

## Elementary Sun Education Activities Guide

1. **Introduction:** Start the conversation by asking the children some good things the sun does (warmth, light, growing plants, etc). Ask if anyone can think of some bad/harmful effects of the sun (sunburn, cataracts, skin cancer).
2. **How do animals protect themselves from the sun?** Lessons we can learn.
  - a. Materials needed: printed copies of 8x10 double-sided animal cards (animals.ppt). These can be laminated (ask the school to do this for you) for durability.
  - b. Activities:
    - i. Grades K-2: Explain to the children that we are going to learn how animals protect themselves from the sun and how they can teach us to protect ourselves.
      1. Hold up a card, showing the children the picture of the animal.
      2. Ask the children to identify the animal.
      3. Ask the children how this animal is protecting itself from the sun.
      4. Once they get the answer or you tell them, ask them what we can do like the animal to protect ourselves from the sun.
    - ii. Grades 3-6: In small groups, the children can teach each other about the animals. Have each child choose a few cards and go around the circle to tell their friends about what they learned on the card.
3. **Experiment with sun protection:** Can you protect the Frisbee from getting a sun burn?
  - a. Materials needed:
    - i. UV sensitive Frisbee or other object that changes color in the sun (bracelet, sun paper, etc)
      1. Available at no charge from EPA SunWise program or purchase (Amazon.com). Ideally, have more than one Frisbee because once they turn purpose, they take several minutes to fade.
    - ii. Plastic wrap or Saran wrap Quick covers
    - iii. A variety of sun screen products, including low SPF (4) and high SPF (SPF 30 or higher)
    - iv. Wide brimmed hat

- v. Baseball cap
- vi. Shirt or other clothing
- vii. Box or dark bag to keep the Frisbee out of even indirect light as they are very sensitive to changing color

b. Activities:

- i. Cover the Frisbee with plastic wrap
- ii. Ask the small groups of children how they are going to protect their Frisbee from the sun; show them all the objects
- iii. Encourage them to use the blocking items – hat and clothing – first because the Frisbees take a few minutes to fade after turning purple. Ideally have more than one Frisbee available for the group.
- iv. Comparisons: wide-brimmed hat offers more complete coverage vs. baseball hat.
- v. Sunscreen: compare 1 part of the Frisbee covered by SPF 30 with another covered with SPF 4.
- vi. Ask the children to summarize their findings and what they learned.
- vii. UV black light can be used if natural sunlight is not available.

**4. PowerPoint presentations:**

- a. Materials needed: PowerPoint or PDF versions of the presentations

b. Activities:

- i. Set up the presentations on an iPad or other tablet device. Have 2-3 children read through a presentation of their choosing and talk about it together.
- ii. Can also be used for a more traditional presentation.

**5. Your skin is a complex organ – take care of it:**

- a. With a dermatoscope or magnifying glass, show the children some areas of the skin – freckles, scars, fingerprints.

**Other useful links**

<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/publications.html>

[http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/educator\\_resources.html#slide](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/educator_resources.html#slide)

[http://www.neha.org/childrens\\_eh/](http://www.neha.org/childrens_eh/)

<http://www.sunsafetyforkids.org/>

<http://www.sunsafetyalliance.org/index.html>

<http://www.sunaware.org/be-sunaware/>