



# Field Trip Outline to Outdoor Classroom First Grade



## ***PREPARING FOR TRIP:***

1. Discuss ['Leave No Trace'](#) principles published by the Boy Scouts of America at School before leaving for the Outdoor Classroom. This really helps students to understand how to handle themselves throughout the trip.
2. Assign fieldtrip buddies as some of the activities will work well if kids are working as partners.
3. Contact Patricia Gaudreau or Jean Cummins to reserve the Outdoor Classroom. They are listed on the 'Science' page of the MCPS website.

## ***DAY OF FIELDTRIP AT THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM:***

### **Activity 1 - Nature Hike at Lower Pond:**

(If your group is starting here, have the bus driver drop you off at lower pond.)

1. Walk around lower pond.
  - **Caution: There are a lot of goose droppings at the lower pond, so have the students watch their step.**
  - **There are branches hanging down on the northeast side of the pond. It is passable, just stay close to the hillside, not the pond.**
2. On the east side of the pond, there are 2 large culverts. There is a spring located at the culverts that makes a 'glup, glup sound' every second and spits water about 8 inches in the air. It works best to send one teacher to the culvert, then have a chaperone send students to the culvert in groups of 2-4 to observe the spring.
3. Proceed to next station - The Upper Pond.

## Activity 2 - Observation at Upper Pond:

(If your group is starting here, have the bus driver drop you off near the benches.)

*Materials: binoculars, clip boards, pencils, and circle maps for observations about fall.*

1. Discuss how to use binoculars, how to fit properly on eyes and focus the lenses. Students will need to share binoculars.
2. Sit at benches and observe upper pond to the east and the spring to the west using binoculars. There are ducks and trout at the pond.
3. Complete handout identifying signs of fall (or nature observations).
4. Proceed to next station - fish hatchery/recess station.
  - **Caution: There are steps that lead into the water around this pond. Do not allow students on the steps.**

## Activity 3 - Observation at Fish Hatchery/Recess:

(If you have a group starting at this station, have bus drop off group at the pavilion)

1. Meet at pavilion and observe the fenced in area, the fishery. Have the students predict why there is a fence at this location.
2. Walk over to fence and observe.
  - a. What do you see? (lots of trout in the troughs, different sizes of trout).
  - b. Why are the trout there? (to stock the ponds)
  - c. Why are they fenced in? (to keep humans and predators out)
3. Take a recess moment in this area. Recommended games are "[Bats & Moths](#)" or "[Snakes in the Gutter](#)". It is **not** recommended to bring balls for the students as they could get caught in the fence of the trout run.
4. Proceed to next station - mapping activity.

## Activity 4 - Mapping Activity

(If you have a group starting at this station, have the bus drop off at the pavilion.)

*Materials: [maps](#), container of prizes. Put the prize container in the well before beginning the activity.*

1. Start at the large black walnut tree which is located to the **north** of the pavilion. Take a moment to observe the tree.
  - a. It's huge, most likely this tree is over 100 years old.
  - b. Have students join hands together to span the trunk of the tree. How many students does it take to span the trunk? (about 4)
  - c. Point out the walnuts on the ground, and note that black walnuts are not sold in stores, so this may be the first time some students have seen them.
  - d. If you can find a black walnut still in its green hull, and pick it up, it will stain your hands brown. It will take several days for the stain to fade off their skin.
  - e. Talk about how valuable this tree's wood is and that we are lucky they have saved this one for the students to enjoy.
2. Have the students located the gazebo. The gazebo is **south** of where we are standing.
3. Walk half way to the gazebo, stop and review the cardinal directions.
  - a. Teacher points to the east: face **east** and located the sycamore tree. *Question: What do you observe about the sycamore tree?* Hopefully the students will note the whitish bark on the trunk. If not, point it out.
  - b. Compare and contrast the sycamore bark to the black walnut bark.
  - c. Turn around 180° to face **west**. Observe some of the things that you see.

- d. Face the walnut tree to face **north** and then face the gazebo to face **south** and continue to the gazebo.
4. All students get in the gazebo for a photo. Lighting may be a challenge for the picture. Take a moment to ask students what they observe. Point out the well that is to the **northwest** of the gazebo. Walk to the well.
5. Well - make observations. Look inside the well for a surprise!
6. Proceed to next station - Lower Pond.