

Have a Successful Field Investigation

This may be your first time heading out into the NH forests with your class. Here are some simple guidelines to make sure that you all have a great learning experience!

13 Ways to Create Order

1. Be enthusiastic. It's catchy!
2. Be firm. You are in charge.
3. Set limits and explain rules. In the beginning, let the students know what is and is not expected of them. If time permits, ask the students to assign logical consequences for misbehavior.
4. Be consistent. Enforce your rules.
5. Reward good behavior.
6. Try choosing a disruptive student to help you. Use him or her as a materials carrier, official recorder, or your assistant in some manner. Most often this responsibility, activity, and positive attention will eliminate behavior problems before they start.
7. Sit the group in a circle when you want their attention.
8. Listen to your students. Let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
9. Be patient with every student's questions.
10. If the entire group is getting out of control, sit them down and choose a quiet activity.
11. If you sense your group needs to "blow off some steam," give them a five-minute break.
12. Never threaten a student with something you do not plan to carry out.
13. Do not penalize the entire group because of the behavior of one student.

13 Ways to Restore Order

1. Move close to or walk with a disruptive student.
2. Ignore some antics. Some students will be disruptive just for attention. Responding to them, in a positive or negative way, only reinforces their behavior. It's okay to ignore some behaviors, as long as they are not harmful.
3. Use non-verbal signals, such as a nod, raised brow, or moving close to a student, to prevent misbehavior from escalating.
4. Use friendly and kind humor (not sarcasm) to lessen a child's anxiety.
5. Give individualized attention to students having trouble with a task, before frustration leads to misadventure.
6. Try a new activity to break up restlessness or boredom.
7. Praise good behavior.
8. Use a firm "no" to enforce limits.
9. Have a disruptive student sit down or leave the group. This serves as an opportunity for the student to calm down. Talk to the student about his or her disruptive behavior before inviting him or her to return to the group.
10. Stop the activity and review the rules with the whole group. Ask the students to state the rules with the consequences.
11. Enforce the consequences for misbehavior.
12. Do not hesitate to ask for help from another adult.
13. Keep up your enthusiasm. Remember, tomorrow is another day!

Simple Equipment for Forest Investigations

The following items can be purchased inexpensively or obtained from parents or school volunteers:

- Kid-sized gloves (for working in the soil)
- Terrarium or other large holding container
- Variety of clear containers with perforated lids (non-breakable)
- Rolls of string or twine
- Tape measure
- Rulers
- Packages of index cards (4x6)
- Animal call (to use as a signal with groups)
- Bandannas (for blindfolds and other uses)
- Packages of sharpened pencils
- Track cards (available in classroom sets at no charge from NH Fish & Game Department, 271-3211)
- Clipboards (can be a sheet of cardboard with a rubber band or bull clip)
- Field notebooks with hard cover, spiral bound
- Non-mercury thermometers (household type are easily readable)
- Small trowels
- Digital camera
- Cassette recorder, microphone, tape, batteries