ONE SQUARE

Focus Lesson: One Square

Materials:
One Small Square Backyard by Donald M. Silver
Meter sticks
String
Popsicle sticks
Magnifying glasses
Clipboards
Paper
Chart paper
Markers

Time: 1.5 hours

***Common Core Standards:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7
Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

Thinking Skill: Observing, Gathering data, Organizing information

Objective:

Students will make observations, gather data and organize information to interact with the natural world.

Connection:

Students will interact with nature and see what they are learning about soil come to life. They will be able to see the differences between living and nonliving organisms.

Explicit Instruction:

Ask students what they think of when they think of nature.

Read page 5 of *One Small Square* by Donald M. Silver.

Explain to students that they will be going out into the schoolyard and making their own squares where they will be able to record their own observations. Ask them to make predictions about what they think they will find in those squares. On chart paper, write down their answers.

Guided Practice:

Break students into groups of 4-5 and give them the tools they will need. Explain that they will measure out their square with the meter stick, put a popsicle stick in each corner, and connect the sticks with the string to make a square. Then they will each be responsible for making observations of what they see inside the square that they have created.

Take students outside and allow them to create their squares and begin to make observations. Provide assistance as necessary. Give them an 8 page journal and have them sketch everything they see in their square. Colored pencils could be provided.

Independent Practice:

Bring students back into the classroom and give them each an 8 page journal. Tell them that they will observe their square every day for one week. As part of their first observation they will examine inorganic and organic things in their square.

On the board draw a picture of the paper split in half, with half labeled nonliving (inorganic) and half labeled living (organic). Have students do the same on the second page and then sort the things they found in their square into the two categories. Students should sketch details of what they found.

Reflection – Group Share:

When all students are done sorting their lists, bring the class back together and have them share what they found. Compile results on a class list of living and nonliving things. Compare this list with the students' list of predictions of what they would find in their squares.

Reading List:

One Small Square Backyard by Donald M. Silver

Teacher Note: This project can be revisited multiple times per year and results can be compared. What changed based on the season? What stayed the same? When were you able to find the most or least things in your square?