

# What's New?



## Submitted By:

Mary Hannah Cline

## Overview

After observing their class tree and submitting data points to the Nature's Notebook platform as a whole group activity, students will record a personal observation in their individual science notebooks. Students will write about their findings and draw an accurate illustration of something they personally noticed and found noteworthy.

## Grade Levels

Kindergarten

## Curriculum Correlation

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.2, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.8, K.E.1.1

## Duration

30 – 45 Minutes

## Location

Indoor and Outdoors

## Materials

- Project EXPLORE Tree Data Sheet (One for whole group display is fine)
- Class set of binoculars
- Prepared Tree Observation Journal for each student (*This should have at least one page for each week of the school year. I used comb binding in my class, but you may also consider a 3 ring binder or a folder with brads.*)

# What's New?



## Educators Information

This is my way of making the somewhat abstract process of collecting ongoing data and submitting it to a citizen science project more developmentally appropriate, structured, and engaging for kindergarten students. This process is our weekly class routine for collecting data, and the students respond really well to it.

These science journals have been a huge part of the success of the Project EXPLORE Tree Phenology project in my classroom! I've found that students are much more personally vested in the observation process if they know they will need to write about something they individually noticed outside upon returning to the classroom. This becomes somewhat of a healthy, friendly competition for the students to find something particularly noteworthy.

While we are outside observing our class tree, I will have the students group up around something particularly exciting I or a student noticed by singing the "Gather Round" song.

(Sung to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down.")

"Everybody gather round, gather round, gather round.

Everybody gather round, by the tree."



## Procedure

1. While inside, ask students to raise their hands and tell you what they predict they will notice on our tree outside today. Talk about what predictions are reasonable based on the season and the previous observations.
2. Show students the Project EXPLORE Tree Data sheet to remind them what they are looking for as they go outside to make their observations.

# What's New?



3. Have students put their binoculars on as they go outside. I always remind students that the binoculars are tools, not toys.
4. Give students several minutes of free exploration at the tree. Affirm what they share with you, but let them have this time to independently observe changes in the tree.
5. Sing “Everybody Gather Round” to have students circle around something you or a student found that is particularly exciting or noteworthy. We have circled around Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker holes in our tree trunk, open buds, brand new leaves, and a green leaf with a single red stripe!
6. Once students have returned back inside, have students tell you something special they observed on the tree. Encourage students to share something exciting they noticed. Tell them you’re looking for “tiny observations” not “big observations.” For example, a tiny observation would be “I found a leaf that had nibble marks on the edge,” while a big observation would be “The tree has green leaves.”
7. As a whole group, guide the students through answering the Nature’s Notebook questions to “tell the scientists” what you found.
8. Have students write about their individual observation in their science notebooks.

I always tell my students “only draw what you really saw!” during scientific observation drawings. Blue polka-dotted trees are beautiful during art projects, but scientists document their observations by illustrating things the way they really were.



[Tree Observation Journal from Teachers Pay Teachers](#)

# What's New?

