AT-HOME SCIENCE LEARNING

#1 NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

PARENTS

At-Home Science Learning is all about you and your children exploring science in a fun, hands-on way using simple supplies found around your home. Use the "Parent Guide" to help support your children through the activities plus see a list of required materials needed. Print out the "At-Home Science Journal" for your child to follow along with each activity. The activities are designed to take 15 - 30 minutes. Get your whole family exploring science together!

This project is funded by the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence in collaboration with the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools.

FOR THE PARENT:

#1 NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

Overview: All children love a scavenger hunt! The focus of these activities is to get children to explore nature found in their own backyards, front yards, or nearby park. Observing, categorizing, and making connections with objects in nature, both living and non-living is appropriate for all children.

Materials/Supplies:

- Electronic device connected to the internet to watch videos, take pictures, and play games.
- A blank piece of paper (binder paper, notebook paper).
- Pencil and colored pencil or crayons.

Each of the activities is designed to take 15-30 Minutes.

Activity 1

1. Decide on an appropriate location for your child to do this nature scavenger hunt (backyard, front yard, nearby park).
2. Be sure your child has the scavenger hunt list of items to find (Science Journal – Activity 1) and a pencil or pen. They can write or draw the items they find that match each category in their journal. Optional: if your child has an electronic device, like a cellphone or tablet, they can take pictures of what they find.
3. If you have younger children, partner them with an older sibling or with an adult to find the items together. If you have older children, you can give them an extra challenge by giving them a time limit for finding the items.
4. After your child has finished the scavenger hunt, go over the list of items (or the pictures of the items) that they found. Ask questions such as:
    a. What was the easiest to find? Why?
    b. What was the hardest thing to find? Why?
    c. Did you notice anything interesting during the scavenger hunt?

    As your child shares, encourage them to use complete sentences and give them some ideas for starting if it helps. For example:

    a. The easiest to find was _____ because...
    b. The most difficult to find was _____. It was the most difficult because...
    c. I noticed... This was interesting because...

Activity 2

1. Take a piece of paper (lined notebook paper or a blank piece of paper) and cut it into 16 smaller strips or squares.
2. Have your child write or draw each object they found during the scavenger hunt, one object per piece of paper. Help younger students with spelling, if needed.
3. Tell your child to put the pieces of paper into groups based on what those objects have in common. Ask your child to describe what each group of objects have in common. They might have put their objects in groups according to their size, color, shape, or other characteristics.
    a. Encourage them to share using complete sentences and give them the beginning of sentences if it helps them begin to share their thinking. For example, "The items I put in this group are..." "I put these items together because...".
4. Have your child go to their Science Journal – Activity 2 section, and record the categories they created and the objects they had in each group.
5. Now challenge your child to group the objects on the pieces of paper again but this time, choose different characteristics for finding similarities between the objects.
6. For younger children, use an electronic device to play a sorting game with Cookie Monster and Ernie from Sesame Street: tinyurl.com/sortingsong

Activity 3

1. Using the pieces of paper from Activity 2 or your child's scavenger hunt list from Activity 1, ask your child to group the objects found into what they think is "living" and "non-living." Don't give any help! Have your child record their initial groupings in their Science Journal – Activity 3.
2. Ask your child, "How did you decide if the object was alive or not alive?"
    a. Help them answer using complete sentences. For example, "I decided it was alive because..." or "I decided it was not alive because...".
3. Using an electronic device, have your child listen to the book "What's Alive?" tinyurl.com/whatisalive
    a. After listening, ask them to share with you some things they remember hearing about in the book.
4. In their Science Journal – Activity 3 section, help your child record what makes something alive. Encourage your child to go back to their initial thoughts and make any changes on what objects are living and non-living based on their new understanding.
5. Have your child count how many objects they found that were living and how many were non-living and create a graph in their Science Journal – Activity 3. Ask your child these follow-up questions:
    a. How many living things did you find? How many non-living things did you find?
    b. Which one had the most? How many more did you find? How do you know?

Activity 4

1. Scavenger Hunt – Part 2! Using the same categories from Activity 1, go outside again (backyard, front yard, or nearby park) and challenge your child to find living things that fit into the scavenger hunt categories. Some of the categories will be extremely challenging so just encourage your child to find what they can. Use the Science Journal – Activity 4 to record their findings.
2. When done with the scavenger hunt, ask your child to compare how many living things they found the first time compared with this time. Was it hard to find living things? Why do they think it was hard to find living things?
    a. Again, encourage them to share with you using complete sentences. For example, "The first time I found...but this time I found..." "It was more (less) difficult to find living things because..."
3. Help your child create a graph comparing the living things they found during the first scavenger hunt and this scavenger hunt in their Science Journal – Activity 4. Ask your child these follow-up questions:
    a. How many living things did you find the first time? How many non-living things did you find the second time?
    b. Which time did you find the most living things? How many more living things did you find? How do you know?

Activity 5

1. Find a good spot outside (backyard, front yard, or in a nearby park) that is safe and comfortable for your child to sit.
2. Tell your child they are going to do a "Silent Sit" activity with you. Your task is to be completely quiet and listen to the sounds you hear. Set a timer for 10 minutes. (If you have younger children, a shorter amount of time might be better, 3-5 minutes). Encourage your child to really listen and try to identify what is making the different sounds. Your child can record what they hear around them using drawings or words in their Science Journal – Activity 5.
3. After 10 minutes, have your child tell you about the sounds they heard. Help them to identify any sounds they weren't sure of. Add any sounds that you heard during the "Silent Sit" activity.
    a. "I heard..." "I wasn't sure about..."
4. Have your child circle all of the sounds they recorded in their Science Journal that came from a living thing. Ask your child how they knew that sound came from a living thing.

Activity 6

1. Using technology is a fun way to learn about the different trees, plants, birds, and other critters that are found around your home or nearby park. On your Android or Apple device, download the free app "iNaturalist." This app is easy to use. Simply take a photo of a living thing and the app will help you identify the living thing you see. iNaturalist
2. Do a tree count! Use this app to help your child identify the different types of trees around your home or nearby park. Once you and your child have identified the different types of trees, count how many of each type of tree you can see. Your child can record what they discovered in their Science Journal – Activity 6
3. Have fun using this app to identify the different plants, bugs, and other critters you find around your home.

Activity 7

1. Now it's your child's turn to create their own scavenger hunt. If you have a young child, you can pair them with an older child or an adult.
2. Using their Science Journal – Activity 7, have your child write out their scavenger hunt.
3. Then have fun trying to find objects that fit into your child's scavenger hunt!

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#1 NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

NAME:_____

Activity 1: Scavenger Hunt

Can you find these in your backyard?

3 Different shaped leaves	
Something yellow	
Something green	
Something that crawls	
Something that flies	
2 Different colored rocks	
Something that grows	
A spider's web (Bonus: find a spider!)	
Some water	
Something that is round	
2 Different things in the sky	

Activity 2:

Write  or draw  your scavenger hunt objects into the groups you created by deciding what they had that was similar (the same).

Activity 3:

Put your scavenger hunt objects into the category you think they belong:

LIVING	NON-LIVING

After reading the story, what makes something “alive?”

GRAPH: What I Found On My Scavenger Hunt

Activity 4:

Challenge: Can you find **living things** that match each of the categories?

3 Different shaped leaves	
Something yellow	
Something green	
Something that crawls	
Something that flies	
2 Different colored rocks	
Something that grows	
A spider's web (Bonus: find a spider!)	
Some water	
Something that is round	
2 Different things in the sky	

Why was it challenging to find living things for each of the categories?

GRAPH: Living Things I Found

How many I found

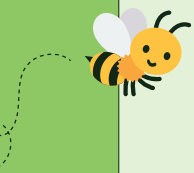
10		
9		
8		
7		
6		
5		
4		
3		
2		
1		
	LIVING THINGS (1st time)	LIVING THINGS (2nd Time)

Activity 5:

"Silent Sit" – draw  or write  what sounds you hear. 

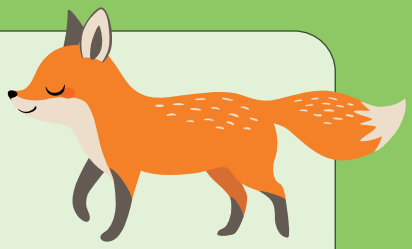
Activity 6:

Tree Count – write  or draw  the trees you identified using the iNaturalist app and how many of each tree you counted.



Activity 7:

Create your own scavenger hunt!



What to look for:	What was found: