

Name: _____

Date: _____

Section 1.2 Your Schoolyard Ecosystem



Question: Are there clear examples of interactions among the living and non-living parts of your schoolyard environment?

Purpose: In this activity you will observe or infer some of the living and non-living connections taking place in the environment near your school.

Materials:

- Note-taking sheet
- Drawing paper
- Pencil/coloured pencils
- Hand lens
- Popsicle stick

Procedure: Observing

- 1) Choose a 1 m² area in the school site suitable for your study. Choose your own area - you are to conduct your investigation without a buddy.
- 2) Record all of the organisms that you can, using your senses, land lens and popsicle stick, in the first column of Table 1. **Do not include human-made objects or garbage.**
- 3) Read and follow Procedure steps 3-6 on page 9 of your text
NOTE Do not pick up or break or damage any plants, flowers, or other organisms. If you turn over a rock, or dig into the soil with your popsicle stick to what's underneath, be sure to replace it carefully when you are finished.
- 4) For each organism, record any connections you can observe or infer. For example: if you find a feather, you can infer "*probably* fell from a seagull" for a living connection.

Observations - Qualitative (what you see, hear, smell or infer)

Here are some ideas to help you find organisms in your schoolyard:

- Living Organisms: insects, plants, spiders, birds, slugs
- Dead Organisms: plants, insects, spiders
- Signs of Organisms: decaying log, feather, egg shell, insect carapace
- Locations to Find Organisms: under rocks, under decaying logs

General Assessment Performance Criteria:

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4 Excellent! All criteria met with outstanding success, a high level of thinking is displayed in Field Study	3 Good! All criteria met well, content in Field Study is mostly accurate.	2 Satisfactory. All criteria met satisfactorily, some errors in Field Study.	1 Minimal. All criteria minimally met, several errors in Field Study.	0 Field study is incomplete.
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Your Schoolyard Ecosystem: Field Study

Table 1: Organisms and their connections to the local environment

Organism Observed (describe and/or draw it)	Living Connections (ex: plants, animals)	Non-Living Connections (ex: temperature, sun, soil, water)

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Making Connections

Based on the observations you made during your schoolyard study, answer the following questions:

1) Would you classify insects as living things or non-living things? Why?

2) What signs of insects, birds, or spiders on other things did you see?

3) List the non-living things that you see living things using, what the living thing using it was and how it was using it.

4) List the non-living things that you have seen evidence of living things using, and what the evidence was that a living thing was using it.

5) Explain why you might get different results if you did your study:

- At night

- During another season

6) You can sometimes "read between the lines" of your observations. Based on what you already know, you can suggest more things than you actually observed directly. We call this inferring. Give three examples of interactions that you did not see directly but were able to infer.
