



SIXTH GRADE: Team Time

Students will come out to Little Creek for a full day to learn and bond with their new 6th-grade teams. They will do this through team-building games and visiting our resident animals.

Early Education: Animals big and small

Early education will be walking out to the prairie to look for insects. Each student will use a bug box and an insect field guide to collect and ID their insects. We will also be visiting our resident animals (dove, snake, turtle, and rabbit) in the Elementary building. The class will also get to explore our Discovery Classroom.

FIRST GRADE: Plants and Pollinators

All living things depend on one another and their environment to live and grow. After being introduced to some of the plants and animals common to Missouri prairies, our student “scientists” hike the Prairie Loop trail, using their senses to explore Little Creek’s prairie habitat and observing its inhabitants and their unique relationships. At stops along the way, students consider how the prairie habitat provides the basic needs of its animal inhabitants and humans. Students will also examine and discuss the structures and functions of plants, focusing on their role in plant survival and their use by humans. Students will visit the bees/apiary and discuss pollinators and how they help farm crops like apples. The student will help make apple cider using an old cider press. Back in the classroom, they will finish their day by sampling apple cider, apple chips, and honey.

SECOND GRADE: The Way Seeds Travel

In this visit, students will have the opportunity to experience how seeds travel. They will participate in several activities designed to introduce them to classification. The students will sort and chart seeds from different trees and plants. Then, the class will be divided into teams, working cooperatively to create a group seed based on how it travels. Students will also get up close with some of the resident vertebrate animals at Little Creek who help seed travel. They will record information about each animal including habitat, food, body covering, how they help plants, and their type of movement.

THIRD GRADE: Exploring the Habitats

During this visit, students can use observations of temperature and wind measurements to compare and contrast a variety of Little Creek’s habitat types—pasture, prairie, deciduous forest, and pond. The hike begins with a walk past the pastures, through a small section of woodland, and then along the Prairie Loop Trail. As they hike from the woodland into the prairie, students can see, hear, and feel the contrasts that exist between these two very different ecosystems. On this walk students will get an up-close look at some of the inhabitants and experience the sights and sounds of the prairie, pond, and forest. Bird songs, scat, leaves, tracks, and plant life are just a few of the topics students will learn about on the hike. Students will use hand lenses to discover what tiny creatures live in the water, identifying some of them with a field guide and then drawing what they have observed. In the classroom, students will work in teams to create a critter using a variety of materials they can select from. The animal will need to live in one of Little Creek Habitats (pond, forest, prairie). Students will brainstorm on a design sheet first before selecting materials. After building their critter, the students will present their critter to the class and explain the traits it has to survive in the habitat.



KINDERGARTEN: Discovering Little Creek through Our Senses

This visit provides an orientation to Little Creek. After exploring the question of how the winter season affects the lives of animals, students will focus on how some animals migrate south, returning in the spring, Hibernate, or adapt. The students will visit Little Creek's indoor resident animals. Always a favorite with the children, they are moved to the classroom building from their usual home in the museum so students can experience them "up close and hands-on ". Also, the students will be using their senses to explore animal traits with our Discovery boxes and using science tools like binoculars, students observe birds feeding at the Christopher Brown Nature Viewing Habitat. They will also be using their senses on a Winter hike through the woods (weather permitting).

FIFTH GRADE: FUN WITH THE SUN

The Sun, either directly or indirectly, powers planet Earth. Whether coal or solar panels are used to generate electricity, the Sun was the original energy source. In this visit, students will be introduced to the six forms of energy, learn the difference between renewable and nonrenewable energy resources, investigate the visible spectrum of radiant light, and look at examples of how the Sun's energy is transformed as it is stored, transferred, and used on our planet. In addition, students will create a "Coal Chain", tracing the path of this nonrenewable form of energy from its formation millions of years ago to the light in our classroom today.

THIRD GRADE: THE JOURNEY OF LEWIS & CLARK

Students will study a large map of the United States and test their knowledge of the Louisiana Purchase, the Native American tribes who lived there, the trail of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and its importance to Missouri history. Students will then use authentic Native American tools to create an artifact from flint while learning about the impact of the explorers on the culture and tools of the Native Americans. Students will also observe and, using a dichotomous key, identify animal tracks that the explorers might have seen along the way, logging the information in a "journal" just like Lewis and Clark did. Finally, they will examine and try to identify various items that the Corps of Discovery carried along with them for both survival and trade with native tribes.

FOURTH GRADE: ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS

During this visit, students will discover how a variety of physical adaptations help animals survive in the habitat in which they live. In one series of activities, students will investigate how camouflage coloration helps some animals blend into their environment and avoid predators. They will also use a variety of tools that simulate the diversity of bird beaks to determine which beak works best for a variety of foods commonly eaten by birds. A close-up look at a bird feather and careful observation of a Little Creek resident dove will round out their study of how feathers, beaks, and feet are important survival tools for our avian friends.



FIRST GRADE: DOWN ON THE FARM

One highlight will be a visit to the barn, garage, pasture, and chicken coop to see the farm animals born this spring, including the calf and piglet(s), along with the resident adult sheep, goats, and chickens. We'll discuss their life cycles and how humans depend on them for food and resources. We'll also point out the apiary in the barnyard (where the bees live). Back in the classroom, students will hold baby chicks while learning about chickens and eggs. Students will also make their butter from cream. This will be followed by a "tasting" of their homemade butter on saltines, a delicious way to end their visit "down on the farm"!

SECOND GRADE: WONDERFUL WOOL

During this visit, students learn how wool from sheep becomes fabric we use for clothing and other needs. The process begins with herding. The students will see a demonstration of how dogs are used to help in the task of herding livestock—a wonderful example of how people use domesticated animals. Then, the shearing of the sheep by our skilled shearer. Students also go to one of the elementary classrooms to observe the steps involved in turning wool into something usable, such as a sweater, shawl, or placemat. Artisans demonstrate how to use hand carders and the drum carder, tools that prepare the wool for spinning. Next, students observe spinners using a spinning wheel to change loose wool into spun yarn. Students then use a loom to weave yarn into fabric by "throwing" the shuttle and using the beater bar.

KINDERGARTEN: CELEBRATE SPRING

This visit will focus on how the spring season affects the lives of the plants and animals found in both the wild and manmade habitats at Little Creek. Little Creek staff will accompany classes on a hike along one of the nature area trails. Students will learn the difference between wild and domesticated animals and look for examples along the way. Students will use their senses and simple tools to observe particular signs of spring in the habitats they visit and compare them to what they would observe during a winter walk. Also included is a visit to the barn, garage, and pasture to see the farm animals, including the calf and piglet born this spring. The students will also spend time in the classroom, where students will hold baby chicks. Kindergarten ends its visit with a trip to the Discovery Classroom.

EARLY EDUCATION: SPRING

The spring visit will include an introduction to chickens, from egg to adult. They are challenged to think about how hens, roosters, and chicks are the same and different, and how chicks hatch from eggs. Several baby chicks are brought out for the children to see, and they are questioned about how the chicks look, sound, and feel. Then each child is allowed to hold and touch a chick. The visit continues with a trip to see other animals found during the spring at Little Creek in the barn, garage, chicken coop, and pasture, including a piglet, calf, adult sheep, goats, and hens. The children will have the opportunity to touch many of the animals and feed the sheep and goats at the pasture fence. The children will also hike along the Log Cabin Loop trail (ADA Trail), discovering some of the plants, birds, and animals that live in Little Creek's forest habitat along the way. The hike finishes with a visit inside the Discovery Classroom.



Little Creek Property during the summer is a busy time. The Audubon Camp Summer Camp is run by the Audubon Center at Riverlands and Little Creek. It is a free camp and open to students finishing 3rd through 5th grade that live in the Ferguson-Florissant School District boundaries. There are 3 sessions during the summer.

Little Creek is also hosted some other camps during the summer sponsored by the American Journal and St. Louis Chess Club.