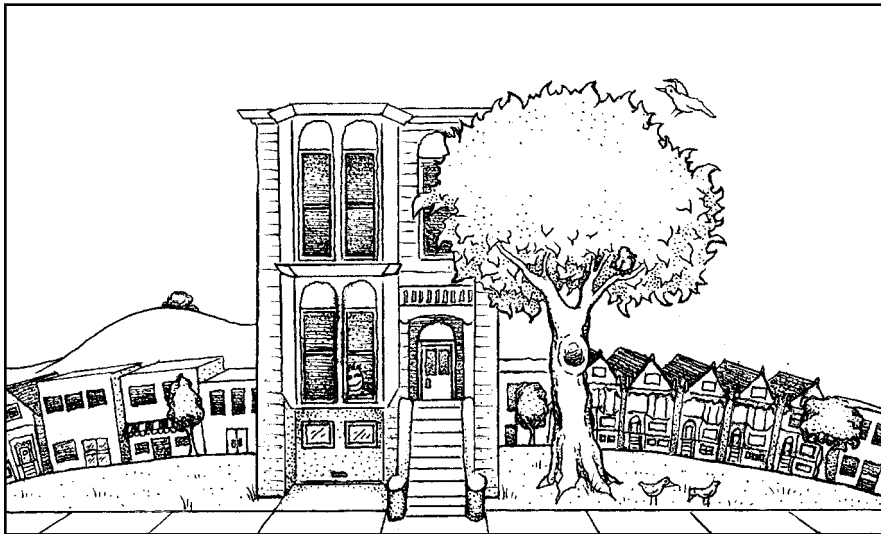


Nature in the City Bingo



Materials

For the group

- Large sheet of chart paper divided in four with headings: Favorite Thing, Surprise, Same as Home, Different from Home
- Marking pen
- Prizes, such as small flower bulbs or seeds, nature stickers, or small treats

For each participant or pair

- Copy of Nature in the City Bingo card
- Pencil
- Copy of *Things you can do for nature in the city* handout

Summary

Youth play a bingo game in which they look for elements of nature at the program site. They compare what they find to what they saw at the outing site.

Learning Objectives

Youth will:

- Observe nature where they live and play.
- See ways that people are a part of the greenbelt, not apart from it.

Correlation to California Content Standards

Science

- Life Science: All organisms need energy and matter to live and grow. (Grade 4)
- Life Science: Living organisms depend on one another and on their environment for survival. (Grade 4)
- Ecology (Life Science): Organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with the environment. (Grade 6)



Background Information

The Bay Area's greenbelt is defined as the open space and farmland that surround this nine-county area. It is often thought of as a broad band encircling the area (hence the name *greenbelt*). The greenbelt is interconnected with the cities and towns that lie within.

Urban dwellers rely on the greenbelt for farm products, for recreation, and for scenic beauty. The greenbelt also provides environmental services to the entire region that help to make our cities more livable. The plants, animals, and other elements of greenbelt areas:

- Create fertile soils
- Maintain the balance of the air's oxygen and carbon dioxide
- Help collect and purify water to drink and use
- Prevent erosion
- Prevent flooding
- Maintain climate balance
- Create and pollinate our food

In addition, cities and the greenbelt are linked together by the species they share in common. Many of the same insects, birds, and plants you see in

the greenbelt may also be found right at home on your block.

Procedure

Step One: Introduce the activity by showing the chart and having the youth think about a time they have visited the Bay Area's greenbelt. Ask them to share their ideas for each of the four categories:

- Their favorite thing they saw in the greenbelt
- Something about nature that surprised them on their visit to the greenbelt
- How the greenbelt site they visited is like home
- How it is not like home

Record their answers on the chart as they share.

Step Two: Ask the youth to describe the greenbelt and ask them whether they think they could find pieces of the greenbelt at the program site.

Step Three: Give each student (or pair) a bingo card and a pencil. Explain the activity:

- They will be looking outside for pieces of the greenbelt.
- They will be searching for elements of nature (not made by people or

- machines) for each of the squares.
- They should be careful not to disturb anything.
- They will find more items if they are quiet and walk slowly rather than dart around.
- They should draw each item they find.
- They should try to get five in a row vertically, diagonally, or horizontally.
- Every person who gets five in a row (subject to checking by the leader) will get a prize.

Step Four: Take the group outside and show them the boundaries for the activity before you have them begin.

Step Five: If some youth finish before the others, challenge them to see how many items they can find. Maybe they can find all of them!

Step Six: Go back inside and ask a few of the youth to share something from their bingo card.

Step Seven: Have youth take a look at the chart you started in step 1 and say whether there is anything they would add or change based on what they found at the program site.

Wrap-up Questions

- ? **What did you find here that you also saw in the greenbelt? Were any of the plants and animals exactly the same?**
- ? **People sometimes think that nature is "out there" away from the city. Do you think that is true? Why or why not?**
- ? **Why is it good to have nature in the city?**
- ? **What could you do to help nature in the city?**

Distribute the *Things you can do for nature in the city* handout.

Variations

For a shorter activity, youth can write the name or description of what they see instead of drawing it. For a longer activity, you can require that they fill in the whole chart.



Flowers brighten an urban street.

Nature in the City Bingo

Look for these things NOT made by people or machines.
When you find one, draw it in the square. **Find something that is...**

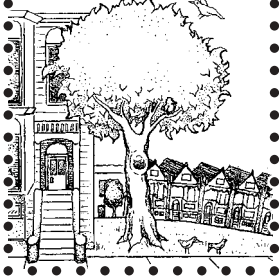
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An animal	Living on a plant	A sign of the season	Moving	Round
Flat	Water for wild animals	Red	Rough	An insect sound
The size of a dime	A bird sound		Straight	Living in soil
Moving in the air	Shiny	Nice-smelling	An animal home	A seed
Yellow	Living in a crack	Sharp	Surprising to you	Eaten by animals

Things you can do for nature in the city

- Get a map of your city and find the park closest to your home. Go there and pick up a few pieces of trash to make it nicer.
- Go for a walk around your neighborhood with someone in your family. Look for plants and animals living in out-of-the-way places.
- Volunteer to clean up a park or plant trees in your neighborhood. Check the Bay Area Volunteer Information Center, www.volunteerinfo.org, to learn what groups are looking for help. Volunteer opportunities specifically for youth can be found at www.thevolunteercenter.net/volunteers_youth.php.
- Create more nature in the city: grow some plants at your home, or ask your teachers about starting a garden at school. For help, see the San Francisco Green Schoolyard Alliance website at www.sfgreenschools.org.

Find out more...

- Go to your local library and ask the librarian to help you find a book on urban nature (or nature in the city).
- Visit the Randall Museum in San Francisco, the Oakland Museum in Oakland, or the Lindsay Museum in Walnut Creek to learn more about nature in our area.
- Contact a local hiking club, environmental organization, or urban garden to find out what they are doing to help the greenbelt.
- Sign up for a “nature in the city” tour of San Francisco (San Francisco Neighborhood Parks Council, www.sfneighborhoodparks.org/nitc/ or (415)621-3260) or a nature walk at one of the East Bay Regional Parks (www.ebparcs.org or (510)562-PARK). Ask your family to take you on a free Greenbelt Outing. Look for the schedule at www.greenbelt.org.

