

Environmental Education

Tennessee

May 2019

Educational Highlight

Summer Reading



A Curious World: Exploring and Discovering through Books

by Monica Farmer and Tania Hinojosa

The child is curious [...] He does not shut himself off from the strange, complicated world around him [...] but tastes it, touches it, hefts it, bends it, breaks it. To find out how reality works, he works on it. He is bold.

-- John Holt, How Children Learn

Whether you are 6 or 60, the power of reading is limitless. Finish this school year and begin the summer with books! Books bring moments of wonder about the natural environment into all learning spaces, especially for those with limited access to natural areas. Books can provide escapes to tropical islands, underground adventures, and can even rocket you to a world of stars, all the while slipping in those indirect moments of environmental education.

Find and share a special book today, and don't forget to read it under your favorite tree.

[Read the Article: A Curious World](#)

[Adult Nature Book Ideas](#)

[Child Nature Book Ideas](#)

This Month Is...

Mental Health Awareness Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. Nature is a free and scientifically proven mental health treatment.

Whether you are taking a long walk in the woods or simply enjoying a beautiful photo of the outdoors, time



engaging with the natural world can lower blood pressure, decrease feelings of toxic stress, and even increase focus and emotional resilience.

A recent empirical study found that virtually any form of immersion in the natural world, outside of your internal world, heightens your overall well-being and increases your positive engagements with the larger human community.

Simple Ways to Bring Nature into Your Busy Day:

1. Enjoy a desk/work plant.
2. Drive a back road instead of the interstate.
3. Hang photos of natural spaces.
4. Eat lunch outside.
5. Take a walk without technology.

[Research: Green Spaces and Mental Health](#)

[Research: Nature-Based Play and ADHD](#)

[Research: Environmental Learning and Student Grades](#)

[Research: Simple Nature and Well-Being](#)

Professional Development

Summer 2019

West TN

July 18 at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park (FREE)



Discover how to use the environment in your classroom, gain knowledge about local Tennessee ecology through fun, outdoor experiences, and leave with teaching resources that embrace scientific principles and experiential learning. Use this time to make connections with the park, park staff and other teachers and professionals who wish to introduce outdoor learning to their 3rd-8th grade students.

Session #1 Includes a hike and outdoor classroom experiences!

Session #2 Includes kayaking or canoeing and outdoor classroom experiences!

Middle TN

June 27 at Tennessee Tech (\$25) 3-12 Science Teachers

This workshop will help you learn more about the format of the new Tennessee Science Assessment aligned with our new 3-dimensional standards. Learn what 3D Assessment looks like. You will have the opportunity to work in grade-level teams to create a ready to use performance-based assessment or PBA featuring a phenomenon, a stimulus, and a prompt. We will collect and share all of the original PBA items with participants in an online platform.

East TN

June 10-14 (6-12 Teachers) (\$25 refundable)

June 24-27 (K-5 Teachers) (\$25 refundable)

at The Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute

The Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute is excited to offer our third annual summer camp for educators. River Teachers is a week-long immersive professional development program designed to help River Teachers and high school science teachers bring freshwater lessons to life. River Teachers will venture out in the field with our scientists to sample macroinvertebrates in a local stream, snorkel one of the Southeast's most biodiverse rivers, and participate in STEAM activities.

[West TN Registration Session 1](#)

[West TN Registration Session 2](#)

[Middle TN Registration](#)

[East TN Registration](#)

Sustainability Corner

Composting



[TN EE Resource: Science of Composting \(2nd Grade\)](#)

[EE Resource: Composting Video \(K-5\)](#)

Get Involved!

2019 TEEA Conference

2019 Tennessee Environmental Educators Association Annual State Conference:

"No Teacher Left Inside"

Friday, October 4 - 6

Montgomery Bell State Park



• Learn classical and breakthrough environmental education techniques, gain skills and confidence to teach outdoors, and discuss success stories and strategies as you grow connections with new and current members at innovative workshops.

• Keynote by Jim Wike of Nature Explore will inspire your outdoor classroom design.

• Saturday evening social with live music and stories by Keith Paluso: Park Ranger and Top 24 Finalist on NBC's "The Voice!"

Register now to take advantage of the \$100 Early Mockingbird Conference Package.

[Learn More and Register Today](#)

[Submit a Conference Presentation Proposal](#)

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