

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**In the fall...**

1. Adopt a vacant lot and keep it clean. Consider planting flowers to beautify the area. Be sure you have permission to be on the property, and always take a friend or adult with you.
2. Create a family compost pile ([http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/composting/by\\_compost.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/composting/by_compost.htm)). Add both 'wet' waste (kitchen scraps, grass clippings) and 'dry' waste (dry leaves or hay) in layers. Add some water as you go. Fruit and vegetable material is acceptable for compost; never add raw meat, eggs, or human or pet waste.
3. Consider feeding worms as part of worm composting project (<http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/worms.htm>).
4. Using a butterfly net, go out and collect some insects. Note how many different types you find, and where you found them. Repeat the activity during a different season and see how your findings differ. (Be sure to be gentle with the bugs and let them go when you are finished observing them.)
5. Keep a record of the dates that leaves fall from trees. (Save the record; you'll need it in the spring.)
6. Create a list of backyard responsibilities for each member of the family to do and rotate jobs each month. Jobs could include raking leaves, shoveling snow, putting away toys, etc. Make sure everyone takes a turn at each one.
7. Plant a 'birthday garden' the next time someone in your family has a birthday. Instead of presents, guests should bring local plants to contribute to the garden. During the party invite everyone to plant what they brought. If conditions aren't right for planting, guests could bring a packet of seeds, a potted plant, or other garden-related gifts.
8. Keep track of how much rainfall your area gets in each month. How does your data compare with the monthly averages (<http://www.met.utah.edu/jhorel/html/wx/climate/normrain.html>) for your area?
9. Get your local forecast, make your own weather station, check out "The Weather Dude," and much more at the Kids Weather Pages ([http://illiniweather.com/pages/kids\\_weather\\_links.htm](http://illiniweather.com/pages/kids_weather_links.htm)).
10. Calculate the daily water usage (<http://www.dcwasa.com/kids/activities/dailywaterusage.html>) in your school. Start a school wide campaign encouraging everyone to use less water.
11. Help Monarch butterflies (<http://www.monarchwatch.org/>) by creating a way station, growing milkweed, or even raising Monarchs.
12. If you care about beaches and waterways, volunteer for the International Coastal Cleanup (<http://www.coastalcleanup.org/index.cfm>), on September 17.
13. Research the kinds of wildlife that migrate in your area. Map their migration paths.
14. On September 22, the Autumnal Equinox, you can find ideas to celebrate the changing of the season at [equinox-and-solstice.com](http://equinox-and-solstice.com).
15. Is the water in your community healthy? Register online in September to test a lake, stream, or other body of water for World Water Monitoring Day (<http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/>) every September 18.
16. "Get your hands dirty and keep your public lands beautiful" on September 24, National Public Lands Day (<http://www.npld.com/>).
17. Start a new hobby ([http://www.stamps.org/kids/kid\\_StampFun.htm](http://www.stamps.org/kids/kid_StampFun.htm)) in November, Stamp Collecting Month.
18. Get involved on America Recycles Day (<http://www.americarecyclesday.org/>) every November. Take an inventory of your family's trash. Classify the trash by type (food, paper, plastic, etc.) and make note of what could have been recycled or reduced somehow. Come up with suggestions to reduce your family's trash production. Don't forget to wear gloves when you do this, and wash your hands thoroughly after handling the trash.
19. Explore and honor diverse cultures in your community through *Geography Action!* (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction/>).
20. Participate in Geography Awareness Week (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction/>), each third week in November.

21. Learn how Geographic Information Systems are used in your community on November 16- GIS Day (<http://www.gisday.com/>).
22. USA Freedom Corps for Kids (<http://www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov>) gives you ideas for ways to improve your neighborhood. You can even win an award!
23. During World Space Week (<http://www.worldspaceweek.org/>) (October 4–10), keep track of what's up in space (<http://www.space.com/>). Mark upcoming events—flights in space, sky events visible in your area—on a calendar.
24. Use online astronomy resources (<http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy.html>) to track meteor showers, eclipses, and other events in the sky.
25. Find out what your birth constellation is, and when it is visible in the Northern Hemisphere. Visit a planetarium to see it.
26. What happened today, in history? (<http://www.historychannel.com/tdih>) Has the event affected you?
27. See if you share your birthday with someone famous. (<http://www.famousbirthdays.com>)
28. On a calendar, mark international, national, and state holidays (<http://www.holidaysmart.com>) that you would like to celebrate. Celebrate holidays (<http://www.theholidayzone.com>) with games, food, music, or crafts.

### In the winter...

1. Using potted plants, compare their growth if you use fertilizer and plant food to their growth if you don't. Make sure sunlight and watering conditions are the same.
2. Adopt a neighbor who could use some extra help. Lend a hand with shoveling snow, scraping ice from a car, yard work, taking out trash and recycling, or walking a dog.
3. Take a neighborhood inventory. Count houses, apartments, and/or cars per block in different parts of town. Consider reasons for the differences you observe.
4. Inventory your cupboards and note where each product was made. Using a map (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/>), mark the country in which each product originated. Do most of your products come from one region of the world? If so, why do you think that is true? Which products came from farthest away?
5. Create a work of art made entirely of recycled objects (<http://www.kinderart.com/recycle/>). Using your family or school's recycling bin, collect cans, jars, and other recyclables. Add discarded wood or paper to create your artwork.
6. Use recycled objects (<http://www.kinderart.com/recycle>) to make a holiday gift.
7. During the holidays, recycle wrapping paper and ribbons.
8. Take a walk and collect rocks. When you get home sort the rocks by type or appearance. Try a different route and see if you find different types of rocks.
9. Create a piece of local art made entirely out of products produced or found in your community. This could include plants, sticks, rocks, newspapers, etc.
10. In March, celebrate National Nutrition Month by creating a recipe out of locally grown foods. Don't include anything that wasn't produced in your area. Write up the recipe including information about how and where each product was grown.
11. Compare your neighborhood with another nearby neighborhood. Note differences in amount of houses and apartments, size of yards, and amount of green space. Be sure to take an adult with you when exploring a new neighborhood.
12. Look for animal (<http://www.bear-tracker.com/mammals.html>) and bird ([http://www.biokids.umich.edu/guides/signs/tracks\\_b1.html](http://www.biokids.umich.edu/guides/signs/tracks_b1.html)) tracks in the mud or snow.
13. Keep a tally of the amount and types of birds visiting your yard. Do they have food, water, and shelter? Turn your yard into a Backyard Habitat (<http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat>). Do more birds visit your "habitat friendly" yard?
14. Instead of throwing away items such as margarine tubs, jelly jars, or milk cartons, think of other uses for them. You can find ideas at <http://www.kinderart.com/recycle>.



15. Who invented Scotch tape? When was paper invented? Explore inventors and inventions (<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/inventors/>). What do you think should be invented? Get advice for inventors (<http://www.drfaq.com/>).
16. Why do animals hibernate? How do they prepare for the winter? Build a “bear den” or other “hibernation home.” Do people act differently in the winter? How?
17. Germs are more likely to spread in winter. What kind of “bugs” are people in your area getting? How can you stay healthy?
18. Celebrate Chinese New Year (<http://kidsdomain.com/holiday/chineseny.html>) by making a dragon or preparing traditional Chinese foods.
19. Cook or bake something with peanut butter in March to celebrate National Peanut Month. (<http://www.peanutbutterlovers.com/>).
20. Volunteer to keep your community safe and beautiful during the Great American Cleanup (<http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=gaclanding>) from March 1 to May 31, annually.
21. Roll up your sleeves and make a fun toy (<http://www.sciencetoymaker.org/>).
22. Check the labels of your clothes to see where they were made. Using a map (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/>), mark the country in which each piece of clothing was made. Do most of your clothes come from one region of the world? If so, why do you think that is true? Which clothes came from farthest away?
23. Create an online learning activity (<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/index.html>) (treasure hunt, web quest, etc.), and then challenge your friends to play it.

### In the spring...

1. Dig down up to six inches into the soil. Find and record all the critters (bugs, worms, etc.) that live in the dirt.
2. Plant a butterfly garden and make note of any butterflies using the garden.
3. Plant seeds that will result in a particular pattern of flowers when they bloom. Take pictures to document your design.
4. Use your eyes, hands, and nose to investigate the soil. Is it moist? Sandy? Muddy? Does it have any particular odor?
5. Plant a small garden (<http://www.kidsgardening.com/>) of flowers, vegetables, or whatever you want. You can do this in your yard, on your balcony ([http://www.mastergardenproducts.com/gardenerscorner/balcony\\_gardening.htm](http://www.mastergardenproducts.com/gardenerscorner/balcony_gardening.htm)), or even inside!
6. Take an inventory of the different types of plants ([http://www.enature.com/guides/select\\_LBJNative.asp](http://www.enature.com/guides/select_LBJNative.asp)) growing in your neighborhood. Which type is dominant?
7. Collect and identify ([http://www.enature.com/guides/select\\_LBJNative.asp](http://www.enature.com/guides/select_LBJNative.asp)) rocks from your neighborhood. How many different kinds can you find?
8. Put out food to attract birds and squirrels to your yard; note who comes to eat it.
9. Harvest your garden (<http://www.backyardgardener.com/veg/>) to feed your family.
10. Explore your neighborhood to see what different types of plants grow in different conditions (shade versus sun, dry versus wet, etc.)
11. Dig up some soil from a few different areas in your neighborhood. Use the soil to plant and grow the same type of small potted plant. Which plant grows the best? What does this tell you about the soils?
12. Choose a new plant or plants to observe throughout the growing season. Starting when sprouts first appear out of the ground, measure the growth each week. Make note of the timing of the appearance of buds, flowers, etc.
13. Find the record you made in autumn of the dates that leaves fell from trees. In the springtime, watch the trees and note the date that buds first appear. How many months of the year are there leaves on the trees?



14. Investigate how microorganisms affect plant growth. Take two soil samples from the same plot and bake one in the oven to destroy microorganisms. Label two pots and plant the same type of seeds in each soil sample. Make sure other conditions are the same and record their growth over time.
15. Make a kite in April, for National Kite Month (<http://www.nationalkitemonth.org/kids>).
16. Host an Earth Day celebration (<http://www.allspecies.org/neighbor/blocka.htm>) on your block. Organize a block party and share your concerns about the local environment with your neighbors. After the party, groups could go out and pick up trash, work on a neighbor's garden, or help maintain a local greenway.
17. Plant a tree on Arbor Day (<http://www.arborday.org/kids/carly/>).
18. Make your neighborhood a better place. Volunteer to pick up trash, repair playground equipment, or other fun activity on Join Hands Day (<http://www.joinhandsday.org>), May 6, annually.
19. Plot the path of a tropical storm on a map. Record data from different storms. Try to predict whether or not a storm will become a hurricane.
20. Remove weeds or plants that are not native to your area.
21. Give away toys you no longer use and clothes you've outgrown to charity.
22. Under the supervision of an adult, investigate how to safely store, use, and dispose of cleaning products, fertilizer, oil, and other harmful substances. What types of products would be safe for the environment?
23. Peak tornado season in the U.S. occurs March through May. Make a virtual tornado (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/forcesofnature/>).
24. Do you know what to do if there is a tornado? With your family, discuss how to prepare for a tornado (<http://www.fema.gov/kids/tornado.htm>).
25. Spring showers can wash lawn clippings, trash, and other material into storm drains, and eventually to the ocean. Stencil storm drains to help keep the ocean clean.
26. During National Wildlife Week (<http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlifeweek/>), investigate ways to create habitats for local wildlife.
27. If you live in an area where sea turtles (<http://www.kidsconnect.com/Turtles/TurtlesHome.html>) nest, find out how you can help keep them safe from harm.
28. Start clowning around in National Fitness Month (May), to see if you're Circus Fit (<http://www.circusfit.com/>).
29. On a rainy day, explore games, activities, experiments, and more online at National Geographic Kids (<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/>).

### In the summer...

1. Research ways to save water during summer, such as watering the lawn early in the morning or late in the day, using drip irrigation, using a bucket instead of a hose to wash the car.
2. Research a place for a family vacation that everyone would enjoy. How would you get there (car, plane, train, bus)? How much would it cost (travel, lodging, food, entertainment)?
3. Explore local places and events that are free, such as museums, zoos, libraries, community concerts, and agricultural fairs.
4. Make a treasure hunt for your friends. Clues could be "Which house has a mailbox in the shape of a \_\_\_\_? "Name three intersections with four-way stop signs." Give each person a sheet of paper with all the clues. The first person to return with correct answers wins. Limit the area of the hunt to an area that is safe.

### Anytime...

1. Prepare for disasters (<http://www.fema.gov/kids>) by making a family disaster kit and having a family disaster plan.
2. Go online daily for National Geographic News (<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/>) about animals, the environment, science, and more. Is Bigfoot a hoax? How can you tell if someone is lying? Delve into the science behind the news with the Why Files (<http://whyfiles.org>).

