

## OBSERVATIONS 101

- Elementary
- 45 minutes
- Ranger recommendation

## OVERVIEW

In this experience, paired or grouped students will explore a set area of the park and use tools to observe living and non-living things. Students will use an observation checklist as guidance around the space, and report their findings and experience during a whole group discussion time.

## SAFETY + SETTING

1. Confirm recommended setting with the Park Ranger
2. Identify boundaries for exploration space. Do not allow students to cross roads or be out of sight.
3. Communicate safety rules for using senses (do not touch animals or ingest anything, avoid poison ivy/oak)



## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

**K.LS1.2** Recognize differences in living and non-living things

**K-2.ETS2.1** Use tools to make observations

## Vocabulary

**Observing:** Using your senses to notice things around you

## PROGRAM TITLE

### STEPS

1. Gather students. Explain “observation.” See colors, shapes, textures, patterns with eyes, etc.
2. Identify exploration space and boundaries. Suggestions available in “Settings” section above.
3. State exploration goal: observe this space and look for the items on your observation checklist
4. Pair or group students. Provide a laminated checklist (photos and/or text)
5. Explore for 20 minutes
6. Gather together and have students report their findings.

### RETURN MATERIALS

After you have finished your teacher-led experience, gather and return all materials to the Park Ranger in charge or to the Visitor Center.



### DON'T FORGET!

- Talk through the items on the checklist before exploring
- Explain how to use the checklist and hand lens (if using)
- Review safety expectations

# OBSERVATION CHECKLIST



Green Leaf



Brown Leaf



Pine Cone



Mushroom



Log



Animal Tracks



Tree Stump



Moss



Seed Pods



Curvy Branch



Spider/Web



Rocks



Acorn



Hole in a Tree



Pine Needles



Flower



Tree Roots



Insect



Fern



Grass

# OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

\_\_\_\_\_ Something natural

\_\_\_\_\_ Oval shape rock

\_\_\_\_\_ Something rough

\_\_\_\_\_ Something red

\_\_\_\_\_ Animal tracks

\_\_\_\_\_ Spider web/ Spider

\_\_\_\_\_ Y-shaped twig

\_\_\_\_\_ Something that does  
not belong in nature

\_\_\_\_\_ Bird

\_\_\_\_\_ Insect

\_\_\_\_\_ Something that moves

\_\_\_\_\_ A tree that is too big to hug

\_\_\_\_\_ Water (creek, stream, river)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 different leaves

\_\_\_\_\_ Park Ranger

\_\_\_\_\_ Something old

