

Be a Nature Detective

You will need:

Activity sheet, pencil or crayons. This activity is intended to be done at a park or an area where there are different types of habitats (grasses, trees, wetlands, meadows, etc...).

Instructions:

1. Read over the activity sheet with the youth.
2. Explain to them that today they are nature detectives and their job is to find as many of the items on the activity sheet as they can.
3. Using the pencils or crayons, have the youth or an adult volunteer write down what they find beside each description on the activity sheet.
4. This can be done as a group or you may divide them into smaller groups if you have more than one adult volunteer per group.
5. Set a time limit of approximately 15 - 20 minutes.
6. Then gather the group back together.
7. Have them share with each other what they found.

Teaching Activity:

Ask them if they think they are good detectives. How many of their senses did they use to find the items; seeing, smelling, hearing, touching?* Explain to the youth that all around them are different colors, textures, patterns and signs of life in nature. Have them share some of the different items they found with each other. *If you would like to include the sense of taste, have a snack of fruit or nuts available after the activity. Explain that these items too are found in nature and we can enjoy them with our sense of taste.

Variations:

- If you have access to magnifying glasses you can give each group one to inspect items up close. You may find the colors blue and green on a beetle or feather when you look at it more closely.
- You can give each youth a piece of paper and a crayon to see how many patterns they can capture by laying the paper on the item and lightly coloring over it. For example, lay the piece of paper on different tree barks and color the paper to discover the different patterns and lines of each species.
- Don't forget to remind them to look up at the sky. Birds, clouds, the sun and rainbows contain many colors and shapes.

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Can You Find...



- A bird that is singing.
- Something green.
- Something that is rough to touch.
- Something that is smooth to touch.
- A hole or nest where a critter might live.
- An insect.
- A flower.
- Something that is oval in shape.
- Something yellow.
- Something rectangular.
- Something blue.
- A feather.
- Scat (droppings left behind from an animal such as deer, raccoon, bird...).
- Tracks from an animal.
- Something brown.
- A tree.
- A nut or seed.
- A vine.
- A spider.
- An ant.
- A worm.
- A butterfly.
- Something orange.
- Something with lines on it.
- Something with spots on it.
- Something white.
- A frog or toad.
- Something hairy.
- Something that hops.
- A food source for the deer, raccoon, or any other animal.
- Something we may use to decorate our home.
- Something people need to use in our everyday lives.
- Something not on this list!



All items should be naturally found in nature. Also, be sure to encourage the youth to leave the items where they find them. Explain, that others may enjoy looking for these items too!

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