



DIY Air Force Activities: Nature Adventure



Materials:

- empty egg carton, small basket, or small bag
- markers or crayons
- paper (any kind and any color) – for Nature Journal
- white paper – for leaf and bark rubbings
- pencil



The world around us is diverse and colorful! We need all different types of things to keep the world in harmony. Nature is full of living and non-living things. Living things need food and water; they grow and reproduce (make more things that look like them). We see living things every day such as dogs, cats, birds, insects, grass, and trees. Non-living things do NOT eat or drink and do NOT reproduce. Some non-living things you might see every day are rocks, cars, fire hydrants, phones, and bikes. What kinds of living and non-living things can you find on a nature walk in your neighborhood? Follow the directions below!

1. Take a few pieces of paper and fold them in half so that it looks like a small book. This will be your Nature Journal! Using your markers or crayons, decorate the front of your nature journal.
2. Have an adult take you outside to explore! Be sure to bring your nature journal, a pencil, and your egg carton/basket/bag. You can take a walk around your neighborhood or simply go explore around your yard.
3. As you explore, collect things you see that you want to look at more closely. For things that can only be observed, draw a picture of that item in your nature journal. Add a note of what it is and where you found it. **Note: Some living things such as bugs and insects should never be collected or harmed, only observed. Other things may be too big to collect! Ask an adult before touching plants too, some may irritate your skin. Just draw these things in your nature journal!**
4. When you are back home, try to identify the items you collected and observed as living or non-living and why. Write or draw your ideas in your nature journal. Did you find more living things or non-living things?

*** Bonus: Did you notice any patterns? Did you find certain things together? What type of living thing did you find most frequently? What types of non-living thing did you see a lot of? What non-living things were man-made and which were created by nature? Compare what you find in different environments too!

Air Force Associations:

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life in a particular habitat or ecosystem. The non-living parts of that ecosystem are essential to how the living things survive, and the balance is sometimes delicate. Eglin Air Force Base in Florida encompasses more than 700 square miles of territory and houses hundreds of native species, many of which are on the endangered species list! Base staff and personnel and federal agents coordinate on conservation efforts to enable ecosystem management that assists with the military mission.



How to do a leaf rubbing:

1. Collect leaves of various shapes and sizes
2. Place leaf on table with the bottom side facing up.
3. Place a sheet of paper, preferably thin or lightweight, over the leaf.
4. Tilt a pencil so you are using the side and not the point of the pencil or use the side of a crayon to gently rub over the area of the leaf.
5. Rub over the entire leaf; you should see the shape of the leaf appear!

***** Make sure to check with an adult before picking up any leaves!
Some can irritate your skin.**

