



# 'Sense' of Place

## Grade K Standards

GPS.SKP1.b,  
SKL1.a,c,  
SSKCG1.a,b; NGSS.  
K.LS1.C, K.ESS.3.A

## Time

(3) 45 minute periods over 3 days

## Supplies

(per student)

- Pencil and crayons
- "What's Alive in the Garden?" sorting chart for living/non-living
- "Sensory Scavenger Hunt" sheet
- Garden Drawing paper
- Clipboard
- Place mat, table cloth or something else to sit on

(per class)

- Markers
- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Pack of sticky notes
- 4 Soccer cones (boundary markers)
- Whistle, duck call or sound-maker
- Book, such as:  
Is It Living or Non-Living?  
by Rebecca Rissman OR  
What's Alive?  
by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld
- A garden pot and sensory-stimulating plants

## Garden Connection

This lesson will take place in the school garden (or in the schoolyard, if no garden exists). Students may create or expand a sensory garden by contributing a plant petting zoo in a pot.

## Overview

Based on their observations and experience, students will propose their own guidelines for garden safety and learning outside. Students will then go on a Sensory Scavenger Hunt to explore the school garden using all five senses. Later, students will use powers of observation to sort things in the garden into living and non-living categories and discern what distinguishes the two.

## Guiding Questions

Where is the garden and what can I do there?

How can I use my senses to discover the garden?

How can I use my senses to discern patterns of what organisms need to survive, so I can distinguish between living and non-living things?

## Engaging Students

After brainstorming ways to stay safe, work well outside, and protect other living things, students will propose their own guidelines for being in the garden. Students will then go on a 'Sensory Scavenger Hunt,' which challenges them to use all their senses to discover the garden.

## Exploration

Students will further explore the garden to create lists of living and non-living things they observe and use those lists to discover patterns and create criteria for distinguishing between living and non-living. Students will listen to a book about living and non-living things and then collect and sort objects in the garden into living and non-living categories, identifying patterns they can use to distinguish between living organisms and non-living objects.

## Explanation

Students will be able to explain the 'garden guidelines'; argue from evidence about whether something is alive or not; and describe the garden in terms of five senses.

## Environmental Stewardship

Post Garden Guidelines in the garden so that other students know how to behave appropriately. Create or expand the school garden's sensory effects by selecting, planting and contributing plants that stimulate the senses.

## Evaluation

A rubric is included to help assess student proficiency in behaving according to the Garden Guidelines, using senses and powers of observation, and distinguishing between living and non-living things.

## Standards

### Georgia Performance Standards in Science

SKP1. Students will describe objects in terms of the materials they are made of and their physical properties

b. Use senses to classify common materials, such as buttons or swatches of cloth, according to their physical attributes (color, size, shape, weight, texture, buoyancy, flexibility).

SKL1: Recognize the difference between living organisms and nonliving materials.

a. Recognize the difference between living organisms and nonliving materials.

c. Group plants according to their observable features such as appearance, size, etc.

SKL2. Students will compare the similarities and differences in groups of organisms.

b. Explain the similarities and differences in plants. (color, size, appearance, etc.)

### Next Generation Science Standards

K.LS1.C: Organization for Matter and Energy Flow in Organisms

All animals need food in order to live and grow. They obtain their food from plants or from other animals. Plants need water and light to live and grow. (K-LS1-1)

K.ESS3.A: Natural Resources

Living things need water, air, and resources from the land, and they live in places that have the things they need. Humans use natural resources for everything they do. (K-ESS3-1)

### Georgia Performance Standards in Social Studies

SSKCG1 The student will demonstrate an understanding of good citizenship.

a. Explain how rules are made and why.

b. Explain why rules should be followed.

## Teacher Background

Gardens can be designed to stimulate all the senses. For tips on how to increase the sensual appeal of the school garden, as well as a plant list for each sense, check out this article on “Gardening for the Senses”:

<http://www.gardenforever.com/pages/artsenses.htm>

Using all their senses, students will be making observations to determine which things in the garden are alive and which are non-living. Students will detect patterns in their observations of living and non-living things and will use those patterns to establish criteria for deciding whether things they encounter in the future are living or non-living. This lesson introduces kindergarten students to the idea of arguing from evidence and developing critical thinking skills. To brush up on the criteria for determining whether something is living or non-living, check out this unit guide from Science A-Z:

<http://www.sciencea-z.com/scienceweb/unit/Living/Non-Living?unitId=24>

## Teacher Preparation

Obtain supplies for the lesson.

Make a copy of the “What’s Alive in the Garden?” Living vs Non-Living Sorting Chart for each student (pg 7 of this lesson)

Make a copy of the “Sensory Scavenger Hunt” form for each student (pg 6 of this lesson)

Make a two-sided copy of the “Garden Drawing” sheet or mark separate drawings Day 1 and Day 2, for future comparison (pg 5 of this lesson)

Enlarge one copy of the Sensory Scavenger Hunt form to take outside.

Mark the boundaries of the garden area in which students can move about to discover and explore, using soccer cones.

Scope out the garden in advance, identifying fruits, vegetables or greens that can be safely taste-tested, as well as plants that can be touched. Wash the food and cut into bites for tasting, and harvest sprigs of the touchable plant(s) to pass around.

Recommended additional reading with students:

- [Tops and Bottoms](#) by Janet Stevens
- [Is it Alive?](#) By Marcia Freeman
- [Living and Nonliving](#) by Angela Royston Living or (same title) by Carol K. Linden
- [What is a Living Thing?](#) By Bobbie Kalman

## PROCEDURES FOR LESSON ACTIVITIES

### Day One

#### Engagement

- **Garden Guidelines:** Explain that the class will be learning in the garden but before they can go out, they will need to brainstorm ways to stay safe; work well, be productive, and stay on task while outside; and how to protect other living things. Write down all suggestions and choose the most important or supplement the list to create a final set of Garden Guidelines. Later, make copies of the guidelines for each student to sign, laminate a poster-sized list of the guidelines to place outdoors, or otherwise ensure that students are reminded of the guidelines before each trip outside. Some suggested guidelines to include: come immediately when a special call is sounded, stay with a partner at all times, always remain inside the soccer cones or boundary markers.
- **First Garden Drawings:** Gather lesson supplies, assign partners, give each student a clipboard and a place mat, and lead them outside. At the garden, have students sit immediately on their mats. Give students a chance to sit quietly and observe the garden, either in pairs or in a circle. Pass out the Garden Drawing paper and crayons. Make sure student put their names and dates on the paper. Tell them everyone will be quiet while they draw pictures of the garden so they will not scare wildlife away and can listen for any garden sounds.
- **Introduction to the Senses:** After a few minutes of drawing, engage students in a discussion about using their senses to perceive the garden. Have students name the five senses. Pass out pencils and copies of the Sensory Scavenger Hunt form for students to fasten on their clipboards. Explain that they will have five minutes to wander around the garden making observations and completing the scavenger hunt by writing or drawing one thing they sense in each category. Note that they are not allowed to taste anything or touch any plants while exploring on their own, but tasting and touching will take place when they class gets back together.
- **Sensory Scavenger Hunt:** Show where the boundary makers are located and let students hear the special call or whistle. When it sounds one time, all students should run back to the “home base” where the teacher is standing and sit on the ground as quietly and as quickly as possible. Release students to go on the Sensory Scavenger Hunt and let them know you will test the call-back system to see how it works. Within a minute after students start their exploration, recall the class by sounding the special call or whistle just once. When they have reassembled, thank them and release them to explore again. While students are exploring, set up the poster-sized enlargement of the Sensory Scavenger Hunt Form so everyone can see it. After a few minutes of scavenging call the class back and, when everyone is seated, pass around washed food from the garden that can be taste-tested (for example bites of fruit, vegetables, or mint). Then pass around sprigs of a garden plant that can safely be touched. Herbs that are aromatic when crushed, such as rosemary, basil and oregano, make good plants to touch and smell.
- **Sensory Discussion:** Ask students what they observed and perceived with their senses, while exploring the garden area. Teacher may list these observations and perceptions or give each student a sticky note and let them draw their favorite thing from the Scavenger Hunt and attach the note to the poster under the sense used to discover it. Encourage students to use descriptive words – especially adjectives – when telling about things they sensed. If students collected specimens of things in the garden, bring them back to the classroom for Day 2 of this lesson.

### Day Two: In the Garden (or the classroom)

#### Exploration

- **Living vs Non-Living:** Take the class outside as before, carrying clipboards, book, What’s Alive in the Garden copies, soccer cones, pencils, and any specimens kept from Day 1. Read aloud a book about living and non-living things, such as Rebecca Rissman’s *Is it Living or Non-Living?*
- Ask students how they decide if something is living or non-living? Supplement students’ list to include these criteria, all of which must be met for something to be considered living.
  - Eats or makes its own food
  - Breathes or respire (plants exchange gases through tiny holes in their leaves)
  - Moves or has moving parts (inside or out)
  - Removes waste from its system (plants release waste gases through tiny holes in their leaves)
  - Grows and develops
  - Sensitive and reactive to surroundings
  - Produce young, seeds, or eggs
- Pass out the “What’s Alive in the Garden?” copies and tell students whether they should use it as a sorting chart by placing objects on either side, or to draw things that they observe in the garden that are living or non-living.

## **Explanation**

- After allowing a few minutes to sort or draw, bring the class together to consider whether several items are living or non-living, asking students to give reasons and challenge each other if they disagree. It will be easier for students to rule out something from the living category (to determine it is non-living) than to definitively identify it as living.

## **Day 3: In the Garden**

### **Environmental Stewardship**

- Post the Garden Guidelines for other classes to see and use.
- The class may also wish to contribute to the garden by adding plants that stimulate the senses, such as herbs (smell and taste), plants with textured leaves for a plant petting zoo in a pot (touch), or flowering plants. Consider the plants on these lists, as possibilities: <http://www.gardenforever.com/pages/artssenses.htm> and try to select species native to the area.

### **Evaluation**

- Give students an opportunity to create a second garden drawing, while sitting in the garden. Remind students to use all their senses to experience the garden, while they are drawing. This drawing will be compared to the first drawing, so make sure the date is noted. A rubric is provided to assess student proficiency in lesson activities.

# My Garden Drawing

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 1? 2?

# Sensory Scavenger Hunt in the Garden

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



I heard \_\_\_\_\_



I saw \_\_\_\_\_



I smelled \_\_\_\_\_



I tasted \_\_\_\_\_



I touched \_\_\_\_\_

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# What's Alive in the Garden?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**LIVING  
THINGS**



**NON-LIVING  
THINGS**

# Assessment for Sense of Place

Student Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p style="text-align: center;">Level of Mastery</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Benchmark or Performance Measure</p> 	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>EMERGING</b> Not yet proficient 1 point</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMPETENT</b> Partially proficient 4 points</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROFICIENT</b> Mastered task with 80%+ proficiency 5 points</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOTAL POINTS</b></p>
<p><b>Student uses five senses to perceive the garden while on a Sensory Scavenger Hunt and later communicates impressions and observations verbally.</b></p>	<p>“Sensory Scavenger Hunt” form is incomplete. Student can tell about the garden verbally but does not use adjectives to describe the garden.</p>	<p>Sensory Scavenger Hunt form is completed. Student can tell about the garden and uses some adjectives to describe observations and perceptions.</p>	<p>Sensory Scavenger Hunt form is completed and student uses adjectives when describing observations and perceptions related to all five senses OR can do so when prompted.</p>	
<p><b>Student’s powers of observation and perception are growing.</b></p>	<p>Little or no difference between pictures of the garden drawn on Day 1 and Day 2 of this lesson.</p>	<p>1 or 2 more details or additional items or labels included in drawing of garden on Day 2.</p>	<p>Drawing of the garden on Day 2 contains substantially greater detail or additional items compared to drawing from Day 1.</p>	
<p><b>When using “What’s Alive in the Garden” sorting chart, student demonstrates some understanding of the differences between living and nonliving things and can identify reasons for making these distinctions.</b></p>	<p>Student categorizes living and non-living things in the garden with 50% accuracy or less and cannot identify patterns or suggest rules of thumb for distinguishing between living and non-living things.</p>	<p>Student categorizes items in the garden as living or non-living with 50 - 80% accuracy and can suggest one or two ways to show something should NOT be considered living.</p>	<p>Student categorizes living and non-living things in the garden with 80% accuracy, and argues from evidence why something should NOT be considered living. Clarification: it is not necessary for a student to list all characteristics of living things.</p>	
<p><b>Student understands and behaves according to Garden Guidelines</b></p>	<p>Cannot recall the Garden Guidelines and/or abides by them less than 50% of the time.</p>	<p>Recalls the Garden Guidelines and abides by them most of the time.</p>	<p>Recalls the Garden Guidelines and abides by them almost all the time.</p>	