

Garden Discovery Guide

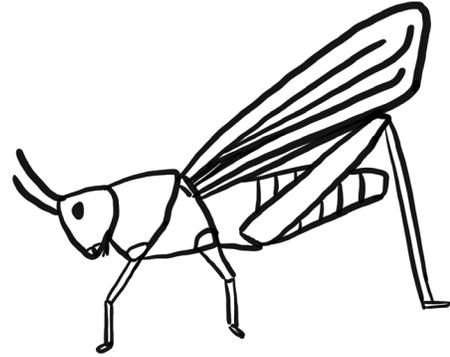
Recommended for ages 7-11



Head out to a garden or any natural outdoor area near you to complete the following activities.

Suggested Materials

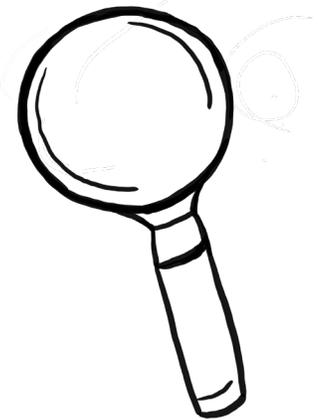
- magnifier or hand lens
- journal or notebook
- hula hoop (or something similar)
- optional: trowel (small digging tool/spoon)



1. Insect Investigation

Search for an insect that catches your eye. Try to observe the insect without disturbing it. See if you can answer these questions. Write your answers in your journal.

- How does your insect move? What do you notice about its body parts that support your answer?
- What role do you think your insect plays in this ecosystem? How do you know?



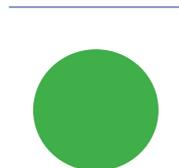
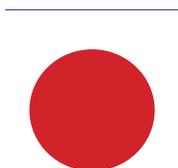
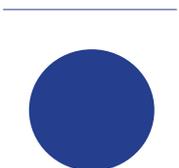
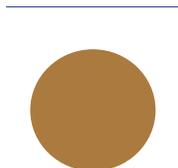
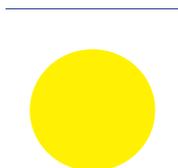
Fun fact: insects play many important roles in gardens. Some pollinate plants so that they can grow new seeds while others help cycle nutrients and keep the soil healthy.

- What do you wonder about this insect?
- What colors are present on your insect? Do these colors help it in some way? Why do you think that?

Fun fact: insects with bright colors or patterns are likely to be poisonous or distasteful to eat. Their bright colors remind predators to never try to eat one of their kind again, unless they want to taste something unpleasant.

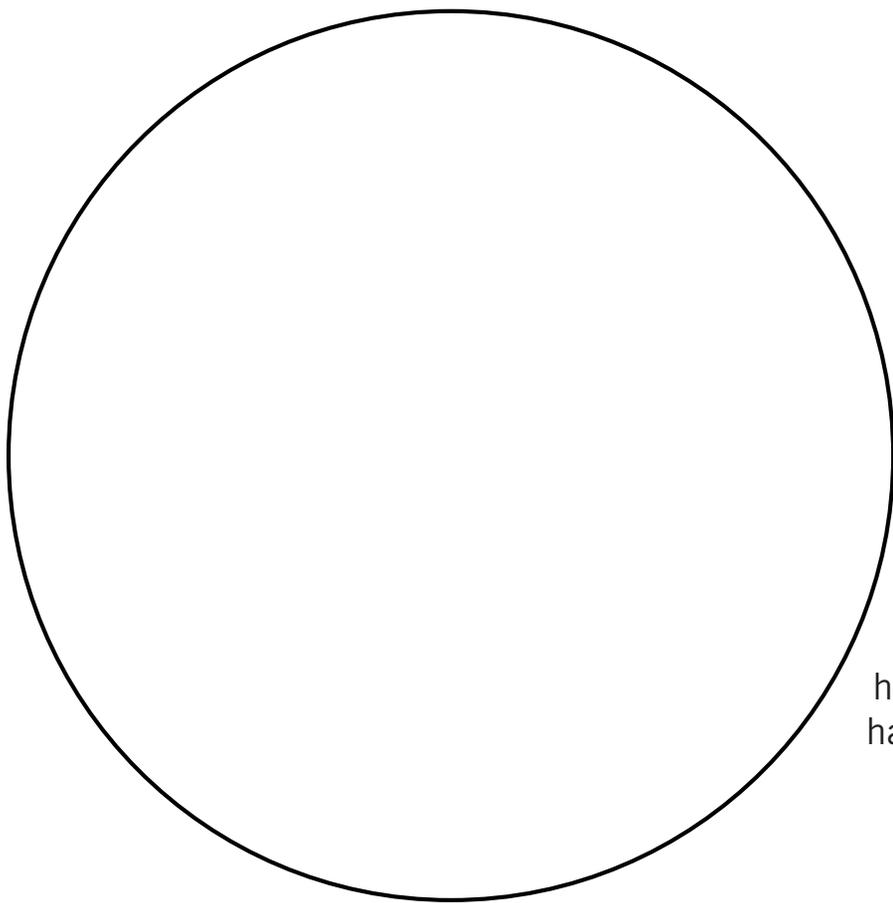
2. Color Hunt

Spend 15 minutes looking for as many objects of each color (yellow, brown, blue, red, green) as possible. Tally them in the blanks. Which color had the most objects?



3. Close Observation

Look for a small area that has a variety of plants, insects, rocks, or anything that you find interesting. Place your hula hoop or similar object on top, take a closer look, and draw what you see in the circle! Write your answers in your journal.



How many species of plant can you count in this area?

Do you notice any insects or other animals here? How are they using this space?

Visit the same spot in a few hours or on a different day. What has changed? Why might this be?

Optional*: use your trowel to gently dig a couple of inches into the ground without causing a great disturbance. What color and texture is the soil? Learn more about soil color at: <https://tinyurl.com/vx38dy6> *If not at home, ask permission to dig.