



# GUIDELINES

BOULDER COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES  
DEVELOPED BY THE BOULDER COUNTY E MOVEMENT

# 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE

## 3rd Grade Learning Objectives

*We want our students to be inspired to understand that there is interdependence among animals, humans, and their environment. We want to facilitate opportunities for them to identify how problems arise when environments change, and to work with their peers to solve problems and answer questions.*





### 3rd Grade Environmental Education Guidelines

**Progression of place:** The appropriate scale is neighborhood community within the watershed and regional environment.

#### NATURAL CONCEPT

*Cycles and change are important processes in nature (life cycles, rock cycle, water cycle).*

#### SOCIAL CONCEPT

*Geographic tools can be used to understand our region's watershed (mapping).*

## The Guidelines

### Head

#### ACADEMIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Physical and behavioral adaptations of living things affect their ability to survive, reproduce, and adapt to changes in the environment. [CAS: SC.3.2.5.a.; SC.3.2.5.b.] [NGSS: 3-LS4-3; 3-LS4-4]
- Structures in animals and plants serve functions of growth, survival, behavior, and reproduction. [NGSS: 3-LS4-2]
- Earth's materials can be broken down and/or combined into different materials such as rocks, minerals, soil, and sand—some of which are usable resources for human activity.
- Scientists record patterns of the weather across different times and areas so that they can make predictions about what kind of weather might happen next. [CAS: SC.3.3.1.a.] [NGSS: 3-ESS2-1]
- Cause and effect relationships are routinely identified, tested, and used to explain change. [NGSS: Cause and Effect]
- Climate describes a range of an area's typical weather conditions and the extent to which those conditions vary over years. [CAS: SC.3.3.1.b.] [NGSS: 3-ESS2-2]
- A variety of natural hazards result from natural processes. Humans cannot eliminate natural hazards but can take steps to reduce their impacts. [CAS: SC.3.3.2.a.] [NGSS: 3-ESS3-1]
- Observable phenomena exist from very short to very long time periods. [CAS: SC.3.2.4.a.] [NGSS: 3-LS4-1]





### Heart

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING, AFFECTIVE NEEDS, SENSITIVITY, ATTITUDES AND SELF-EFFICACY

- Nurture care and respect for living things and natural areas.
- Ask and record questions about what draws the students' attention and create space for students to find their own answers.
- Make time for, and model awareness and observation during time outdoors including play, quiet time, and reflection (goal: make this part of your routine with consistency and increased frequency).
- Build community and interpersonal skills like active listening within the classroom.
- Work productively and collaboratively, both independently and as a member of a small group or team. Identify clear purpose for group/team work and outcomes.
- Discuss feelings and connections that students have and make when they are outside. Model self-reflection.
- Learn to rely on ourselves and on each other.
- Model and identify empathy and humility.
- Foster openness to new opportunities, ideas, and ways of thinking.
- Learn how to disagree.



### Hands

ACTION AND SERVICE

- Create time for cooperative and social play in natural settings.
- Support a classmate—promote acts of kindness.
- Define more complex problems, based on evidence, in the school.
- Take action to make a positive impact or solve a problem in the school.
- Allow for place-making opportunities for students to design and have a voice in the school community.



### Feet

CONNECTION TO PLACE

- Build appreciation of, and familiarity with, surroundings—natural and built, including wildlife, people, plants, and neighborhood structures (streets, buildings).
- Develop understanding of our natural and cultural communities that extend from the school community to the local scale.
- Organize field trips that get students outside the classroom to see something from a new perspective.
- Allow for multiple encounters with an expanded place over time.
- Provide outdoor opportunities for students to be adventurous, imaginative, and quiet, both with and without academic tasks to accomplish.
- Encourage exploration of nature in connected green spaces, open spaces, and parks.
- Begin to expand from the schoolyard into a local natural area (greenbelt, stream, field or partner field trip).



## Recommended Activities

Activities listed are intended to provide inspiration for how to connect to a local natural area, or plan a field trip with a partner organization.

- Provide for self-guided time outside daily - make this a regular part of your daily schedule.
- Take walks through the schoolyard or neighboring areas (naturalized or not) to record changes over time and questions about observations.
- Explore a local natural habitat to identify flora, fauna, and signs of wildlife.
- Engage in gardening and habitat improvement.
- Compare/contrast regional animal/ecosystems communities to human communities.  
[CAS: SC.3.LS.1]  
[NGSS: 3-LS4-3]
- Conduct seasonal comparisons of local natural/human environments and the activities of wildlife and people in the community.
- Follow the life cycle of a common product (i.e., paper, plastic, aluminum) from manufacturing to use to recycling and visit a recycling/waste management facility.
- Observe the life cycles of classroom animals and plants including ladybugs, painted lady butterflies, silk moths, meal worms, and Wisconsin Fast Plants (rapid radish/brassica).  
[CAS: SC.3.LS.1]  
[NGSS: 3-LS1-1]
- Participate in a Citizen Science program.
- Provide opportunities to transfer skills learned in one context to new lessons or investigations (ex. use of tools like the hand lens - practice use indoors, then take outside to investigate).

