyone is only allowed one jump between the sticks. You’re not allowed to touch the stick or have your feet land twice in between the sticks. The last person to jump needs to jump really far after the third stick, because where his/her foot touches the ground, that’s where you move the furthest stick. Then you start jumping in the opposite direction to move the other stick further away. Then people start getting eliminated and eventually someone wins (be conscious of your age group and competitiveness amongst the children. We don’t want anyone to feel left out. EVERYONE’S A WINNER.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUb5hIKYT-g>

- Touching trees: one child is blindfolded and the other child leads them to a tree. They have to touch the tree. Then they are taken away, the blindfold is taken off and the child has to find the tree that they were originally led to.
- Catch a falling leaf - how many can you catch? (if autumn)
- The green bag (learning game) - pick 10 things (related to e.g. nfp's, climate, ecosystems etc.) from the forest, put them in a bag. Show the children one thing at the time and send them out to find that thing. When they return, you give a small talk about that thing, and the groups that found it get 1 point.

Activity 4 - Children's video (1-2 minutes)

- What's one word that can describe the forests?
- What do you like to do in the forest?
- What lives in a forest?
- "Happy International Day of Forests"

Note: Some country's laws do not permit you to film children without their parents' consent. Confirm with the school's principal or the necessary authoritative board whether or not you may film the children and post it on social media.

Activity 5 - Plant a tree (or trees) in memory of International Day of Forests 2019

it would be great if you could bring a (or several) tree seedling(s) to the event and finish the day with a small tree planting ceremony. Where the kids get to help plant their very own tree(s) they can tend to and watch grow in the future.

Feel free to get creative!

The sky's the limit! We trust you are most aware of what children in your country/region are interested in and how to best 'sell' them the idea of forests being amazing. Make sure you inform yourself about any legal implications when working with children. Best to work together with a school or teacher in planning and running your event.

III. Reporting

We would love to hear about your activity. When you have videos or testimonials from the kids or teachers to share or fotos and reports from the event let us know. We're also happy to share the news about your event on social media. Also if you need help planning get in touch with junaid@ifsa.net. Let us know if you feel the kids would enjoy a certificate of participation, and we will supply you with a template.