Excellerations

TEACHER'S ACTIVITY GUIDE

12+ months

Infant & Toddler

earlySTEM™ My First Specimen Viewers - Set 3
12 months+

Here's What You Get!

4 Viewers with embedded specimens:

- Ginko Leaf
- Red Lacewing Butterfly
- Golden Scorpion
- Yellow Daisy, Snowland Daisy & Persian Violet

Teacher's Activity Guide

Introduction

Young children are naturally curious about nature! Excellerations® Toddler Specimen Viewers allow them to get close-up views of plants and animals just like real scientists. As children examine the specimens, they develop key process skills such as observing, comparing, contrasting and communicating as well as an awareness of and appreciation for the natural world. Use the activities suggested below to further children's exploration by engaging them in spirited discussion and introducing scientific terminology appropriate for their level.

Use the Excellerations® Toddler Specimen Viewers to address these Head Start Early Childhood Learning Outcomes:

- Goal P-ATL 11: Child shows interest in and curiosity about the world around them
- Goal P-SCI 1: Child observes and describes observable phenomena (objects, materials, organisms and events)
- Goal P-SCI 2: Child engages in scientific talk

Suggested Activities

Plant or Animal?

Encourage the children to observe the specimens. Can they tell which are plants and which are animals? Encourage them to observe the specimens more closely. How are the plant specimens the same? What makes them different from the animals? They may note that the plants have stems or leaves, the animals have legs or wings and antennae. Can they identify other kinds of plants and animals? Some children may be interested to know that plants make their own food from sunlight and water, but animals must hunt for or find their food.

What Colors Do You See?

Encourage the children to identify the colors they see in the different specimens. Observe other plants and animals and discuss the different colors. Are all plants the same color? Some children may note that many plants have green leaves. Leaves come in many different shapes and sizes. Some leaves change colors throughout the year.

Are all animals the same color? Children may note that some animals are dark colors, such as brown or gray, that help them camouflage, or blend in with their surroundings for protection. Some animals have bright color. Sometimes an animal's

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Toddler Specimen Viewers (continued)

bright color means "Here I am—look at me!" and sometimes bright colors mean "Stay away—I'm dangerous!" Ask the children to look for examples of animals with camouflaging colors and colors that draw attention.

How Many Do You See?

Together, count the specimens in each viewer. Can you find 1 butterfly, 1 leaf, 3 flowers and 1 scorpion?

Plants have different kinds of leaves. Some have single leaves – one leaf on a slender stem. Some have compound leaves: many small leaflets on one stem. Take a close look at other plant leaves. What do you see?

Can you count the flower petals? Petals protect parts of the plants and can be many sizes. Petals are often beautiful colors that attract insects. Look for petals on other flowers.

Insects & Scorpions!

The butterfly is an insect. Insects have 6 legs. Many insects have 2 pairs of wings. Can you find these parts on the butterfly? Scorpions have 8 legs – can you count them? Can you find the small pinchers on the front of the scorpion? What do you think the scorpion uses these for?

Look for pictures of other insects and scorpions and find the body parts. If possible, observe these animals on walks, in books, or in videos. Prompt the children to discuss how they are the same and how they are different. What colors are the different insects? How do they move? How do they eat? Can you pretend to be a butterfly or scorpion?

Interesting Specimen Facts

The Ginko Leaf is from an old tree that has been used by people for medicine, food and special celebrations. Does the leaf look like other items – maybe a fan or triangle?

The Red Lacewing Butterfly has colors that can range from red to brown with black and white patterns. They live in rainforests and they use their colors to keep other animals away. Like all butterflies, it grows from an egg into a caterpillar. Then it makes a chrysalis, or cocoon, where it lives while its body changes into a beautiful butterfly.

The Golden Scorpion likes to live in warm, dry areas. Do you like when it's warm outside or cold?

Yellow Daisy, Snowland Daisy and Persian Violet flowers are all flowers that butterflies and birds like. They come in many colors and sizes.

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