



Living Lab Program

Thematic Grade-Specific Activities

In-Person Field Trips

These field trips/workshops are in-person at the Bellevue Botanical Garden with a choice of the thematic grade-specific workshops listed below. We can take up to 50 students. If you have more students than that, you will need to request two dates.

Workshop Descriptions with suggested grade levels:

“Tree”mendous Trees (Kindergarten): Students learn about leaves and types of trees with the focus on patterns and observation. They will learn about the properties of leaves, make a leaf rubbing, and make individual observations of a leaf using their senses. They will also learn about the parts of trees and their functions and do a role play. Students will sort items made and not made from tree materials and make two items from wood materials to take home: a wooden pendant and a paper plate with their age in tree rings. While walking in the Garden the focus will be on types of trees, leaves and bark texture. (FOSS: Trees & Weather)

Zany Worms (Kindergarten): Students learn about two kinds of worms: nightcrawlers and red worms. They will examine live worms and compare them. We talk about composting and how some worms are composters, and some are not. The Garden walk covers looking at soils and talking about compost and the decomposers that live at the Garden. (FOSS: Animals Two by Two)

Happy Habitats (1st grade) –In the animal adaptations section, students are challenged to find out which bird beaks work best with different bird foods. They will do a bird puppet craft and have an opportunity to explore insect homes and life cycles. In the second part, the focus is on food webs. They will also tour parts of the Garden with a focus on bird habitats. (FOSS: Plants and Animals)

Flower Power (1st grade): Students are challenged to figure out the “power of the flower.” Students will use hand lenses to observe and learn about flower parts and their function. A role-play is used to help them learn about the parts of a flower. They learn about the relationship between pollinators and flowers by making paper butterflies and playing a pollination game. The walk through the garden focuses on looking for pollinators and at flower parts.



Super Soils (2nd Grade): Students are challenged to find the best soil for a specific plant. By observing four soils (pebbles, sand, clay [silt] and loam) students learn to identify each. They then experiment with “perk” tests for each soil type to discover the rate at which water percolates (flows) through them. Parts of the scientific method are highlighted. They learn about the composition of soil, follow a soil recipe, and plant a hens-and-chicks plant to take home. The students will go for a walk through the Garden looking at different types of soil. (FOSS: Pebbles, Sand, and Silt)

Plant Power & Pollinators (2nd grade): In the workshop, students will experiment with different kinds of seeds and learn about how seeds “move.” The workshop will also cover pollination and plant parts through games and activities. Students will have the opportunity to construct a paper plant to take home. On a walk in the Garden, students will look for pollinators and plant parts. (FOSS- Insects and Plants)

Measurement Madness (3rd Grade): Students are challenged to measure the height, circumference, and density of trees at the Garden to select a “mast” for a “ship,” as was done historically in the Pacific Northwest. They will learn an estimation method to find the height of trees in the Garden. They will practice using measuring tapes to find the circumference of a tree. Students will also use balances to find the mass of wood samples to compare different types of wood. This workshop is a nice blend of science, math, and history.

Native Plants in Our Lives (4th Grade): The group is challenged to find a suitable site for a community dependent on local resources. They learn to identify 8 native plants well known to local Native Americans and learn about the plants’ uses in supporting daily needs and technology then and now. Students apply this new knowledge to a challenge in which they work together as a group to earn “survival” points and select a suitable site in the Garden where a community could thrive. They participate in a cooperative STEM problem solving activity.

Garden Design Challenge (4th or 5th grade): Students are challenged to research a specific plant and then choose where that plant would go in a simulated park environment. Students will work in small groups to locate their specific plant at the botanical Garden and report on the information they gain about the plant. This involves map reading, drawing, and some basic landscaping design skills. We talk about soil conditions, sunlight requirements, scientific names (genus, species, family), botany, landscaping, native & invasive species, topography, and climate zones. (FOSS: Environments)



Virtual field trips

Virtual field trips have allowed us to reach out to classrooms that have been unable to visit us in-person at the Garden. The field trips take place on the classroom's platform (MS Teams, Zoom, etc.). The classroom teacher acts as the moderator and the Living Lab staff serve as virtual guest instructors. See descriptions below for the two topics we are offering. There is one topic for all ages and one topic for older students.

Flower Power! (all ages, up to 1 hour)

This topic consists of a short flower dissection lesson (15 minutes) on the parts of flowering plants and then moves out into the Garden to look at examples of flower and plant parts and pollinators (45 minutes) at limited spots. Teacher resources will include a field guide workbook to share with students, resources for further activities, a standards list, and ways to connect with us after the field trip. The size of the group can be up to the classroom teacher, but we recommend a size of 20 or less if you want your students actively involved online.

Plant Identification! (Recommended for 3rd grade and up, 1.5-2 hours with a break)

This topic covers the basics of plant identification. It includes an activity on how to use a dichotomous key, online resources, and a virtual trip out to look at some plants in the Garden. Teacher resources will include a guide for further activities, a standards list, and ways to connect with us after the field trip. The size of the group can be up to the classroom teacher, but we recommend a size of 20 or less if you want your students actively involved online.

Request a Field Trip

To request a field trip, you must [submit your request online](#).

Questions?

Please [email us](#) or call 425-452-5273.