

Be a Naturalist!

This activity is directly tied to the third spread, pages 5 and 6, in the *What's In Your World?* publication located inside the back pocket of the activity tool kit.

Explore the natural world!

Use your five senses to observe the world around you. Students will learn to develop their skills as nature detectives through senses investigations, journaling and drawing in a micro-mapping project.

Levels

Grades 4-8

Subjects

Science, Art, Language Arts, Mathematics

Skills

Discussing, Mapping, Drawing, Investigating, Examining, Observing, Sensory Awareness

Concepts

Scientific investigation using observation, tools, measurements and data collection;
diversity of life;
inquiry process; structure and function of living things'
micro and macro environments

Objectives

Students will use their senses to make observations of the world around them.
Students will use skills of journaling, sketching and mapping to investigate the natural world.

Materials (20 student class-size)

What's in Your World? booklets (pp. 5-6) - 1 per student
blindfolds - 1 per student
Jelly beans - 1 per student
3 cloth or paper bags each with a natural item inside
numbered film canisters containing cotton ball, swabbed
with scent (vanilla, cherry, rootbeer, mint, lemon,
orange, etc.) - 1 canister per student
journal or notebook - 1 per student
graph paper - 1 per student
pencil - 1 per student
colored pencils - 1 per student
tape measures or meter sticks, stakes or flags, string or
surveying tape

Time Considerations

Preparation - 30 minutes
Activity - 90 minutes

Lesson Overview

- Becoming a Naturalist - Senses Investigation (45 minutes)
- Micro Maps (45 minutes)

Background

A naturalist is someone who is curious about the natural world. They look at the plants, animals, insects, and landscape around them and ask questions. A naturalist wanders and wonders. If you could read a naturalist's thoughts, they might go like this: *Being a naturalist is about asking questions and discovering answers.* Naturalists keep their eyes and ears open--they observe the world around them. They record what they have seen and heard by writing down and sketching their observations. Sometimes, naturalists look at a single plant or animal. Other times they look at a whole community of plants and animals and how they affect each other. They may inventory the number and kinds of plants, animals, and other things in that community. This helps them develop research questions that can be tested and answered to learn more about the natural environment.

