

IN MY YARD

This activity sheet accompanies the *In My Yard* guide sheet and video found at Middletownartcenter.org/leonardo. Watch the video, then take this sheet and the guide with you outside. Work samples may include writing, drawing or painting, photos, essay, or a PowerPoint or Adobe Spark presentation.

What I see and notice

Plants, insects, birds, animals, scat, compost?
8.5 x11 separate piece of drawing paper

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What I Know

Write or use PowerPoint
or Adobe Spark

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

I wonder - my questions-

What you are curious about

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What I found out

connecting form and function

Results of your research (+source)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

IN MY YARD

A guide to take with you outside along with the attached activity sheet after you watch the video at middletownartcenter.org/leonardo.

Get Set: *Gather your supplies.* Cut four 30-inch pieces (or a little more) of string or yarn and gather your favorite drawing supplies and your activity sheet. You can use colored pencils, crayons, pastels, markers. Or water colors. Whatever you prefer. Find 4 sticks to use as stakes.

Square 1: What do I see or notice?

First find and mark a 2ft x 2ft plot for your field study.

Describe what you observe in your plot. Do you see plants, insects, traces of animals or birds and composting organic material? Are there rocks or bark you can look under? *What do you notice?* What kinds of structures are there? Do any of the plants have symmetry - radial, bilateral, alternating or both? Do you notice any interesting textures?

Draw: Using your drawing paper and drawing materials draw a few items you find interesting. You can focus on texture and structure. Express the variety of value you see by mixing tints (adding white to a color to make it lighter) and shades (adding black to a color to make it darker).

Start by drawing the general shape using a contour or line drawing of a plant in your plot. Once your line drawing is done, fill the general shape with its local color, for example green. Now, observe the parts of your plant that are lighter or darker shades of green. Use your black and white, or browns and blues and yellows, to gently accent those areas. Lastly, give you plant one last light coat of green color where it is needed. You may want to draw something that has other colors, but using tints and shades is always a good way to express value or light and shadow, depth and texture.

There's another activity to practice mixing tints and shades, and a sculpture building activity with sticks and string at middletownartcenter.org/leonardo.

Square 2: What do you KNOW?

Look at what lives and exists in your plot. Describe what you know about these particular things. This includes both plants, insects and other organic things. What do you know about these materials? Do they have a function and purpose? What are they shaped or structured the way they are? What do you know about how they got there?

Square 3: I Wonder?

This is your chance to be inquisitive. BE curious! Yes, you know there is a little tree in your plot, but what species is it? How is that species important to its ecosystem? Is there any evidence of life cycles in your plot? If there is an acorn hat or seed in your plot, why is it there? Or, for example, why does the insect you observed have a red and black shell? Or if you spotted a Pill Bug or rollie pollie, why does it like to go under rocks, and why does it roll into a ball?

Square 4: What I found out. Connecting form function and findings (research results)

Use the internet to do your research to find answers to your curious questions or download the SEEK App by inaturalist, as a tool on your phone. It is free and easy to use! Write the answers you found, and the sources (internet sites, books, seek app, etc.) you used to do so.

Take a photo of your plot, visit to observe it every few days and note any changes. Did something grow or bloom? Die away? Has there been animal activity? Please record with photos or drawings and document any observations, just as a true scientist or nature lover would do!

You can make a PowerPoint or Spark presentation, or do an observational essay to organize your thoughts and discoveries. Scan or take a photo of your favorite artworks too. If you take a photo, do it outside in indirect sunlight on a white or other solid color background, and make sure there are no shadows that don't belong in the image. We'll make an online gallery of some of our artwork!