


# A lesson plan on Observational Skills (when Travelling)

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**Title:** On the Road Again

**Grade Level:** Kindergarten and 1st grade

**Time Allotment:** 45 minutes

**Performance Expectations:**

- The students will develop observational skills on the walking trip around the school grounds or surrounding neighborhood.
- The students will become familiar with the word "travel" through class and small group discussions.

**Materials:**

- Chart paper
- Markers
- A safe area in which the students can be led on a walk (around the school)
- Chalkboard
- Chalk
- Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

**Procedures:**

**1. Introduction**

Ask the children what they think the word "travel" means (possible answers: to go from one place to another, to go on vacation). List the students' feedback on the chalkboard. Ask the students, "Have you traveled today?" (possible answers: from home to school, from the cafeteria to the classroom). Again, list the students' responses on the chalkboard. Ask the children to discuss other places that they have traveled with the person next to them and how they got there. Ask a few students to share where their partner had traveled with the class.

Explain to the class that today we will be discussing travel, focusing on travel by foot, and the observations that we make when we travel. Ask if anyone knows what an observation is. Guide the students in their answers so that they understand that observations are what they see, smell, taste, hear, and feel. Give examples of each: I see that Jimmy's shirt is green; It smells like pizza in the hallway; I hear Mrs. Keller yelling in the next room; My coffee cup feels warm. (When discussing the word "observation," be sure to write the word on the word on the board and have the class help you sound it out.)

Read *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak. Ask the students to pay close attention to Mac, the main character, as he travels through his reams. Stop a couple of times during the story and ask the students to make observations about the illustrations. After finishing the book, discuss Mac's trip and the observations made about the book.

### 1. Development

Explain to the students that the class is taking a real trip just like Mac. Remind the students to pay close attention to their surroundings and to remember the observations that they make during their trip.

Take the students on a walking trip around the school and the surrounding neighborhood (if suitable and agreed upon by the administration and the parents). While on the trip call the students' attention to street names, signs, etc.

After returning to the classroom, discuss as a class and list observations of places visited on a piece of chart paper. Make sure to reread each word as you write it so that the students will learn to identify and correlate the word with actual letters.

In their social studies journals, have the students list their favorite observation from the walking trip and draw a picture of it.

### 1. Closure

Discuss with the class the importance of observations. Ask the students to imagine how their observations would differ if they could not see, hear, or smell. Have the students discuss these possibilities with their neighbors.

#### **Assessment:**

The students will receive a participation mark for listing their favorite observation and depicting it.

The teacher will observe the students during the group and class discussions and record observations in anecdotes.

#### **Adaptations/Consideration:**

If the students in the class are unable to go on a real walking trip, the teacher could have them close their eyes, turn the lights off in the classroom, and lead the students through an imaginary walking trip, pointing out sites and describing every aspect of a real walking trip in detail, including smells and things felt and heard.

If the students could not list their favorite observation on their own, the teacher could write it out for them in their journal and the students could draw a picture of it.

I would follow up this lesson with a map lesson. After reviewing the chart of observations, the students could make maps of the walking trip, including streets and other specific sites. I would then introduce basic map symbols and have the students incorporate the symbols into their walking trip maps.

#### **References:**

Armento, B., G. Nash, C. Salter, and K. Wixson. (1991). *The World I See*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

S. E. Haggans, personal communication, October 3, 1997.

Sendak, M. (1963). *Where the Wild Things Are*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

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