

Learning Guide to Accompany **Every Kid Outside**

The Children's Hour radio show podcast

<https://www.childrenshour.org/every-kid-outside/>



Outdoor learning can happen in many ways. It can happen with just one adult and one child. It can happen with a teacher and a class of learners. It can happen at home or at school or at a residential camp. It can happen when a young person works independently with a mentor. Whichever way we do it, when we go outdoors, we can increase our health and well-being, connect to our environment, and learn valuable things about life.



Would you like to know more about the “Every Kid, Every Day, Every Way” vision and strategy for outdoor learning in New Mexico? Go to the EENM website: <https://eenm.org/every-kid-every-day-every-way/>

Outdoor Learning and nature activities for kids: <https://rhythmsofplay.com/forest-school-outdoor-learning-and-nature-activities-for-kids/>

Practical ways to take learning activities outside - National Outdoor Learning Library (USA): <https://www.greenschoolyards.org/covid-learn-outside>

Outdoor Learning Resources (a super-amazing list): <https://www.greenschoolyards.org/outdoor-learning-resources>

Outdoor Learning concepts (UK): <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Research-Resources/About-Outdoor-Learning>

8 Simple Steps to Launching an Outdoor Learning Program: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/8-simple-steps-launching-outdoor-learning-program>

This guide will help you to learn some of the basics about outdoor learning. Also, it will link you to some wonderful resources where you can learn more. [Connect to Curriculum here.](#)

About Us

The Children's Hour Inc is a New Mexico-based non-profit organization that produces an award-winning children's radio program that is educational, entertaining, and engaging, and includes kids who participate in its creation. The program is internationally syndicated broadcasting on more than 115 public radio stations worldwide. Program themes focus on civics, STEM, culture, and music education, featuring New Mexico children as co-hosts and lead interviewers. Katie Stone has been the executive producer of *The Children's Hour* for 20 years.

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Tell us about you!

We at the Children's Hour would like to know:

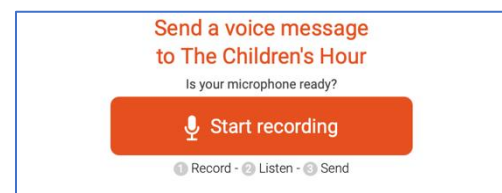
1. How old are you?
2. Was this your first time listening to a radio show or podcast for kids?
3. Was this radio show less fun or more fun compared to other things you do for fun, like playing video games or watching TV?

☐ Less fun ☐ More fun

4. Would you listen to a radio show again if you could?
5. Of everything you heard in the radio show, what will you remember most?

If you would like to draw a picture about anything you learned on the radio show, you can do so below, or on a blank page. Scan and email it to us, and we may display it on our online pages.

If you would like to tell the creators of this radio show something in your own voice, you can send a voice message to *The Children's Hour* here: <https://www.childrenshour.org>. Look for the orange button and click to record.



The Benefits of Outdoor Learning

Learning outdoors is healthy.

- Be active
- Increase physical, mental, and social health
- Decrease the symptoms of ADHD
- Lower the stress level (of both students and teachers)

Teaching and learning outdoors is fun.

- Enjoy a change of pace from the classroom
- Grow enthusiasm for learning

Learning outdoors supports child development.

- Develop a sense of self, independence, and confidence
- Spark creativity
- Use decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Show empathy towards others
- Refine motor skills
- Demonstrate self-discipline and initiative

School performance increases when children learn outdoors.

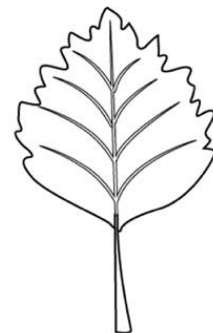
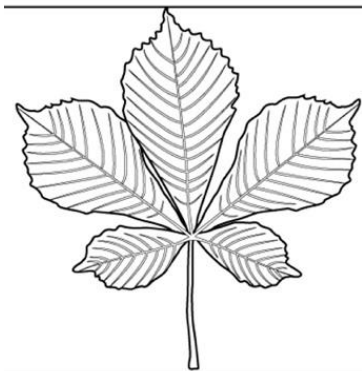
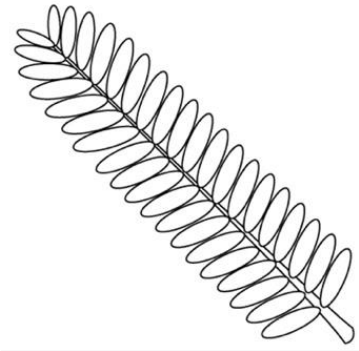
- Increase standardized test scores
- Enhance attitude about school
- Improve in-school behavior
- Improve school attendance
- Enhance overall student achievement when students learn in and about nature
- Engage a greater range of intelligences when doing outdoor activities

Learning outdoors helps develop a sense of place and civic attitudes and behaviors.

- Increase understanding of one's natural and human communities which leads to a sense of place
- Develop stronger environmental attitudes and civic behaviors

Outdoor education engages families and the community.

- Connect families to the community
- Get families involved with student learning
- Increase parental and community involvement in and support for the school



The above statements are supported by research: <https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/leaf/school-grounds/documents/outdoor%20education%20research%20for%20school%20Grounds.pdf>

Environmental Education

The outdoors is the perfect place to learn about the environment. **Environmental education** is a process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment.

“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

— Dr. Jane Goodall, scientist & activist

Why Environmental Education is Important for Kids:

<https://www.rubicon.com/blog/environmental-education-for-kids/>

Learning and Teaching about the Environment:

<https://www.epa.gov/students>

Toolkit of resources to learn, connect, and take action now as environmental stewards:

<https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/humans-and-environment-toolkit>

Your Environment: Scavenger Hunt

An environmental scavenger hunt is fun, engaging, and educational. It can be adapted to most any location or age level of hunter/learner.

While the scavenger hunt portion of the activity is fun, the learning takes place when the hunter mindfully observes the environment and discusses the experience. Start the activity with questions to check if the hunter/learner understand the rules and goals. After the hunt, ask more questions about their findings. What is it? Where did it come from? Why did it end up where it was found? What use is it? How did you find it? What role does it play in the environment? Many more questions may arise, and hopefully spark conversation. Keep it open-ended. (See Reflection questions on page 8.)

Public speaking can also be incorporated by asking each hunter/learner to “show and tell” about the most interesting thing they found.

Do an **Environmental Scavenger Hunt** in your home and immediate surroundings: www.drluzclaudio.com/environmental_scavenger_hunt

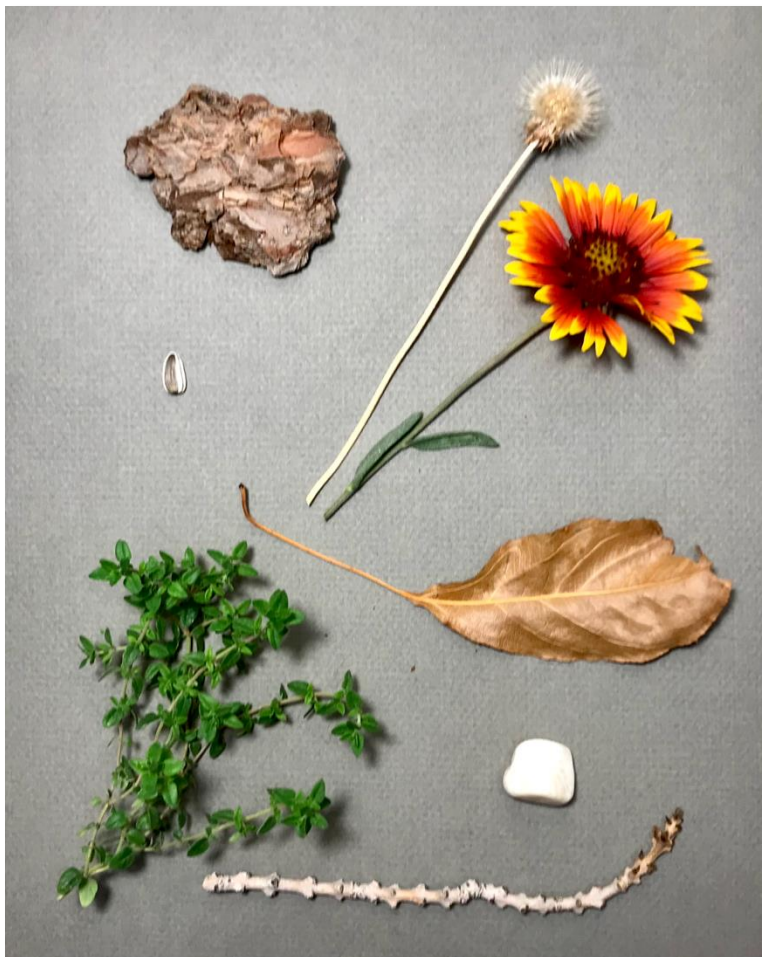


Nature Scavenger Hunt: Sensory Card

Get the wee ones (as young as 2 years old) to explore a given outdoor space as they find natural items that look and feel like items fixed to a card.

Directions:

1. Collect natural items from the location where you will hold the nature scavenger hunt, and glue them onto cardboard and allow to dry. (The backs of used writing tablets can be upcycled for this.)
2. Write labels for each item on the nature sensory card. (optional)
3. Give the nature sensory card and a basket to the child and ask them to explore the area and collect the items that match what's on the card.
4. Sort and discuss the items the child collects. Invite them to match the items they found to the items on the sensory card.
5. As an extension, the child can make a nature collage or their own sensory card using the items that they have collected.



Variations:

- The child collects things of the same color or texture as the card items, even if they don't exactly match.
- The child observes the card at the beginning (but not during) the hunt, to practice memory.
- The child collects a certain number of each of the items, to practice counting.
- After the hunt, the blindfolded child tries to identify the items by touch.

There is no right or wrong way to do a nature scavenger hunt. The whole point is to get outside, connect, and have fun. Use these ideas, or do it your own way.

Another way to hunt and explore nature with your five senses is to use **"Go Find It" cards**:

<https://www.howwemontessori.com/how-we-montessori/2016/02/sensory-nature-play-.html>

25 Easy Nature Play Ideas for Early Childhood Centers:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/25-easy-nature-ideas.pdf>

Urban Nature Scavenger Hunt

You don't have to go to the country to experience nature. There's plenty of nature in city (urban) life. Hunt for these things on your next walk around town. Check them off as you find them:

☐ A wildflower

☐ An insect

☐ The sound of birds

☐ The smell of a plant

☐ Three different leaves

☐ Three pieces of trash

☐ Something natural that's yellow

☐ Something natural that's smaller than a penny

☐ The tallest tree

☐ Water

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

1. What do you see in the sky?
2. What does the air feel like? Smell like?
3. What's making the loudest sound that you hear?
4. Take 20 steps. Were they all on concrete? How many steps is it to the nearest natural ground or water?
5. How much of your hunt was in the shade?

For more ideas about doing a nature scavenger hunt, check out:
<https://www.doinggoodtogether.org/bhf/nature-scavenger-hunt>



Birding

Birding, also known as birdwatching, is an outdoor activity that people of all ages can enjoy. Start by watching birds just outside your home. Next, head out to visit a park, open space, or nature reserve. Be sure to record your observations in a **nature journal**.

Birdwatching with Children <https://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/beginners/getting-started/birdwatching-with-children/>

Easy Ways to Get Kids Birding: <https://www.audubon.org/news/easy-ways-get-kids-birding>

Identify the birds you see using an online guide: <https://www.audubon.org/birding/identifying-birds> or with an app: <https://www.audubon.org/app>

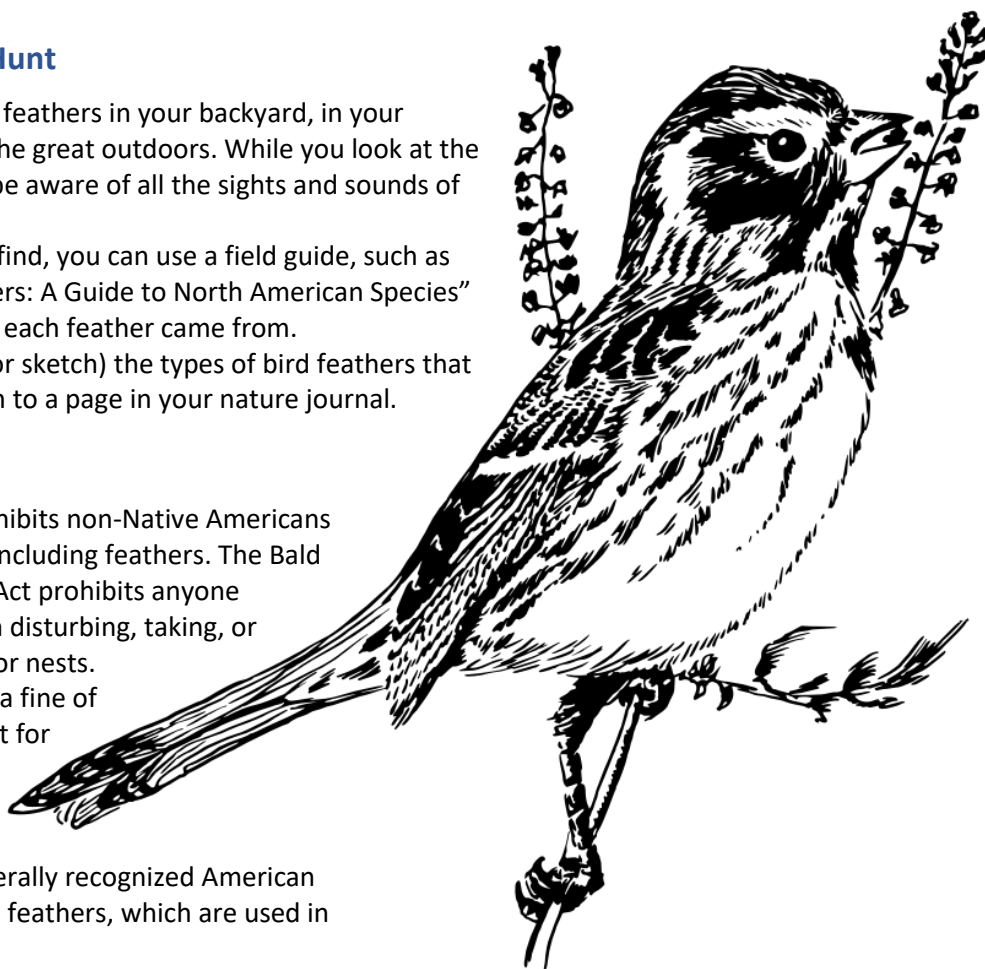
Bird Feather Scavenger Hunt

1. Head out in search of feathers in your backyard, in your neighborhood, or in the great outdoors. While you look at the ground for feathers, be aware of all the sights and sounds of birds around you.
2. For each feather you find, you can use a field guide, such as the book “Bird Feathers: A Guide to North American Species” to identify which bird each feather came from.
3. Record (photograph or sketch) the types of bird feathers that you find, or glue them to a page in your nature journal.

Did you know...

United States federal law prohibits non-Native Americans from possessing eagle parts, including feathers. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibits anyone without a federal permit from disturbing, taking, or possessing eagle parts, eggs, or nests. Violating the act can result in a fine of up to \$100,000, imprisonment for one year, or both, according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Under the law, only permitted a member of a federally recognized American Indian tribe can possess eagle feathers, which are used in tribal ceremonies and rituals.

Learn more about eagle feathers regulations here:
https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/eagle_feathers.html



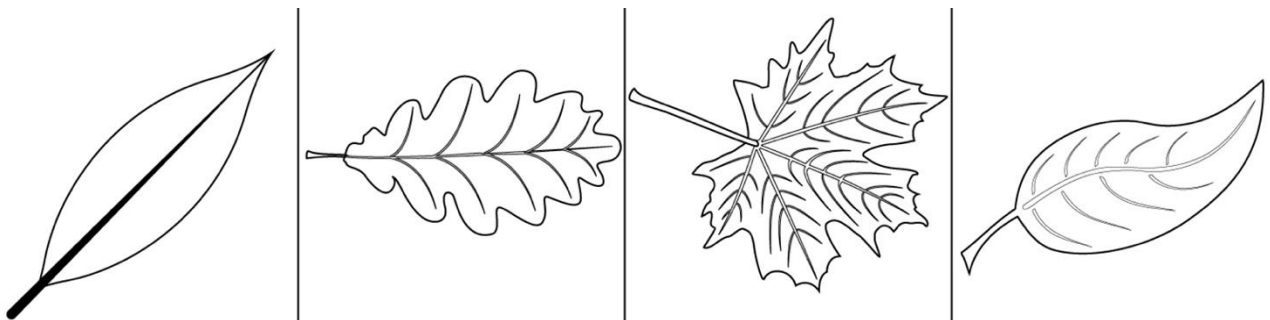
Is your yard a bird-friendly place? You can certify your backyard, patio, balcony, garden, or schoolyard as a wildlife habitat with the National Wildlife Federation. Get the guide for making a **Certified Wildlife Habitat®**: <https://www.nwf.org/CertifiedWildlifeHabitat>

Time to Reflect

Did you do a nature/environmental scavenger hunt? Let's talk about it:

1. Which item was your favorite?
2. Which was most difficult to find?
3. Which did you find first?
4. What senses did you use on your hunt? What did you hear in nature? Smell? Touch?
5. Albert Einstein, famed theoretical physicist, once said, "Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better." What do you think he meant?
6. How does your body feel when you are spending time in nature? How does your mind feel?

As you discover things on the natural world, you can **record your observations**, share with (4.5 million) fellow naturalists, and discuss your findings using the app: <https://www.inaturalist.org>



Connect to Curriculum

<http://www.corestandards.org>

Information/Activity	Core Idea	Common Core ELA Standard
Scavenger Hunt	Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood... to deepen understanding.	SL 3 (K-2)
Nature Journal	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.	SL 5 (K-2)
p. 8 Time to Reflect	Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly... Recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.	SL 4 (K-2)
p. 6 Urban Nature Scavenger Hunt p. 7 Bird Feather Scavenger Hunt	Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.	Next Gen Science Std 2-LS4-1