

Tracking Changes Through Time

By visiting the same outdoor space over and over in different seasons and conditions, students build their connection to place and to nature. They also build their powers of observation, by noticing patterns and changes, which can then inspire inquiry.

GRADE: ECE – Middle

INTENDED OUTCOMES: feet, head

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES:

- Pen, paper, markers, clipboards, cameras

Suggested steps and/or focus for each grade level*:

All Grades:

- Select your subject - a particular plant on the yard, plot of land, the weather,
- Make and record observations with desired level of specificity (e.g. units for measurements)
- Compare observations to the ones you made previously
- Share and discuss similarities and differences

ECE-2nd Grade:

- With young students, consider making and recording observations as a class. You might take photos to show them, in addition to the recordings that they make on their own.
- Turn their observations into a visual timeline to help them understand the sequence of events.

3rd Grade – Middle School:

- Make note of questions that come up as students make their observations and compare them to previous ones. You can use these to spark interest in a particular unit or to inspire further inquiry.
- As students get older, introduce different tools for making observations, such as cameras.
- Expand the scale of observations from the schoolyard to the neighborhood. Include naturalized and non-naturalized areas in your observations.

*For more detail on the grade-level focus for natural and social concepts and sense of place, please refer to the Guidelines

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Wet or snowy weather? Great! Those are important changes to record. Give students notice that you will be spending time outside so they can be sure to bring the right layers. Move around and keep active while outside to keep warm.
- If you don't have clipboards, pieces of cardboard work just fine – so does a picnic table if you have one.
- If your school requires a permission slip for a walk around the neighborhood, see if you can have one signed for the entire year so students don't need new ones each month or each season.



Relevant Standards

SC09-GR.P-S.2-GLE1, SC09-GR.1-S.2-GLE.2