

Mountain Sprouts Curriculum Guide

At Mountain Sprouts, we facilitate learning based on what children are interested in (emergent learning). The learning process involves gently guiding them to explore further (scaffolding). Even though most of our curriculum is inspired by the students' outdoor explorations, planning broad themes helps inspire a seasonal flow. By choosing virtues for our broad themes, we ensure that we touch on some of those more abstract characteristics we value as a community.

September ~ Adaptability

Welcome to outdoor exploration! Students learn to adjust to a unique learning and social environment, one devoid of screens and constant stimulation. They discover an atmosphere that is nature driven, imagination oriented, and full of self-guided play! We, like the forest around us, are adaptable in response to the changing season.

October ~ Empathy

As students gain confidence in their new environment, they are encouraged to look outside themselves. They deepen their relationships with each other and learn to connect with the larger community. We explore thoughtful harvest, indigenous people's celebration (discussing local indigenous culture both past and present), and honoring those that have passed on el Dia de los Muertos.

November ~ Gratitude

At the end of the season, what a natural time to pause and give thanks for friends, family and the Earth! How wonderful to find gratitude for our families' traditions, for the new rain, for animal neighbors and so much more. And, it's 'Hooting Season;' an excellent time of year to learn about owls.

December ~ Giving (Reciprocity)

Many families celebrate holidays through gift giving this time of year. We are also inspired by the giving in nature -the plants and animals who support each other to get through the winter. We have opportunities to give to our Sprouts community through holiday traditions and to our larger community through the community cupboard.

January ~ Mindfulness

The quiet month of January allows us to look inward and at the same time wonder about the great beyond. In the quiet, snowy landscape we stop to pay attention to what we can hear, see, smell, and touch. In the dark we look upward to wonder about the stars and planets. Constellations are brightest this time of year and capture our imaginations.

February ~ Love

Practicing love gives the opportunity to explore acceptance, kindness, respect, compassion, and love languages. We honor Black History Month by learning about the history of Black and Brown people in our country and celebrating the uniqueness of each body.

March ~ Curiosity

As the Spring Equinox approaches, there is so much to discover during the shoulder season! The melting snow reveals all that has been hidden underneath, promoting endless wonder about the thawing forest. We encourage the expansion of our imaginations as nature items become more available to us.

April ~ Joyfulness

There are many things to delight in: the waking noises of spring, the vibrant colors, the rich smell of soil warming, and new life emerging all around us. What brings each of us joy? And how do we integrate this into a daily practice?

May ~ Strength

At the end of Spring we see all the ways we've grown! In nature, we marvel at the strength of a tiny seed that holds the power to become a tree, animals migrating, the raging river, and the bold mountains. We use our strong bodies on National Bike to School Day!

June ~ Light

We can't help but notice the long days. We welcome the summer solstice with joy and open hearts. We take a look at how nature integrates light through photosynthesis and evaporation. We celebrate the light within that helps us be kind, be safe, and be together. In June, Willow wraps up their school year with an end of the year celebration and graduation ceremony.

July ~ Resilience, Evergreen & Summer Camps

In the heat of Summer, we remember that we can do hard things! We tap into our physical, cognitive, and social-emotional tools to continue to thrive at school as we near the end of the year. We investigate and admire the resilience of Tierra's flora and fauna through the drought season and find inspiration for summer time play.

August ~ Celebration, Evergreen & Summer Camps

August is a transitional month for Evergreen. Some of the students prepare to graduate on to kindergarten or Willow. Those who remain prepare to step into leadership roles and welcome new classmates. We spend our final weeks practicing the discipline of celebration, an intentional time of joy and delight. In August, Evergreen wraps up their school year with an end of the year celebration and graduation ceremony.

