

“CANNED SPIEL” VS. FACILITATING STUDENTS’ DESCRIPTIONS AND CONNECTIONS

Scenario #1: “Canned Spiel”

Instructor: Everyone see this plant right here? You can tell if it’s poison oak because it has three leaves: “Leaves of three, let it be.” And you can tell it apart from blackberry because poison oak leaves have wavy edges and blackberries have jagged edges. Everybody feel your ear lobe. Poison oak edges are called “lobed,” which you can remember because they are like ear lobes.

End Scene

Scenario #2: Facilitating Student Descriptions and Connections

Instructor: That plant right there is poison oak. Without touching it, call out some observations you can make.

Student 1: It’s green.

Student 2: It’s shiny.

Student 3: The leaves are in groups of three.

Instructor: You can tell if it’s poison oak because it has three leaves— “Leaves of three, let it be.”

Instructor: How might you describe the edge of that poison oak leaf? What does it remind you of?

Student 4: Like the edge of a drawing of a cloud.

Student 1: Like the bumps on your knuckles.

Student 3: Like an oak leaf.

Instructor: But blackberries also grow in threes. How might you describe the edge of that blackberry leaf? What does it remind you of?

Student 2: Like a saw.

Student 3: Like teeth.

Instructor: Poison oak leaves can cause rashes on a lot of people, so let’s try to recognize and avoid them during the hike. Blackberry leaves may have spines, but they don’t cause rashes, and are OK to touch. Pay attention to the leaves on plants around you. See if you can recognize poison oak leaves and blackberry leaves.

End Scene