

Nature Appreciation

GRADES K-2

Guiding Question

What does nature give us?

Connecting Concepts

- Living things need water, air, and resources from the land, and they live in places that have the things they need. Humans use natural resources for everything they do. (NGSS, ESS3.A: Natural Resources)
- Forests provide habitat for fish and wildlife. (PLT FLF, 2.A.1)
- Forests are the source of products that people use every day (e.g., paper, tissue, furniture, food, clothing, house framing, and more). (PLT FLF, 2.B.3)

Scope and Sequence

The collection and order of content below supports an intentional student learning progression.

Activity	Description
Adopt a Tree	Students select individual trees to observe over time, developing an appreciation for nature where they live.
Discover Diversity (in Grades 3–5, see K–2 Variation)	Students take a 3-foot mini-hike, noting the plant and animals they encounter on the way.
Backyard Safari	Students explore a nearby habitat—such as their backyard, schoolyard, or other outdoor setting—to look for signs of animals living there.
We All Need Trees	Students examine various products to determine which come from trees.
Get Outside! (in Grades 3–5, see K–2 Variation)	Students observe the sounds, textures, and smells they sense indoors versus outdoors, and note how each place makes them feel.

See plt.org/academic-standards for detailed standards correlations for each activity.

Storyline

Students explore the concept that nature provides many different things, including plant and animal habitats, foods and other products, and a sense of well-being.

- Begin with the activity Adopt a Tree, which invites students to appreciate nature in their schoolyard or neighborhood by focusing on a single tree.
- Next, lead them in the activities Discover Diversity (Variation for Grades K–2) and Backyard Safari, in which students investigate how nature provides living places for a wide range of plants and animals.
- Using the activity We All Need Trees, expand their understanding of the everyday products that come from trees.
- Finally, lead the K–2 Variation for the activity Get Outside!, which encourages students to articulate their experience of being inside versus being outside. You might conclude the unit by helping students make a class book, collage, webpage, or other group product that describes the benefits from nature that they discovered through the activities.