

LET'S EXPLORE

Introducing the Backyard Observation Journal

Help students slow down, look closely, and record discoveries about the tiny wildlife around them. Use the journal after reading Who Lives in My Backyard? or during an outdoor observation activity.

Before you explore

Copy and assemble the *Let's Explore* journal consisting of front and back covers, a title page, and several journal pages. Each page has space for two observations, which may be completed on the same day or during separate visits.

Discuss the journal and how it will be used, taking time to view each section. Instruct children to fill in their name and to personalize the title page with their own drawings in the space provided. They may choose to draw one of the tiny creatures in the book, or creepy crawlies that have seen in their backyard.

Practice Noticing and Journaling Together

Choose a photograph from the book. Ask: What colors do you see? What body parts can you find? What details might you miss at first?

Model a quick drawing and a short observation. Explain that students can record what they see even if they do not know the animal's name.

Outdoor Observations

Choose a safe area and set clear boundaries. Encourage students to watch quietly and give wildlife space. Leave animals, plants, and their homes undisturbed. Allow time to look before students begin drawing or writing.



LET'S EXPLORE

Journaling

Date and location: Record when and where the animal was found. (under a rock, on a leaf, or flying in the air)

Draw the animal and include a detail noticed through observation.

Write its name, if known, or a brief description.

Record visible details, such as colors, legs, eyes, or movement.

I wonder… Add a question to explore later.

Share and reflect

Invite students to share one observation and one question. Ask: Did anyone notice something similar? What changed when you looked more closely? How could we learn more?

Keep it flexible

Students may use drawings, labels, words, sentences, or dictation. If outdoor observation is not possible, use photographs from the book. Focus on careful noticing rather than perfect spelling or artwork.

LET'S EXPLORE



NATURE JOURNAL

WHO LIVES IN MY BACKYARD?

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO

_____

My Backyard Observation Journal

Look closely. Draw what you see. Record what you notice.

Name: _____

Date: _____ I found it: _____

My drawing

My backyard neighbor:

I notice...

Colors,legs,eyes, movement, or other details

I wonder...

Date: _____ I found it: _____

My drawing

My backyard neighbor:

I notice...

Colors,legs,eyes, movement, or other details

I wonder...

Copyright 2026 Nannette Richford

LITTLE
EXPLORERS
BIG
DISCOVERIES

