

Sevens

The premise of Sevens is that if every person in the Commonwealth could name just seven birds, seven mammals, seven herbs, seven trees, seven rocks and/or seven clouds, our populace would be more environmentally literate. The Center's educators combine schoolyard natural history with hands-on exposure to wildlife with incremental classroom training in observation and interpretation and other science concepts, content and process skills that are tied to the Massachusetts Science and Technology Curriculum Frameworks.

Sevens is a hands-on environmental education program that increases student and teacher understanding of wildlife and the natural world by bringing them into direct contact with animals, plants and other natural phenomena in their own local environments including their school yards and neighborhoods. Sevens uses local habitats and even local schoolyard puddles to increase student understanding and appreciation for water and other local environments. The Center's educators combine schoolyard natural history with hands-on exposure to wild and domestic hospital patients with incremental classroom training in observation and interpretation and other science concepts, content and process skills that are tied to the Massachusetts Science and Technology Curriculum Frameworks. Sevens educators help students gain a life long appreciation for wildlife and local environments that ultimately assist them in becoming active stewards of the environments.

During Seven's three-week intensive, hands-on study of wildlife and local habitats, students learn to use the Sevens classification model. Each week students are challenged to find seven plants, animals and other natural artifacts within a local environment. With the help of guiding questions posed by the Center's educators, students divide their lists using criteria they develop themselves. Divisions can be based on criteria such as "is covered with fur", "is cold-blooded", "has senses", "moves", and "is a decomposer". One of the programs hallmarks is that it combines student learning with teacher training. The Center's educators teach students and model the program for teachers. Teachers will then be offered subsequent support from the Center and will be empowered to replicate the program independently. One other important aspect of Sevens is its focus on in depth and continuous study. It is our belief that individual programs are effective at teaching environmental literacy but that deeper understanding and connections are made through multiple programs. The Center's educators will expand upon what students have already begun to learn. They will visit the wildlife teaching hospital they have learned so much about. In addition, teachers will be trained in order to incorporate this program into their curriculum and reach a greater number of students than our one session.

The Sevens curriculum emphasizes biodiversity by helping students and teachers to become familiar with the flora and fauna in their own schoolyards and neighborhoods, and by taking them outdoors to identify a variety of plants and animals. Students are taught basic science skills like observation (compare and contrast) and interpretation through the use of wild and domestic live animals from the Center's hospital. Educators teach students to make scientific conclusions that will allow them to classify living organisms according to current biological conventions through making comparative observations and using dichotomous keys and field guides. Horizons are expanded for both students and teachers alike as they are challenged to compare and contrast local habitats. Students are taught to observe and record (verbally,

photographically and diagrammatically), living and other natural objects by keeping natural history journals.

For further information or to schedule Sevens for your classroom, please contact Casey at newchosp@aol.com or 781-749-5387.

Thank you.