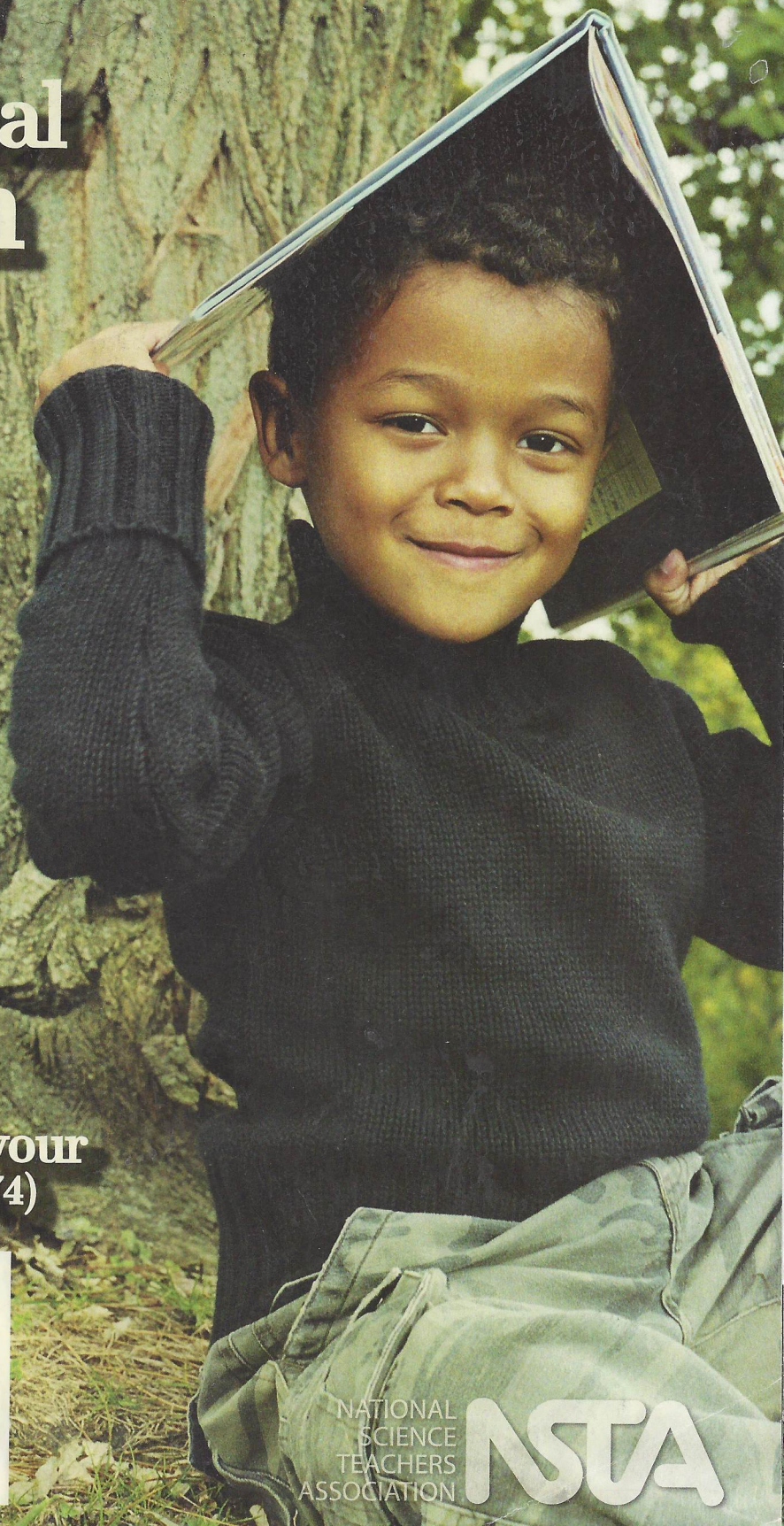


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Where should we send your Summer Issue? (see page 74)

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Teaching through Trade Books

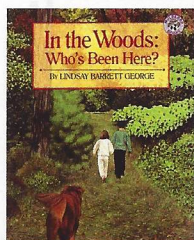
Activities inspired by children's literature

Into the Woods

By Karen Ansberry and Emily Morgan

In today's electronic age of video games and mp3 players, children are not spending as much time outdoors as past generations did. Many fear that as a result children are becoming increasingly alienated from the natural world. This month's trade book-inspired investigations encourage students to experience the excitement and mystery of their local ecosystems firsthand. In the process, they develop their skills of observation and learn to become better stewards of their environment.

This Month's Trade Books

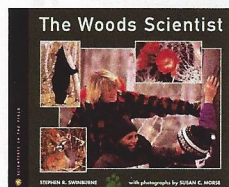


*In the Woods:
Who's Been Here?*
By Lindsay Barrett George.
Mulberry Books. 1995.
ISBN 0688161634.
Grades K-4



Synopsis

Cammy and William don't see any wildlife as they walk through the woods, yet there are signs everywhere that animals have been around. They find such clues as an empty nest, a fallen branch with the bark gnawed off, bleached bones, and more. Each observation prompts the question, "Who's been here?" with the answer revealed on the following page.



The Woods Scientist
By Stephen R. Swinburne.
Houghton Mifflin. 2002.
ISBN 061804602X.
Grades 4-6

Synopsis

This title from the excellent Scientists in the Field series features the work of Sue Morse, a forester, habitat ecologist, professional tracker, and passionate student of the woods. Readers experience the thrill of scientific discovery through her eyes and learn about the factors that led her to dedicate her life to wildlife conservation.

Curricular Connections

The National Science Education Standards (NSES) suggest that students in grades K-4 learn to ask questions about objects, organisms, and events in the environ-

ment, particularly questions that they can answer using reliable sources of scientific information and their own observations. In the primary grades, students should also develop such simple skills as observing and measuring to gather data and using magnifiers to extend the senses. In the K-3 lesson, students read the story and then explore "mystery objects" collected from the local ecosystem. Next, they explore a natural area outdoors, record their observations, and create a class book containing their own questions and answers about local wildlife.

In the 4-6 lesson, students learn about nature and conservation through the eyes of a real scientist. The NSES advise that students in grades 5-8 develop understanding of science as a human endeavor. Underlying this standard is the idea that women and men of various backgrounds, interests, talents, qualities, and motivations choose science as a career and devote their entire lives to studying it. Following this recommendation, students first read about the personal background and work of environmental ecologist Sue Morse, who has dedicated her life to conserving wild habitats. Next, they take a walk outdoors "in the shoes" of an environmental ecologist and then research local conservation efforts.

Check your district policy on taking students outside during the school day or away from the school grounds before doing the following outdoor activities.

