

First Day of Spring

Actual Holiday: March 19, 20, or 21

First Celebrated: Unknown



Introduction

The first day of spring begins with the March equinox when the Sun crosses over the celestial equator, an imaginary line in the sky above Earth's equator. (This does not happen on the same day every year due to factors such as time zones and leap years.) When the equinox happens, the amount of daylight and darkness we experience in a day is almost equal. Spring also signifies the end of winter and the beginning of warmer days. To celebrate this day, show students how to recognize the change in seasons by taking them on a signs-of-spring scavenger hunt!

Materials

- *Signs of Spring Scavenger Hunt* activity sheet (page 19)
- pencils
- art supplies

The Activity

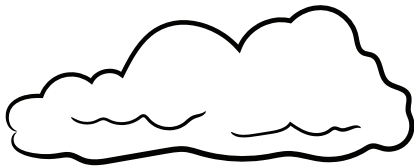
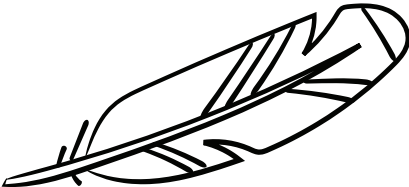
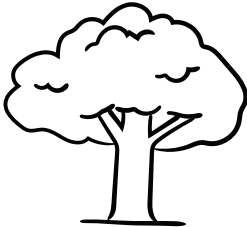
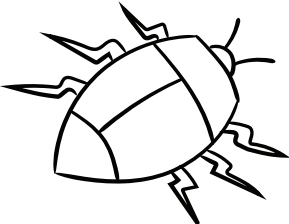
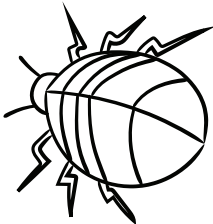
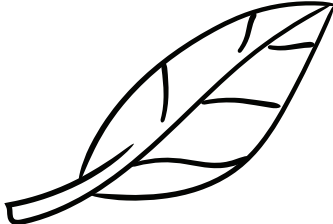
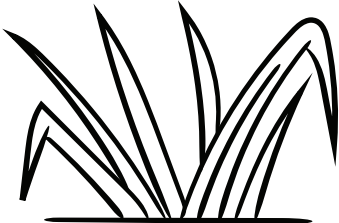
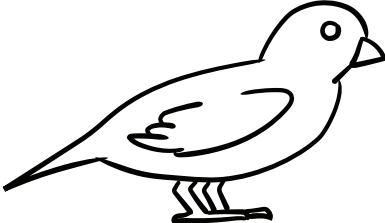
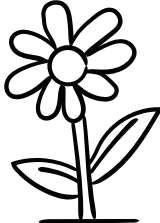
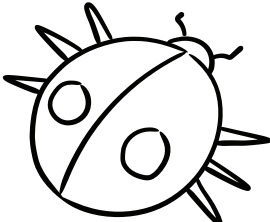
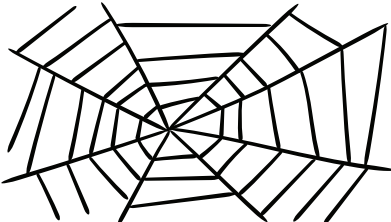
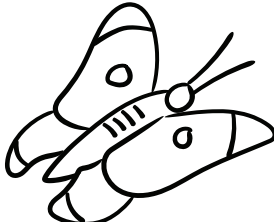
- Tell students that today they will be celebrating the first day of spring.
- Talk with students about the seasons and how the world looks during the different seasons. Ask students which are their favorite seasons and why. Do they like to swim in the summertime? Build snowmen in the winter? Do they like the fall when the weather starts to get colder?
- Tell students that springtime is when the outside world begins to turn green and wake up again. On the first day of spring, there are almost an equal number of hours of daylight and darkness. This comes after the winter when there are more hours of darkness than daylight.
- Ask students if they can identify different signs they might see outside now that spring is here. The following might be some possible answers:

- Snow melting
- Rain falling rather than snow
- Flowers starting to bloom
- Leaves growing on trees
- Monarch butterflies appearing
- Hearing more birds singing
- Seeing new kinds of birds
- Seeing bumblebees
- Seeing baby ducks
- Seeing more frogs and toads

- Tell students that you are going to go on a scavenger hunt to look for signs of spring around the school grounds. Distribute the *Signs of Spring Scavenger Hunt* activity sheet to students. Discuss the different signs of spring that are listed on the sheet.
- Tell students that when they see one of the signs of spring listed on the sheet, they should check it off. When they get back to their desks, they can color the picture of the object that they saw on their scavenger hunt.
- Point out the three boxes at the bottom of the sheet that read "I saw _____," "I heard _____," and "I smelled _____." Students should fill in these boxes with signs of spring that are not listed on the sheet. This also gives them an opportunity to identify non-visual signs of spring.
- After the scavenger hunt, allow students to color the signs that they saw and draw the objects that they experienced with their other senses. Have them discuss their findings as a class.

Name: _____

Signs of Spring Scavenger Hunt

 <input type="checkbox"/> clouds	 <input type="checkbox"/> feather	 <input type="checkbox"/> tree
 <input type="checkbox"/> bug	 <input type="checkbox"/> bug	 <input type="checkbox"/> leaf
 <input type="checkbox"/> grass	 <input type="checkbox"/> bird	 <input type="checkbox"/> flower
 <input type="checkbox"/> ladybug	 <input type="checkbox"/> spiderweb	 <input type="checkbox"/> butterfly
<input type="checkbox"/> I saw _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> I heard _____.	<input type="checkbox"/> I smelled _____.