



Complementing Curriculum to Enhance Student Learning

Pine Project programs are intentionally designed to complement Ontario's curriculum for Science, Health & Physical Education, Arts, Social Studies, and Language, within the context of the province's commitment to integrate environmental education across curriculum. The following table provides a brief overview of program alignment within each major curriculum area.

Curriculum Area	Alignment	Example
Science	Pine programs offer a unique context for students to deepen their understanding of concepts within science, while building an appreciation for the natural world . Through observing, hypothesizing, relating, problem-solving, and describing, children will engage in inquiry-based learning that inspires curiosity and wonder . We teach naturalist knowledge in fun and dynamic ways, so children can familiarize themselves with the flora and fauna, develop a sense of place , and expand their understanding of humans' impact on the environment.	Students regularly embark on wanders through the park to identify basic leaf types in plants. Their Instructor models what types of leaves exist through song, field guide visuals, drawings, and body movement in order to cater to various learning styles. Then, students track down the similar-looking plant leaf types and record them in their journals. Instructors may ask, "What do you notice about their structure or colour? How are they similar or different? How might similarities and differences be related to their local environments? Why might they share some characteristics?" These questions allow for children to develop competencies required for scientific inquiry, retain information in a creative way, and expand their understanding of the environment to a wider context.
Health & Physical Education	Pine programming integrates social-emotional learning and physical and mental health strategies to foster healthy child development in an ever-changing world. Programming builds students' physical and health literacy by incorporating activities that contribute to positive mental thinking, movement competency, and overall resiliency toward dynamic situations. We provide a caring, safe, and inclusive environment for children to participate in stretches, whole-body movement, running and balancing, sneaking and hiding, and participating in games.	Instructors encourage students to observe "animal forms" by mimicking animal movements to practice their observation, balance and agility. Pine programs also encourage children to make healthy choices in respect to themselves, others and the environment by understanding factors that could contribute to an unsafe situation. One such activity is through a "Hazard Assessment," where an Instructor asks the students, "What are some hazards within our environment?" The students look around and suggest elements that might pose danger (eg., ice, cold, hazardous plants, etc.). Instructors follow up by asking how individuals and the group can manage hazards. For example, if cold weather is a potential danger, the Instructor may ask students, "How can we make sure we're staying safe?" Answers provided by students might include wearing appropriate clothing, bringing extra items, or seeking shelter. This open discussion promotes awareness and resiliency as children are able to assess situations independently and come up with responsible choices for themselves.

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Arts	Nature provides inspiration for a variety of creative art forms that are essential to student expression and belonging. Experiences of song, drama, and visual arts are woven throughout Pine programs. Students are able to observe, explore, and create their own original works in kinesthetic, visual, spatial, and dramatic ways.	Students may learn the “Poison Ivy Song and Dance” which details the lyrics, “Leaves of three, let them be. You shouldn’t get too close. Poison Ivy you protect the Forest the most.” Pine Instructors provide specific instructions to sing in unity and mimic choreography. Descriptive feedback is given to provide guidance and encouragement. Finally, students engage in a discussion to understand the meaning of the song and apply this lesson to their given environment.
Language	Language is central to students’ intellectual, social, and emotional growth. During Pine programs, students learn to value the power of language and use it responsibly each day as they embark on problem-solving adventures, both independently and within teams. They are challenged to express their feelings and opinions in a clear and respectful manner that considers their listeners’ perspective.	Through storytelling, children learn to use formal language to articulate plot and imagery to their audience. In the “Plant Origin Story” activity, students learn to discuss a plant and make inferences about how a specific aspect or trait within the plant came to be. This language development activity allows for students to make mental observations, communicate their ideas, and connect their learning with the world around them.
Social Studies & Humanities	Pine programs use a series of relevant and age-appropriate nature connection practices to foster students’ sense of self, history and community. Through awareness and orientation activities, students partake in mapping their surroundings, assessing their impact on the environment, and engaging in storytelling to understand the various ancestral perspectives that continue to shape the land. Activities that promote students’ understanding of interdependence between themselves and their environment help them become responsible, active citizens with the skills to make informed decisions within their communities.	Pine programs begin with a verbal land acknowledgement that contextualizes Toronto as a site of human activity for thousands of years and shares gratitude for the generations of People, past and present, who have tended the land. Students listen to the names of the many diverse Nations, such as the Wendat and Tionontati (Petun) First Nations, the Haudenosaunee, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit (of the Anishnabeg Peoples). Together, we acknowledge the history and ongoing challenges that First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island face today.