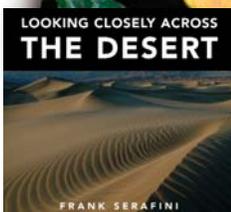
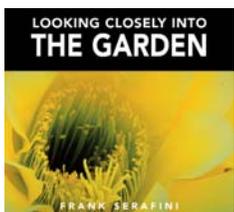
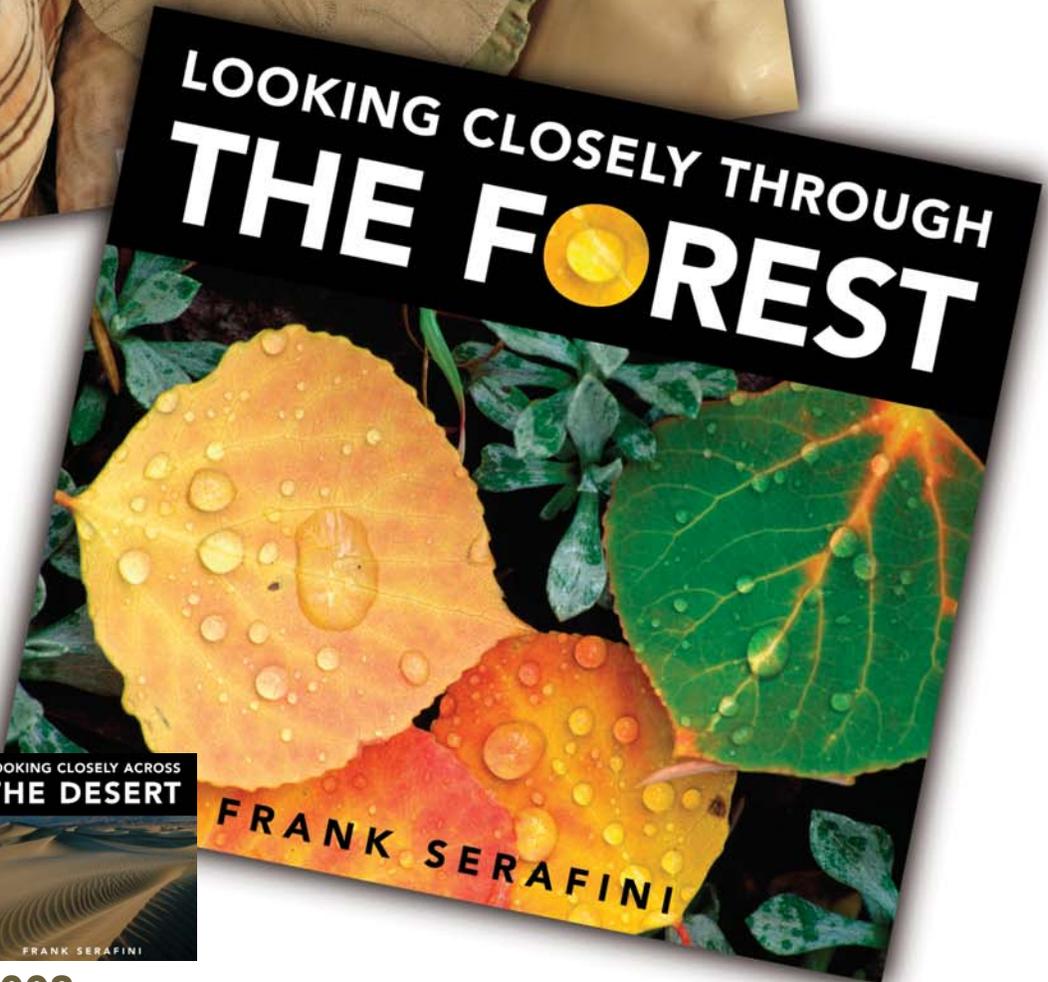
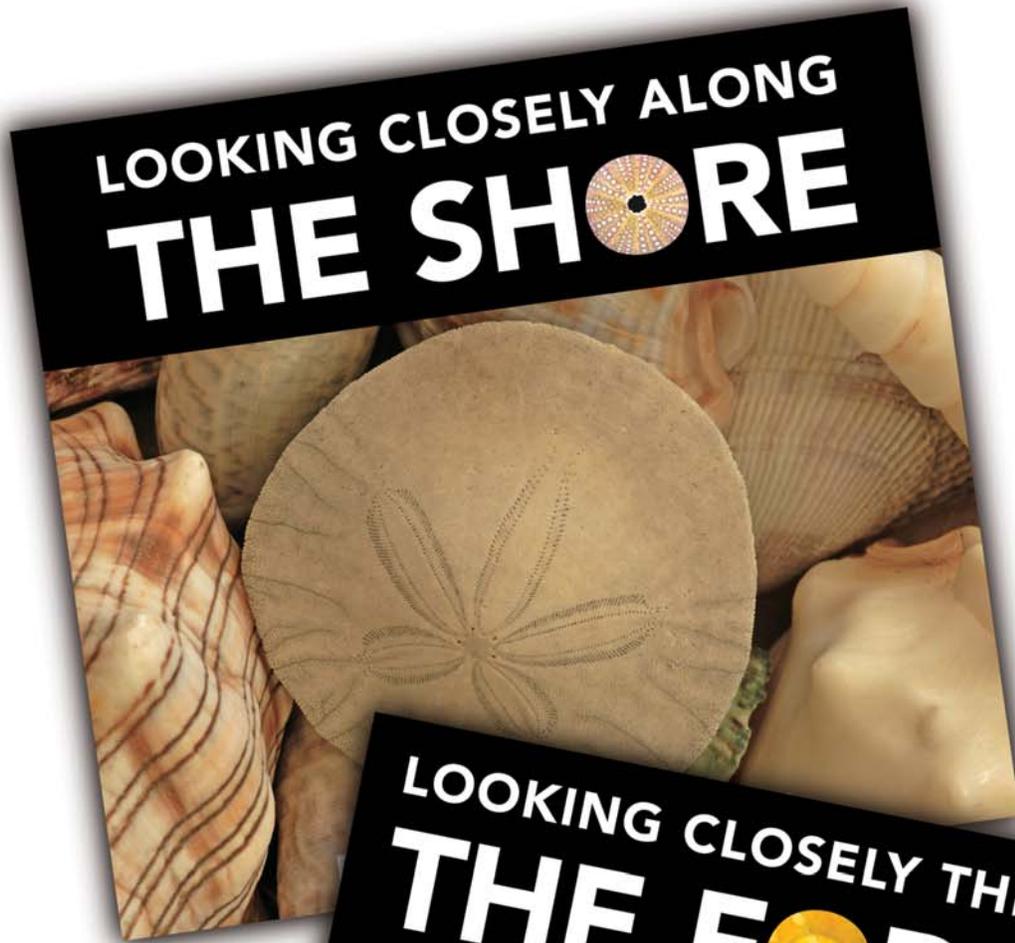


LEARNING RESOURCE MATERIAL



Coming Fall 2008

About the Looking Closely series

The Looking Closely series inspires young readers to take a second look at their natural surroundings. By encouraging children to ask questions and use their imaginations, these books help build problem-solving skills and increase visual literacy while exciting children's curiosity about nature.

About Looking Closely through the Forest and Looking Closely along the Shore

Through these first two books in the series, children will learn about the variety of plants and animals that live in the forest and shoreline ecosystems.

About the Author

Frank Serafini is an educator and avid nature photographer whose work has taken him from Fiji to Mexico, from Canada to Australia. Previously a primary schoolteacher, Frank is now Associate Professor of Children's Literature and Literacy Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The following activities are recommended for use in primary school classrooms.

1. Observation Journal

Organize a field trip to a nearby park or nature trail or simply take your students outside to the school playground. Organize the students in pairs or small groups, and provide each child with a notebook and a pencil that they will use for writing and/or sketching. Give each group a small area to explore, and ask them to "slow down and get down" in order to look closely at natural phenomena

Here is an example of the way students might use the chart to document their thoughts:

Noticings	Interpretations	Wonderings
I noticed the ochre starfish has white dots along its back.	The book says these are pinchers.	What do they pinch? How do they work?
I noticed the Roman snail has a spiral shaped shell.	The Roman snail lives on land.	Why are the shells spiral shaped? Do all snails have shells?

they might tend to overlook. You might ask each group to identify three things in their designated area that they have never seen before — perhaps they will find an unusual insect or notice a distinctive pattern on a leaf or feather. When you return to your classroom, ask each group to share their findings with the class.

2. Making Predictions

The design of the Looking Closely series encourages students to use a small portion of an image to make predictions about the entire image. As a class or working in small groups, encourage your students to make predictions about the images in these books, then ask them to discuss why they made the predictions they did. The point of the exercise is not to be "correct," but rather to use logic to anticipate future information. By discussing the child's thinking behind her/his prediction, you are demonstrating that even "wrong" guesses can be meaningful and worthy of discussion.

3. Noticings / Interpretations / Wonderings Chart

Make a copy of the tri-column chart on the next page for each student in your class, and then use it when discussing one of the books in this series. The chart is designed to allow students to talk about more than their likes and dislikes when they are responding to a new book or experience. It provides three distinct avenues for response; each section requires students to attend to a different aspect of comprehension. The first column, Noticings, asks students to attend to visual and textual information, to discuss what they see and what catches their attention. The second column, Interpretations, requires students to make sense of what they notice and offer some ideas about what it might mean. The third section, Wonderings, allows students to share any questions that remain after reading the text.

4. Writing Captions

Captions are short phrases that describe an image and add to the contextual understandings of the reader. Some captions simply describe, while others explain. Creating captions can be a useful way to show students connections between the reading process and the process of writing. Begin by finding some examples of captions from other expository texts or nature magazines and discuss these with your students. Then ask your students to create their own captions to accompany some of the images in one of the Looking Closely books.



5. Creating a Habitat “Shot List”

Frank Serafini, the author and photographer for the Looking Closely series, says, “Before I photograph the images for my picture books, I create a list of ‘shots’ that I want to get for each book. This requires me to know something about the biome or natural habitat that I am photographing.” You can replicate this work in your classroom by first dividing your students into small groups, and then assigning each group a habitat that you have explored in class. Ask each group to imagine they are going to create a book full of images of their assigned habitat. What kinds of things would they want to photograph or draw in order to give readers a good sense of their habitat? For example, if you have studied bears and their habitats, the students might want to include images of where bears sleep; the foods they eat; the trees they sometimes climb; their landscape in winter and in summer or in the day versus at night.

Looking Closely along the Shore and Looking Closely through the Forest © 2008. Written and photographed by Frank Serafini. Available as a free download from www.kidscanpress.com

6. Creating Images

If you have access to digital or disposable cameras in your classroom, you can use them to help your students understand how images are created and what purposes they serve. Ask students to take photos around their homes, in school or on field trips to document their experiences and to present information that will support their writing. For example, you might ask one student or group of students to take photographs of a celebration that is important to their family; another group might take photographs of students preparing for and then participating in a track-and-field event; a third group might take photographs of living things they see while on a field trip to a local park or a farm. You can use this activity to start a discussion of how to frame a photograph so as to capture important visual information while leaving out extraneous or distracting information; how action shots versus more static shots resonate differently with the viewer; or how lighting is important in setting a mood and highlighting one aspect of a photograph rather than another.

