



LICHEN OF RIVERSIDE KNOWLEDGE PATH GRADES 3-5

Let's learn about lichen! In this activity, learn how to identify and classify lichen found at Riverside's Knowledge Path based on their physical characteristics.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- How to identify the three categories of lichen
- Where lichen can be found, how they live, and how they grow
- How to draw lichen and use scientific vocabulary to describe them.
- Vocabulary learning: lichen, Crustose, Foliose, Fruticose

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES:

Learners will explore nature around them. This activity promotes critical thinking as class will need to think about the physical characteristics of lichen to categorise them. Other skills developed by this activity are observation, drawing, making inferences, and oral presentation

MATERIALS:

- A nature journal or a notebook
- Pencil
- Computer
- Activity sheet (attached)
- Lichen field guide (optional)

This is an individual or group outdoor and indoor activity, it can be done in outdoor spaces of the school, home backyard, nearby park/trails and work can continue inside in the classroom.

WHAT TO DO:

1. Ask the class if anyone knows anything about lichen.
2. Take the time to describe to the class what a lichen is, where they are found and what their use is using the accompanying PowerPoint in the resources section. Students may take notes about lichens in their nature journal or notebook.
3. Students should be encouraged to find and observe the lichen from the school outdoor place on their own, instruct students to not pluck lichen as that is harmful to them.
4. When the students find the lichen, ask them to draw them in their nature journals or notebook and describe them using 3-5 words.
5. After students are done with their nature journals, discuss everyone's findings as a class. Educators can start with questions such as 'were they leafy or flat', 'Did they stick up?'. Students will generally classify their lichens based on leafy, flat etc. structures.
6. Hand them the lichen activity sheet found in the resources section and ask them to record their survey of lichens on it.
7. Next introduce the three categories of lichens, crustose, foliose, fruticose. Get them to write their definitions in the notebook. You can also have a field guide handy so students can see different examples. Reflect back on the PowerPoint in the resources section with students if they have questions.
8. Finally go back to the class and have examples of the three different groups of lichens to show the students. Ask them to bring their lichen drawings and put them in the group they think their lichen belongs to.
9. Check if the students put their lichen drawings in the correct group. To wrap up the session, take the time to have a class discussion and ask students if lichen drawings were put in the right group and if they were classified correctly and why.

ASSESSMENT:

- Educator can check the class notebook to see if the definitions were written
- Check if the students categorised the lichens

EXTENSION:

- Have students go home and find lichen at home gardens, parks, neighbourhoods, woods or anywhere in school so that every student is included. They can ask their parents and guardians to help them find lichen if needed.
- Ask them to bring a drawing of the lichen they find to class and put them in the right category.

CREDIT/REFERENCES:

This activity has been modified from serc.carleton.edu, which was developed by Christy Lind, North Shore Community School, Duluth, MN.

Crustose



Foliose



Fruticose



(Images extracted from <https://wildsight.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/lesson-plan-lichen.pdf>)