

## James Farm Activity

Recommended for first grade but can be adapted for other grade levels. It is designed to correlate with curricular resource Organisms from Science and Technology for Children (STC).

**Challenge:** Can you find out what lives in a small space in nature at James Farm?

### Materials:

Hula Hoops (to define the boundaries of their small space), clipboards, pencils, hand lenses or paper, towel tube, or rolled paper for focusing on the small areas of their space, a set of handouts for each group to record observations.

### Procedures for the teacher:

1. Classes will meet at the benches. Teacher will go over rules and procedures for the day.
2. Students will be divided into three groups, one for each location on James Farm. Within the groups, students can work as teams or individually.
3. Each group will go to a different location and then rotate (beach, woods, grassy area).
4. Students will choose a place to do their observation. Using their hula-hoop to define their small space, students will observe their space and record what they see on the recording sheet. They may take turns drawing or writing their observations on the handout sheets. Adults will remind the students that they will be looking for animals and plants inside their small space. Adults may lead the observation by asking the following questions:
  - Can you find the smallest thing that is living? Nonliving?
  - Can you identify the thing that you observed?
  - Can you find the biggest thing that is living? Nonliving?
5. After about 10 minutes, students will try to find a critter in their space. Observe the critter as long as it stays in the circle but no more than 10 minutes. If you don't find a living critter ask the students why they think that there are no critters in their circle?
6. List all of the things that the critter does. Try to determine where the critter is going or what it is doing. (Optional – move the circle to find a critter)

- What do you think the critter will find to eat in this small space?
  - Will it find shelter in the space?
7. At a determined time, students will rotate to another location so that all students will be observing at each location. Activities are repeated with each group.

After all students have observed and recorded their information at each location, they will meet back at the benches to discuss their findings.

**Extensions:**

Compare each location at James Farm for likenesses and differences.

Compare a location at your school to James Farm.

Students can research the critter that they found by using books and computers back at school.

Write a story about your critter.

Make a model of your critter.

## What Do You Find in Small Spaces?

**Challenge:** Can you find out what lives in a small space in nature at James Farm?

Your job is to look inside the circle to find plants and animals.  
Take turns drawing what you find in the circle on your worksheets.

