



Lesson Plan

EcoArts

Summary

1. Subject(s): Exploring art in nature
2. Objective: Students will observe nature from different perspectives through arts. Discussing habitats will connect us to nature using creative outlets such as drawing, storytelling, crafting and dance.

Key Vocabulary

- Habitat - place or environment where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows
- Adaptation - a behavioral or physical characteristic that helps an organism survive in the environment
- Environmental Stewardship - responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.
- Perspective - the way you see something

Activities for at home or in your backyard or neighborhood:

- My View activity, Create a Creature activity, Naturally Connected activity, Additional Resources



My View

My View teaches us to slow down and notice things we may have not before. Everyone has different perspectives and views things differently. This activity is indoors and encourages curiosity and creativity.

Materials: Paper and pencil

In your home, sit next to a window of your choice that you can see out of. Spend a couple of minutes looking out of your window, thinking about the objects, shapes, and colors that you see. Now use your paper and pencil, and draw an outline of your window so it takes up the entire page. You can use the template below if you would like. Draw from the exact perspective that you see everything. You can divide your window into 4 sections and draw by section if that is easier.

On the back of your paper, or on another sheet, pick one thing that you observed that you drew in your window. Use your imagination to create a story with a beginning, middle and end, about that specific thing. It can be realistic or you can make silly or nonfiction. Example: I drew a tree in my window, so I will now create a story about that tree. "There is a large tree in front of my window. I wonder what year it was planted? It has red flowers on it and many oval shaped, green leaves. One day a hummingbird came along and visited the red flowers. It hummed around and drank the nectar..."

Questions for activity wrap up:

What were some things that were large and easy to see from our window?

What were some more difficult things to see because they were small or in motion?

Identify what were the living things you saw and what were the non-living things you saw.

How might your view change from season to season? What evidence does nature provide us to show what season we are currently in?





Create a Creature


Use your imagination to create the ultimate creature! Think about the coolest adaptations that organisms use for survival. Examples are camouflage, venom, nictitating membrane (3rd eyelid), gills, feathers, nocturnal vision, a hard shell and migration! Adaptations can be physical or behavioral characteristics that help organisms survive.

Create your very own animal, plant or creature that has all of your favorite adaptations. Be creative and invent a name (common and scientific), habitat and diet for their creature. Draw your creature or write a short story about them. If more materials are available, use pipe-cleaners, play-doh/clay, googly eyes, recycled cardboard, construction paper, etc. to create your creature.

Example:

Create a Creature !

Name: Raburtle, latin/scientific name = *Sylvilagus terrapene*



Habitat: Forest Floor, Alabama

Diet: Mice, bugs, detritus / dead leaves

Adaptations: Long legs to jump and escape predators, dangerous spikes on its tail for protection, a hard shell that camouflages with leaves, dirt, and the forest floor, a long, forked tongue to sense its environment and find food, long ears to listen out for predators.



Naturally Connected

Adapted from Leave No Trace, [LNT.org](https://www.lnt.org)

This activity allows us to reflect on the natural world and think about us, humans, as a part of it. We will discover the interconnectedness between ourselves and things we see in nature.

Materials needed: a piece of paper and a pencil. Make three columns with the titles:

Things in Nature, Things We Have in Common, How It Helps Me

Participants are to observe their environment physically if they are outdoors, or mentally if they are indoors. They must find objects in nature and tell how they are like that object. Make sure they consider less noticeable things such as air, soil, sun. Example:

Things in Nature	Things We Have in Common	How it Helps Me
Tree	We both have an outer layer to protect us (bark and skin)	It gives me oxygen
Soil	We both contain minerals	Soil helps grow my food
Ants	We both need shelter	They are fun to watch

Help them to discover that this personal connection is where a commitment to land stewardship begins. Land stewardship is the goal of Leave No Trace. Outline for them what they will be learning about Leave No Trace in the future.

Questions for activity wrap up:

- 1.) What items surprised you most? What were some hard items to relate to yourself?
- 2.) How can we practice “Leave no Trace” when we are outside? What are some tips to be good stewards and not have a large impact on the environment?
- 3.) What are some personal connections you have with one of your nature items? Whatever item you chose, write a journal entry or a short story about the personal connection or experience with that item.



Additional Resources

- Practice your photography skills with Ruffner Mountain's Picture Scavenger Hunt - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7MoHZno1qs>
- The Children's Music Network: Song Recordings and lyrics to environmental songs for children such as "Earthworm Dance" and "American Goldfinch" - <https://childrensmusic.org/songs/environment/toc>
- A video of the 2018 National Water Dance in Birmingham, AL - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UAQX-ws8aQ> More information about National Water Dance: <https://www.nwdprojects.org/national-water-dance/>
- National Audubon Society - How to draw an Eastern Screech Owl - <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=694979887982807>