



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ELF VOLUNTEER

Personal Gains: ELF volunteers find many rewarding aspects of their involvement:

- The information they learn from the VINS staff, the workshop activities and the written material;
- The opportunity to serve their community and get involved in the education process;
- Teaching the children at school about nature in a way that both they and the children enjoy;
- The friendships they develop with fellow volunteers and classroom teachers through ELF.

Time Involved: We estimate that ELF volunteers spend approximately 5 hours per month for 8 months as part of the program. Each month you can plan on:

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| • Attending the monthly training session with VINS staff | 2 hours |
| • Planning time with fellow volunteers prior to your classroom visit | ½ hour |
| • Collecting or making materials and reading the background information | 1 hour |
| • Presenting the classroom session to children | 1 ½ hours |

How VINS Prepares You

The year's schedule of monthly training sessions is set up the preceding spring by ELF coordinators and VINS staff. At each month's workshop:

- The focus of each workshop is explained;
- You'll learn and discuss lots of information about the month's topic;
- You'll participate in activities so you know how to do them with the children;
- As a whole group you'll discuss teaching techniques and possible ways to adapt materials for different age levels.

Written Materials

You will receive our collection of environmental education information and activities, *Hands-On Nature*. For each workshop, the book provides background information and a complete description of the activities and the simple equipment needed to conduct them.

Through Your Service to the School

- Children connect with and learn from a variety of adults.
- Children are helped toward achieving a variety of the national and state learning standards.
- Teachers have additional avenues for helping students to meet those standards.
- Children benefit from the additional resources provided by VINS and volunteers.
- Community/school relations are often improved as volunteers become involved in classroom activities.

More Positive Results

- You and your family benefit from what you learn.
- You meet other people who share your interests.
- If you are a parent, you can share in your child's school experience.
- If you are a community member, you get to know the children in the school.
- You'll receive VINS benefits, including VINS' quarterly newsletter, discounts on programs and discounts in VINS' gift shop, and free family admission to VINS' Nature Center in Quechee.