

BACKYARD BIOLOGIST:

AN ASTROBIOLOGY ADVENTURE AT HOME!



Dear Families,

Today, your child explored the exciting world of astrobiology, imagining extraterrestrial life inspired by "Horton Hears a Who." Now, they get to be a **Backyard Biologist** and discover the wonders of life right in their own backyard or neighborhood!

MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A magnifying glass (if you have one) • A notebook/paper • A camera (phone camera is great!)
ACTIVITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploration Time! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Grab your materials and take a walk in your backyard, a nearby park, or even just around the block. 2. Observe Like a Scientist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Look closely at the ground, plants, trees, and any small spaces. ◦ Search for tiny living things: insects, worms, spiders, or even microscopic organisms (like mold or algae on a rock). ◦ Notice the different environments: sunny spots, shady areas, wet or dry places. ◦ Pay attention to textures, colors, and patterns. 3. Document Your Discoveries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Draw: Sketch the living things you find. Include details like size, shape, and color. ◦ Photograph: Take pictures of your discoveries. ◦ Write: Describe what you see. Use words like "tiny," "crawling," "flying," "smooth," "rough," "wet," or "dry." ◦ Ask questions like: "Where did I find this organism?" "What do I think it eats?" "How does it move?" 4. Share Your Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Bring your drawings, photos, and descriptions to share with the class. Discuss what you learned about the different living things in your neighborhood. ◦ Talk about how the environment affects where living things can live.

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CONNECTING TO ASTROBIOLOGY

- Just like astrobiologists search for life on other planets, you're searching for life in your own "small world."
- You're using tools (your eyes, magnifying glass, camera) to observe and document your findings, just like scientists do.
- You're exploring different environments and thinking about what living things need to survive, which is a key part of astrobiology.
- By observing the diversity of life around you, you'll gain a better understanding of how amazing and adaptable life can be!

Have fun exploring and discovering the hidden wonders of your backyard!

