

Outdoor Education: The Effects of Outdoor Learning on Student Success

Background:
This Action Research project is about the benefits of outdoor education on student learning. The project was done with 19 Kindergarten students in Sheridan, Montana. The problem I focused on is that students at our school have limited opportunities to be involved with their community and the outdoors.

Primary Question: How does incorporating outdoor education with current curriculum benefit student learning?

Secondary Question 1:
What impact does outdoor learning have on student learning?

Secondary Question 2:
How does outdoor learning affect students' perception of science?

Secondary Question 3: How does outdoor education impact current curriculum?

Treatment: Students were given pre-tests of science content knowledge, and were interviewed to determine their views and attitudes towards science and outdoor learning. Teacher journaling was used to record data throughout the treatment. Finally, students were given a post-test on content, and were surveyed about their level of interest and opinions about learning in an outdoor setting.



Data Source		
Pre-test	Formative Assessments	Likert Survey
Interview entire class	Likert survey	Interview subset of treatment group
Teacher Journal	Observational data	

Results: Data collected during this project showed a significant increase in student attitudes and interest towards science, the outdoors, and outdoor learning. Students were noticeably more excited about learning when in an outdoor setting. Test scores after the treatment unit were remarkably higher than before students were exposed to an outdoor learning environment. Current curriculum was enhanced and positively impacted by outdoor educational opportunities.

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