

Kid Naturalist

Guidelines for Parents and Teachers

Why nurture a kid naturalist?

Today with the busy life of parents and time spent on private tuition kids tend to spend their time indoors, in front of TVs, computers, mobile phones, tabs etc. instead of playing and exploring outdoors. Although teachers and parents push them to learn identification of different logos, signals, flowers, leaves in their text books, some kids of today find it difficult to name just five native plants or animal species in their home or school garden practically. Therefore, if we want to raise our next generation to be concerned and responsible environmental guardians, we need to teach them to love, respect, and know their own local natural environment and have protective instincts towards them. Thus, as a motivation to develop environment friendly nation, the NSF open the Kid Naturalist programme as a competition for kids in Grade 1-5 to ensure them utilizing their time productively during this enforced school vacation. This will be conducted as an island wide competition among students of government recognized schools in the country.



How parents or teachers can guide their kids to explore nature?

If you are living in a house surrounded by a garden or village, where your kids can walk around give them time and freedom to explore it on their own while giving your guidance and protection. Few things you can do are indicated below:

- ✗ You can guide your kid to find some medicinal plants in your surroundings, select 01 plant which your kid like most and ask him/her to explore and record the details of the plant, where it grows, its appearance, whether it grows as a plant, tree, bush, or vain, whether it is flowering, bear fruits or other etc. Uses of it as medicine and also as food item etc. You can guide them to press the whole plant or parts of the plant and paste them in the journal with specific identification features and with descriptions. Guide kid to find medicinal value of the plant selected from an elder or indigenous medical doctor in your village to get correct information about the plant.
- ✗ Observe birds visiting your garden, select one species and record its behavior, foraging habits (e.g. ground feeder etc.) food pattern, living as flock, pair or in solitude. Draw pictures using pastel, water colour etc. record its movements with time of the day. Do observations daily within a period of two weeks. Guide him/her to find futher information from web, books etc.
- ✗ Take some time to observe the insects (bugs, beetles, butterflies etc.) in your garden with your child. Observe them closely with a magnifying glass. Observe the colors and how they protect themselves (do they sting?), and how they work together to build a home (an ant hill is a great example of an insect colony). Keep record of one species, draw pictures of the insect and observe its nest etc. Find more informaion through web,books etc.
- ✗ Plant some vegetable seeds and record the growth (Height) with time series until harvesting. Draw pictures of the changes.
- ✗ Ask your kid to observe the sky with time changes occurs during the day time, before or after rain, different cloud patterns. Get more information of cloud patterns through web, books etc.



What kid has to do?

- × Record observations using words, drawings etc. with date and time
- × Allow kid to write his/her own observations, draw pictures, paste pressed & dried flowers, leaves etc. If kid find it difficult to write his/her observations ask him/her to draw what he/she has observed.
- × Allow kid to be innovative, use artistic skills to create nature journal.
- × Do not use pictures taken from books, internet or other sources and typed texts in the journal.
- × Try to avoid using photographs as much as possible. Use a few photographs taken during observations, only if it is extremely necessary.

Criteria for application

1. Within age limit 06-10 (Be in Grades 1-5)
2. Direction and supervision can be provided by a parent, a teacher or an adult.
3. Student can participate in the above competition by preparing a journal based on his/her observations during a period of 1 month.
4. Use A4 papers one-side
5. Only use 10-20 pages only
6. One student can submit one journal.
7. Use a suitable method to arrange pages to give good finishing to the journal.
8. Use the format given as a guidance but do not restrict your child coming up with his/her own format
9. The project should be a student own activity and if unnecessary influence and contribution of an adult are detected, NSF has the sole authority to reject the application.

10. All the projects should be submitted with the certification of parent as student own activity and after the school is open the certification of class teacher should be submitted through the school Principal on request of the NSF.
11. Application : If a student wishes to participate the Kid Naturalist Competition organized by the NSF, the application should be submitted on or before 15th August 2020. Please indicate "Kid Naturalist 2020" as the subject and Email to maduka@nsf.gov.lk or send a WatsApp message to 0713216023.
12. Journal : Completed journal should be submitted on or before 18th September 2020 as per the given guideline. Please indicate "Kid Naturalist 2020" as the subject of the Email (maduka@nsf.gov.lk / abhimani@nsf.gov.lk).
13. The final decision of the competition will be the decision of the Panel of Judges. No grievances or appeals will be entertained once the winners are announced.
14. The winners will be rewarded in a national award ceremony organized by the NSF considering the prevailing health and security situation in the country.



For further information:

Please visit www.nsf.gov.lk

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