



DALLAS ARBORETUM
Education

Garden STEM at Home
Schoolyard Safari



WE GROW MINDS, TOO.



OBJECTIVE:

STUDENTS WILL PRACTICE THEIR OBSERVATION AND INFERENCE SKILLS BY EXPLORING A NEARBY HABITAT: THE SCHOOLYARD.

SOURCE

Project Learning Tree PreK-8 Activity Guide

BACKGROUND

A habitat is where an organism lives. While habitats can vary greatly in size and location, each habitat must provide an organism the same basic elements: food, water, shelter and space.

Often, students picture an ocean, a forest or a pond as a habitat, but careful observation can highlight that habitats are found just about everywhere!

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask students to discuss what a safari is, and highlight that it doesn't have to take place in a faraway place.
2. Discuss what you might see on a schoolyard safari.
3. Discuss direct (observing a bird, plant, insect) vs. indirect evidence (observing a nest or hearing a song, seed pod, exoskeleton) of life.
4. Share the Schoolyard Safari Survey page (or write your own) and determine the area to investigate.
5. Return to a meeting place and share results. Did students/student groups find different evidence for the same organism? What was most surprising? Did you find all the elements of a habitat on your search?
6. Optional: (1) Complete further research to learn more about the species observed. (2) Take identification field guides out during your safari. (3) Provide strategies to better observe nature (a quiet sit spot, a blind for viewing, provide feeders, etc.) (4) Compare a school grounds with a park or forest; what differences do you notice?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Download the Schoolyard Safari Survey page from PLT:

https://www.plt.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/PLTPreK-8_Activity-46_Schoolyard-Safari_Student-Page_Schoolyard-Safari-Survey.pdf

Download the Schoolyard Safari Texas Connections Resource Guide from PLT:

http://www.plttexas.org/uploadedFiles/Websites/PLT_Texas/Content/Texas_Connection/Activity%2046%20Schoolyard%20Safari.pdf

Explore the Schoolyard Safari Additional Resources Guide from PLT:

<https://www.plt.org/activity-resources/prek-8-activity-46-school-yard-safari/>