STARBASE Challenge: Nature Journal

Nature is all around us. For this challenge, you will take 5-10 minutes a day to go outside your home and make observations in the same place (nature area) using your senses. If you can't work outside, try to observe with a door or window open. Each day you will add something new to your journal to share with your friends and family.

CAUTION: Please research the habitats and appearance of plants like poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac before you choose your nature area!

Day 1 – Initial observations

- Go outside and sit down in your nature area with a piece of paper and a writing utensil. What types of plants do you notice? Grasses? Clover? Dandelions? Trees? What about animals? Insects? Worms? Birds? Squirrels? Chipmunks? Record how many different plants and animals you observed. Are there more plants or animals?

Day 2 – Soil

- Go outside and sit down in your nature area with a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Feel the soil on the ground. How would you describe it? Is all the soil in your area the same? Do you think the soil is good for plants to grow in? Why or why not?

Day 3 – Plants

- Go outside and sit down in your nature area with a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Use your senses of sight, touch and smell to observe the plants around you. Are all the plants in this area the same? What colors and textures do you notice? Are there flowers or seeds? Do any of the plants give off a smell? Are any of the parts damaged? Write about or draw a picture of a plant you observed.

Day 4 – Animals

- Go outside and sit down in your nature area with a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Use your senses of sight and sound to observe the animals around you. How many different types of animals do you notice? Can you identify any of them? What do you observe about their bodies? How does the design of their bodies relate to their environment, movement, and/or food sources? Write about or draw a picture of an animal you observed in as much detail as possible.

Day 5 – Making connections

- Go outside and sit down in your nature area with a piece of paper and a pencil. Observe your nature area from the soil to the plants and animals. What connections can you make between the different living creatures in this area? Are there places where the plants are damaged? How do the plants and animals interact? What evidence do you have to support these connections?

You take it from here! Enjoy this opportunity to explore!