



ON A WALK: PLANTS & ANIMALS

SCIENCE: LIVING THINGS

Every child is different. Do what works best for encouraging each child's exploration of this suggested activity.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS INVESTIGATION:

Children will observe different plants and animals in their environment during their outdoor walk.

VOCABULARY:

- Plants: Tree, Grass, Flower, Stem, Leaves
- Animals: Squirrel, Duck, Spider, Bird, Bugs, Worms

MATERIALS:

- Optional: Buggy or wagon for outdoor walk

PROGRESSION STEPS (SCIENCE: LIVING THINGS):

Visit [STEMIE Learning Trajectories](#) for details

- Characteristics recognizer

THIS INVESTIGATION:

- Tell the children you want their help looking for different plants and animals on your walk today. Use visuals as necessary. Give children wait time to respond.
- **“Let’s observe the different plants and animals we notice today on our walk. We might observe things like flowers, trees, and squirrels. What do you notice?”**
- Prompt children for their observations of plants and animals in their environment:

“What colors do you notice?”

“What do you notice about the different parts of the plants? (e.g., leaves, flowers, stem)”

“What do you notice about the animals?”

- Challenge children to make more detailed observations and notice the similarities and differences between plants and animals.

“How do the plants feel?” (e.g., rough, bumpy, smooth, etc.)

“What do you notice is the same between the plants? What is different?” (e.g., “I notice my leaf is brown and feels hard. But your leaf is red and feels smooth.”)

“What do you notice is different between the animals?” (e.g., “I notice the squirrel is brown and is much bigger than the black spider over here.”)

ADAPTATIONS:

See [A Guide to Adaptations](#) for general ideas and strategies

Instruction:

- Use visual cue cards for different plants and animals.
- Encourage verbal and nonverbal responses and follow children’s interests.
- If children are in a buggy or can’t get close enough to observe, bring different stimuli to them as appropriate (e.g., a flower, leaf, ant, etc.)





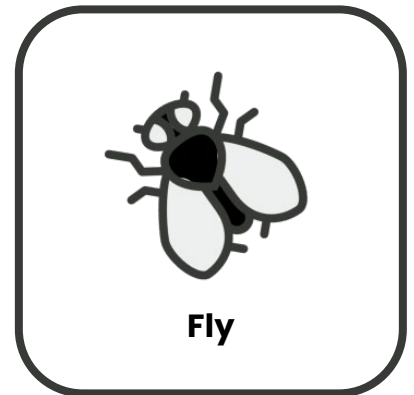
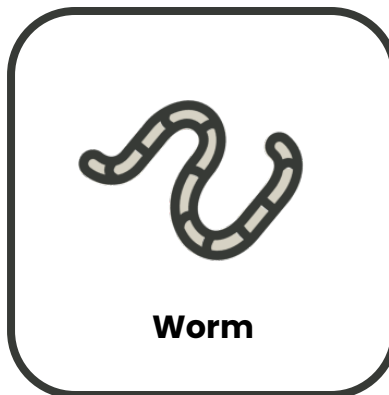
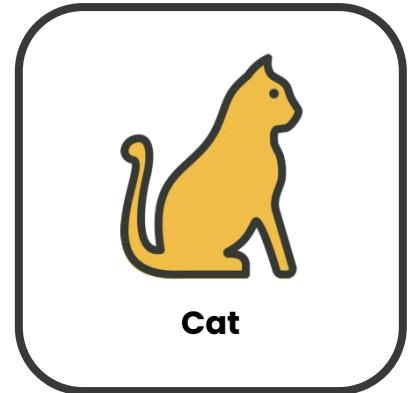
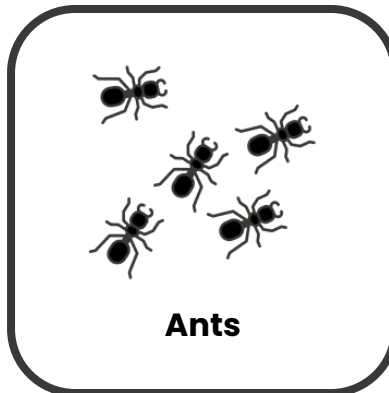
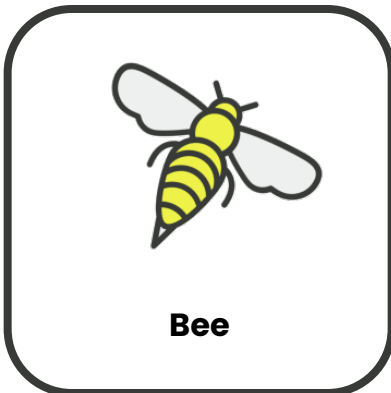
ADAPTATIONS (CONTINUED):

- Focus on children's sensory strengths. For example, if children are strong listeners, focus on auditory input vs visual input, etc.
- Try open-ended questions first, but if children don't respond to open-ended questions, provide close-ended questions (e.g., **"Is the rock hard or soft?"**)

HOW TO CONTINUE THIS INVESTIGATION:

- As children engage in opportunities to recognize characteristics of living things, support them in becoming a change recognizer:
- Think about documenting how the plants change over time on your outdoor walks. You could take photos together or write down children's weekly observations to discuss how the living things in your environment are changing over time.

SUPPORT MATERIALS:



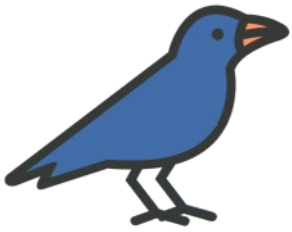


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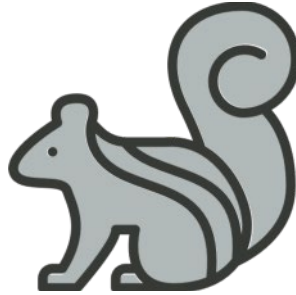
SCIENCE: LIVING THINGS

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SUPPORT MATERIALS:



Bird



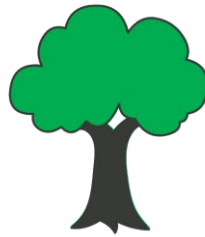
Squirrel



Stroller/Buggy



Wagon



Tree



Leaves



Flower



Grass



Butterfly