

ENVIROLOPES

BIO
KEY

Observation
Variety
Comparing



OVERVIEW

Envirolope challenges direct the participants to hunt for a variety of textures, colors, odors, and evidence of organisms in the activity site.

BACKGROUND



Many people enjoy walks in the outdoors. An awareness of the diversity of nature can enhance the aesthetic appreciation and personal value of such walks and lead to biological inquiry. The color of fall leaves; the fragrance, shape, and color of spring flowers; and the textures and patterns of trees, ferns, and mosses are only a few examples of the variety found in the outdoors.

Envirolopes focuses on the diversity of nature in almost any outdoor setting: along a trail, around a science center or school, at a camp, or on a family outing. This activity works well with mixed-aged groups and encourages the participants to develop the ability to make observations and share them with others.

MATERIALS

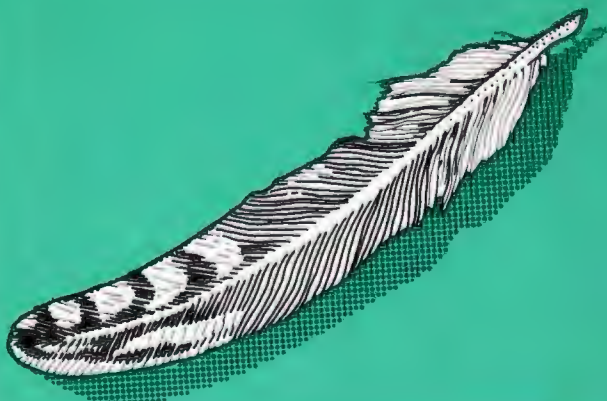


For each team of two:

- 1 letter-sized envelope with a challenge on the front
- optional: several pieces of colored yarn or cloth, a different color for each team (See the "Preparation" section.)

For the group:

- 1 "Envirolope Challenges" card
- glue or tape
- scissors



CHALLENGE: FIND A VARIETY OF COLORS, TEXTURES, ODORS, SHAPES, ORGANISMS, OR EVIDENCE OF ORGANISMS.



PREPARATION



Group Size. This activity works well with both small and large groups of almost all ages (over five years old).

Time. Plan on thirty to forty minutes for this activity.

Site. Select a site where collecting small samples of leaves, rocks, twigs, or shells is permitted. Picnic tables, sidewalks, or lawns are good places to spread out the envirolope collections for the group discussion and observation game.

Envirolopes. Make a copy of the "Envirolope Challenges" card. Select the challenges that are appropriate for your site and group, or make up some of your own. Cut the challenges apart and adhere one to each of the envelopes.





Envirolope Challenges. Possible challenges include:

- Find at least five different textures.
- Find at least five different odors.
- Find the five most unusual-shaped leaves.
- Find at least five different kinds of seeds.
- Find at least five different-colored objects.
- Find at least five different kinds of evidence that animals are around, such as a leaf with bites taken out of it or a feather.
- Find at least five different kinds of evidence that people are around (trash, for example).
- Find at least five different kinds of rocks.
- Find at least five objects with different shades of brown.
- Find at least five objects with different shades of green.

For seashore sites include:

- Find at least five different kinds of shells.
- Find a shell that has five different colors on it.

Flagging. If regulations or a fragile habitat preclude collecting, you can use the flagging technique. Use a different color of cloth or yarn for each team. The teams should attach flags to or near the objects that meet their challenges. If you use this method, the group will have to walk around the site to discuss the choices.

ACTION



1. Point out the boundaries of the activity site to the group. Show everyone an example of an envirolope challenge, and discuss how the challenge might be met.
2. Divide the group into teams of two, and give each team an envirolope. Give the teams twenty minutes to search for samples that meet their envirolope challenges. Make a rule that each team's samples must fit in the envelope.
3. Circulate among the teams as they search, encouraging them to investigate further. Offer encouragement or assistance when necessary.
4. After a twenty-minute search period, ask the teams to display their collections and look over each other's finds.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?



1. What objects appeared in more than one collection?
2. Did you find more evidence of animals or of people? What types of evidence do animals leave? What types of evidence do people leave?
3. Which was the most difficult challenge to meet?
4. Which item, because of its variety of properties, could be included in the largest number of individual collections?

Note. Keep discussions short. However, if a discussion wanders from biology to art or to some other form of creative expression don't feel that you have to turn the discussion back "on course." Such interest is the key to developing environmental awareness and appreciation.

OBSERVATION GAME



1. Combine several collections (starting with about twenty-five items), and spread them out on the ground.
2. Have the group form a circle around the collections. Tell the group that you are going to remove one item while their eyes are closed, and that they will try to discover which item you took. The first person to accurately describe the missing item takes your place and gets to remove the next item. Replace the missing item before each new round.
3. Another way of increasing the game's difficulty is to gradually increase the number of items in the pool. After several rounds, suggest removing more than one item each round.

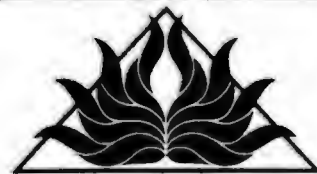


BRANCHING OUT



1. Repeat the activity at a different site or at a different time of year.
2. Ask interested individuals to make up new challenges for another hunt.
3. Make a collage with the samples collected.

Copyright © 1980 by The Regents of the University of California



Find at least five different textures.

Find at least five different odors.

Find the five most unusual-shaped leaves.

Find at least five different kinds of seeds.

Find at least five different-colored objects.

Find at least five different kinds of evidence that animals are around, such as a leaf with bites taken out of it or a feather.

Find at least five different kinds of evidence that people are around (trash, for example).

Find at least five different kinds of rocks.

Find at least five objects with different shades of brown.

Find at least five objects with different shades of green.

Find at least five different kinds of shells.

Find a shell that has five different colors on it.