

Brontosaurus Learning

Making science fun!

An Experiment about

Living Things

Plants At School



What you will need:

- a large piece of paper and pens
- notepads - one per group
- 3 plastic bags per group
- permanent marker

What you will do:

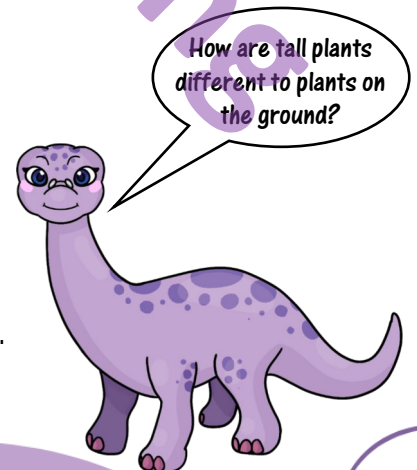
1. Label your bags "ground level", "bush" and "tree".
2. In small groups explore the area of the playground your teacher suggests and have a good look at the plants you find there.
3. Collect one sample leaf and if you can one sample flower or seed or seed pod from each different type of plant you find. Put your samples in the right plastic bag, for example if the leaf is from a tree, put it in the bag labelled "tree". If you can collect a fairly fresh leaf from the ground, do so.
4. As you collect each sample, write down anything else you notice about the plant. Is it big and bushy or tall and thin? Does it have fruit? Does it have a particular kind of bark?
5. Bring you samples and notes back to the classroom. On the big paper make a display by pasting your samples according to where you found them - ground level at the bottom, bushes in the middle and trees at the top.

What is going on?

You should be able to use your observations to describe the general features of the plants that are ground level, the plant that are bushes and the trees.

Challenges:

- Use paper and crayons to do bark rubbings of different trees. What similarities and differences can you find?
- Can you work out a way to classify the plants based on your observations?



TEACHING NOTES:

Brontosaurus Learning Experiment:
Living Things LT09

Key Concepts:

- Characteristics of plants

Resources:

- Experiment description Living Things LT09 - one copy per student.
- An area of the playground, nearby park etc preferably with a variety of plants at ground level, as bushes and trees
- Chart paper, pens, student notepads, plastic bags (3 per group), glue, permanent marker

Lesson Notes:

As a class read through the procedure of this experiment and discuss where students are and are not permitted to go and how the students are going to look at the different plants and collect specimen leaves, seeds, and flowers. You will need to remind students to be careful about taking notes about the plant and to be sure to put their specimens in the correct bags.

Once the students have had time to look around the area and collect their samples, gather them back together to discuss the types of features that they observed. Then draw up the table on the large paper as it is on the experiment description. I usually then let one group of students at a time glue one type of plant's specimens to the chart and prompt them with questions to explain where they found them and to describe their other features. Then the next group can choose a different plant to add, and so on.

What should happen in this experiment and why?

Students should be able to describe some of the features of the plants that are found in their local area, and some of the similarities and differences of the plants.

Follow up questions:

- If we did this same activity in another part of the world, would our results be the same? Explain your answer, with an example if you can (eg, desert, mountain, rainforest, seaside etc, plants native to different countries etc)
- If we did this same activity at another time of year how would it be different? (deciduous plants bare in winter, flowering plants in spring, fruiting plants in summer etc)

Investigation Record



Experiment Title:

Scientist (that's you!):

Materials: What will I need?

Investigation—what am I going to do in this experiment?

Diagrams are a great idea!

Hypothesis: What I think will happen:

Observation: What I SAW happen:

Diagrams are a great idea!

From my investigation I learnt:

Great work scientist!