

Science Learning and Exploring Through Photography

One Small Square: Exploring Nature Close Up



One Small Square is all about getting close to nature. Find a place where students can work with a partner and spread out. This could be the playground, a local park, a nature center- some place where the environment is natural is the best.

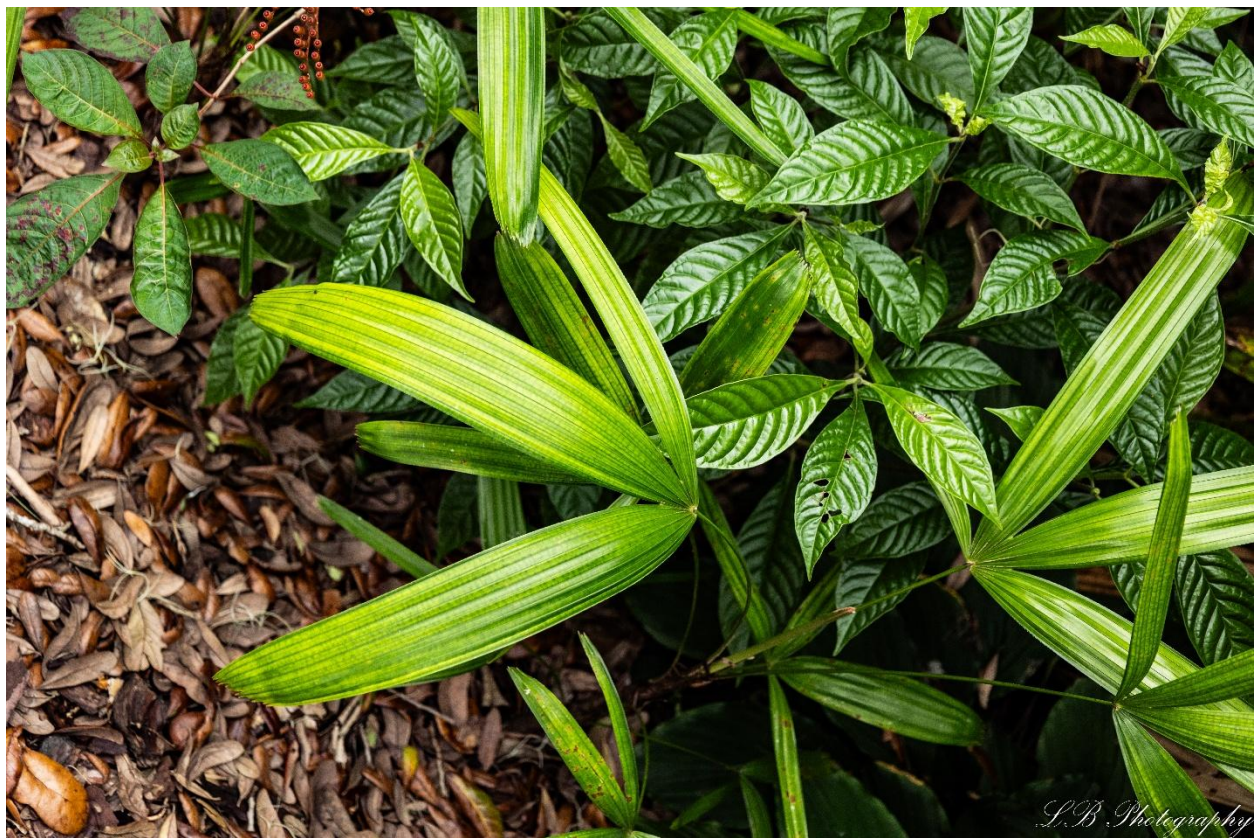
Give them something to make their square (or circle). A tied ribbon, a hula hoop, an empty picture frame- this will become the border of their place to explore.



Provide a hand lens, notepad, colored pencils and other art supplies. You'll also want a collection of field guides for your area that can be used to try to identify plants and animals.

The best option is to go outside. If going out is not an option, *Science Learning and Exploring Through Photography* provides high-resolution images for students to work with. Print the provided small squares in color.





















L.B. Photography

Exploring your Small Square

First, use your hand lens to look at your small square. How many different things can you find? If you aren't sure what it is, use the field guide to try to identify it.

How many kinds of plants do you observe?

Are the plants alive or dead? Are they low to the ground or tall?

Do they have flowers? What shape are their leaves?

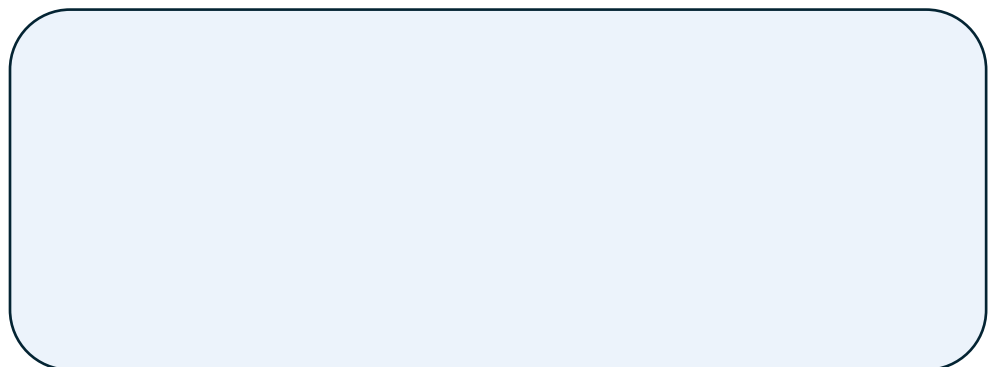
Kind of Plant	Alive or dead?	Low or tall?	Flowers?	Leaf Shape?

Do you see any animals? What kind of animals? What do they appear to be doing?

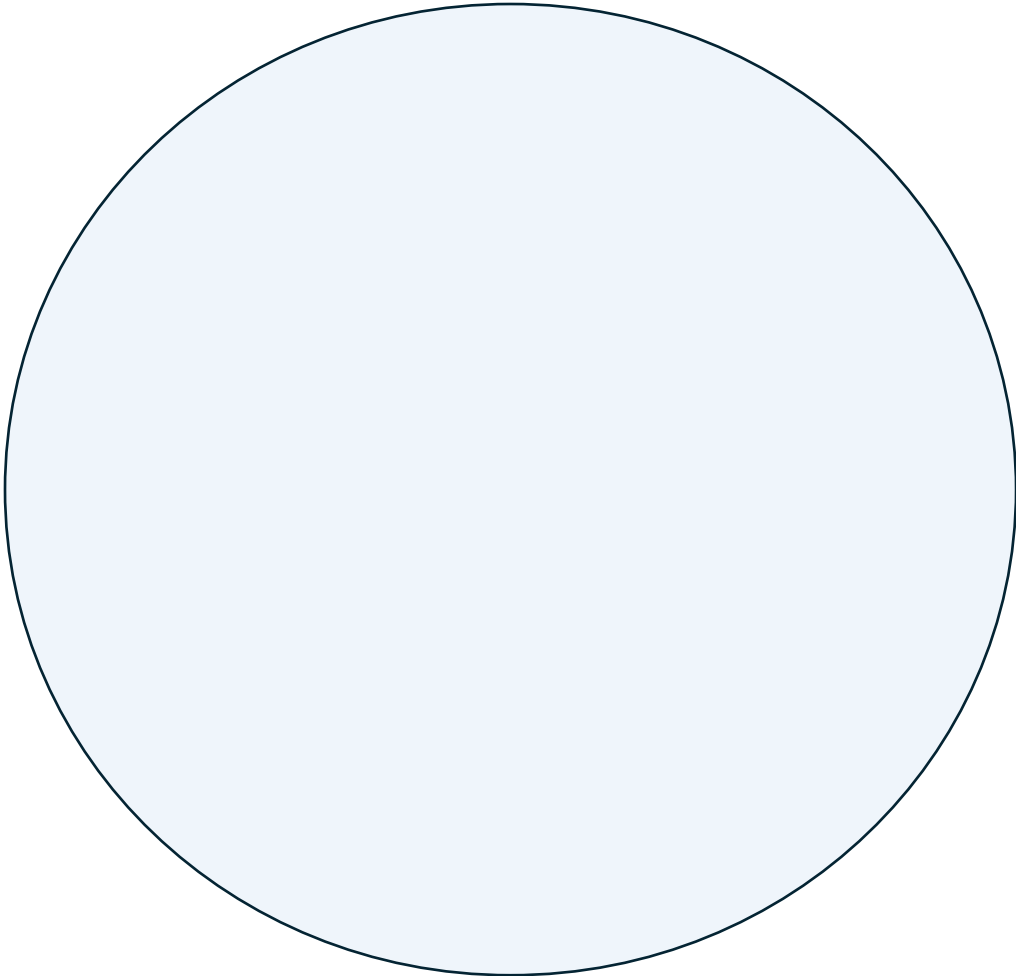
Do you see any signs of animals? Maybe somewhere an animal might live. Something an animal was eating.

Animal?	Kind of animal?	What is the animal doing?	Animal Signs?	What did the animal do to make the sign?

Do you see the ground? If so, what type of ground is it? If not, what do you think is under the ground cover materials?



Choose one of the plants to focus on. Draw a picture of it. Use your hand lens to try to get as many details of your plant as you can. Show your picture to a partner. Can they find that plant in your small square?



Senses Alert!

Let's consider your senses. Imagine you are in your bare feet standing on your one small square. What does it feel like? Close your eyes and imagine smelling the air above it. What might it smell like? What sounds might you hear? Do you see anything in your one small square that would be good to taste?

Senses Alert!			
Touch?	Smells?	Sounds?	Tastes?

Exploring Living and Nonliving

Living: Plants and animals, whether they are alive or dead, are called living things. They are things that have or have had life.

Nonliving: Your picture may also show things that have never had life. Those things are nonliving things.

Study your small square. What living things do you see?
What nonliving things do you see?

Living Things		Nonliving Things
Is alive	Is dead (but was alive sometime)	Has never been alive

Check your thinking  Has any item you listed ever been alive? For instance, you might see a stick. Sticks are the remains of plants. It was once alive, so it is a living thing. It will always be a living thing. Do you have a pencil made from the wood of a stick? That part of the pencil is a living thing. Even though the wood of the stick and the wood of the pencil may be dead, they were once part of a living, growing plant. They are living things.

So, what are nonliving things? A rock would be an example of a nonliving thing. A rock has never had life. It has never been alive. A rock is nonliving.

Check your thinking  Anything on your lists need to move?

Extend the Activity

Choose one small square that is different than your first square. Use your hand lens to explore your new small square. Make a Venn Diagram. Be sure to add labels.

