

Elementary

Purlieu Lesson Plans

Created by DeeGee Lester, Education Director

The Parthenon

Purlieu Exhibit

Sharon Charney & Anne Williams

West Gallery: November 12, 2011-April 28, 2012



Maple Leaf

By Sharon Charney

Photos used with permission from the West Meade Conservancy

Curriculum Standards

Visual Art: 2.3 (Recognize that art has a purpose); 2.2.1 (Principles of design, balance, variety, rhythm, proportion); 3.3 (Describe the subject matter and ideas of another's artwork); 3.1 (Describe the subject matter and ideas of a student's own artwork)

Language Arts: 1.1.2 (decode words and expand vocabulary); 1.1.3 (sequence of sound); 1.2.8 (Participate in group discussion); 1.3.3 (compose a simple story)

This lesson plan can be used in conjunction with the introductory Power Point, *Exploring Art and Nature*, listed under Educational Resources on the Parthenon Web site.

Purlieu



Pronounced: purl-yu

What is that word?



It means “a piece of land on the edge of a forest.”

It also means “a frequently visited place.”

To the people who live in Nashville’s West Meade, it is a beautiful area of forest and wildlife that they love and are trying to protect through the **West Meade Conservancy**.



Conservancy

Pronounced kun-ser-vunsee

What is *that* word?



It means the protection, preservation, management, or restoration of wildlife or natural resources such as forests, soil, or water.



The West Meade Conservancy is a non-profit dedicated to preserving the woodlands and wildlife of West Meade as a link to Nashville's ecological corridor.





Activity:

Purlieu Word Wall

Make a word wall in the shape of a tree.



Attach leaves to the tree with pieces of yarn, allowing the leaves to move.

On the front of each leaf, write the name of a bird, animal, tree, plant, or flower.

On the back of each leaf, provide the pronunciation of the word.

Older students may also create a binder with a photo and brief description of each plant or animal listed on the word tree.

Lessons from a boy named Noah

A boy named Noah Charney grew up in the area of Nashville called West Meade. He loved nature and enjoyed spending his time exploring the woods and hills and creeks.



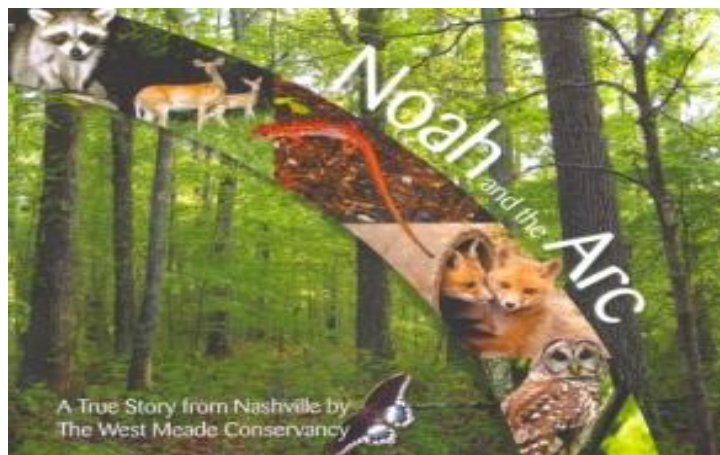
He noticed creatures and plants that most people miss. He peeked under leaves to discover curious insects. He listened to bird songs. He took photos of plants and animals.

When he grew up, he built upon his boyhood love of nature and became a biologist, a person who studies living things. He founded the West Meade Conservancy to preserve the woods and wildlife for future generations.



And...

Noah's story became a delightful and informative book



What can we learn from Noah?

- An area of interest today can lead to opportunities tomorrow.
- A curious mind has no boundaries.
- A focus on developing powers of observation opens a world that most people miss.
- Everyone has a *voice* that can be used to help and to influence others.

Let's Explore and Interpret Nature through a Variety of Activities

Observation of Nature:

How can we know, understand, or interpret nature if we don't experience and observe nature?

Activity: *Pick Five*

- *Collect leaves from five different trees. Place them side-by-side and compare their similarities and differences. 1) How is each shaped? 2) What color or shade of color is each – can students detect variations of green? Are there variations of color on the same leaf? 3) Where are the veins? 4) What are the measurements of the leaf? 4) What are the distinguishing features of the leaf – is it Hairy? Wrinkled? Waxy? Smooth? The exercise shows the magnificent variety found in Nature. Students can create a chart showing the comparisons. They can use the same comparative techniques for insects, flowers, shells, and other objects found in Nature.*

Activity: *Nature Journal*

- Three web sites provide excellent guidance for teachers assisting students in developing personal nature journals. Each site offers background, tips and examples, as well as steps in journal development, sketching and photographing, and even video. Check the Smithsonian in Your Classroom: Introduction to the Nature Journal at www.SmithsonianEducation.org. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Prairie Wetlands Learning Center offers K-6 Lesson Plans for nature journaling at www.fws.gov/midwest/pwlc/documents/NatureJournal.pdf. Another great source by David Welzel (*Creating a Science Nature Journal*) www.david-welzel.suite101.com/creating-a-science-nature-journal.

Activity: *Nature Writing*

- Using description and sketches developed through personal nature journals, students write a descriptive or narrative piece about nature or their experience with nature. Teachers may provide prompts such as:
 - A Day in the Woods*
 - Sunset (or Sunrise)*
 - My Favorite Sounds in Nature*
 - My Favorite Forest Creature*

Activity: *Interpreting Nature through Art*

- Ask students to expand one of the nature sketches from their journals.
 - *Go Abstract!!! Ask students to select a tree, a flower, or some other object they wish to interpret. First, look at the object and observe its details. Now, look at the same object through a simple kaleidoscope (inexpensive versions can be purchased at Parent-Teacher Stores and novelty shops and a handful of kaleidoscopes can be shared in the classroom). The kaleidoscope's multiple reflection gives the viewer a strange and unexpected perspective on a familiar object. The student draws the colors and arrangements of the object as seen through the kaleidoscope.*
- Note:** The Parthenon used this activity in a student workshop several years ago.



The resulting works created by the students in drawing what they saw, were delightful and amazing.

Activity: *Nature Safety*

As students learn to enjoy nature or set off with family, friends, and Scout groups to explore the wonders of nature, *safety in the woods* should always be a priority. It is easy to wander off of trails or away from parents. Students may create *Just Whistle* safety posters, encouraging children to always carry a whistle around their neck to alert others to their location in an emergency.