

Activities and games to play outside



Kruckeberg
Botanic Garden

Get outside! Spring is here- birds are singing, flowers are starting to bloom, and new life is everywhere. Try some of these non-contact activities and games in your backyard, local park, or here at Kruckeberg Botanic Garden. Feel free to adapt or change these activities to meet the needs of your students and space.

1. Nature Sounds

While we often think of nature as a quite place, it's actually full of sounds! It may be a raindrop, a flock of birds, the rustling leaves or swish of a fir tree's branches, the tapping of the woodpecker, or the playful gurgle of a creek.

Supplies: notebook, pens/pencils

Objective: Take time to listen to all the sounds of your surroundings.

Instructions: The group is given five minutes to see who can make the longest list of things heard in the woods during that time.

Challenge students to listen for particular sounds (examples: the *quietest* sound, the *loudest* sound, a *human-made* sound, a *strange* sound)

2. Wildlife Watching

Wild animals are often hard to see in nature. They often move quickly and stealthily, which require us to use our observation and awareness skills. To tell someone later what you saw, you need these skills!

Supplies: None

Objective: Hone your observational skills by working with a partner to spot the differences in each others' appearance. .

Instructions: Split the group into 2 lines, facing each other. Pair students from opposite lines so they are facing each other 6 feet apart.

Instruct students to take 2 minutes to observe as much as they can about the student in front of them.

Then, everyone turns their backs- *make sure no one is peeking!*

Have each student change 3 things about their appearance (e.g. roll up sleeves, untie shoe, tuck in shirt, etc.).

Have students turn around to face each other and take turns seeing if they can figure out what the other person changed.

After students have figured out the changes, have everyone take 5 big steps back & rotate one side so as to create new pairs. Repeat.

3. Predator & prey

Predators are animals who eat other animals to survive, animals that eat meat are predators. Prey are animals that get eaten by predators. Prey can be both plant eaters or meat eaters.

Supplies: blindfolds and sticks

Objective: Only the quietest, most stealthy predators are able to catch their prey. The prey must use all their senses, especially hearing, to avoid danger.

Instructions: Have one person sit on the ground with a blindfold on. They are the "prey". They have sticks (or any other small object) on the ground between their legs.

The rest of the group become "predators" who are stalking their "prey" (the sticks on the ground).

At the start of the game, as the leader calls them out by quietly pointing, the predators start making their way to their prey as quietly as possible.

If the prey hears the predator, they point in the direction of the sound they heard. If they are pointing to a predator, that predator goes back and has to try again as the prey heard them and ran away (theoretically).

A new prey may be chosen after a few rounds.