

PATTERNS IN NATURE



Lower Elementary

What Kids Do

Go for a walk and look for patterns in nature.

Before Kids Arrive

- * Make copies of Nature Walk Patterns, one per lab group.
- * Prepare a clipboard with a few blank pieces of paper and a pencil for each lab group.
- * Check your outdoor meeting place and walking path one more time to make sure these spaces are accessible and safe.

Welcome

Welcome kids as they arrive. If providing lab coats, show kids how to find their lab coats and draw pockets with a fabric marker.

Once everyone is there, walk to your outdoor gathering site and invite them to find a spot to sit on the ground. Introduce the activity and its connection to the theme. **Today we will be looking for some patterns in nature and in prayer. Are there any patterns to how we pray?** Kids may mention bowing their heads, folding their hands, and closing their eyes. They may also describe how prayers start with naming God. Prayers may include things we are thankful for or things we ask God for. Prayers usually end in *Amen*. Affirm their observations about patterns found in prayer.

In today's Bible story, we hear Jesus teaching his disciples to pray. The prayer he taught them might sound familiar to you. It follows some patterns of starting with a name for God and asking God to feed us and forgive us. We finish this prayer with an Amen.

Today we will hunt for patterns in nature. I wonder why nature has so many different patterns. Guide kids through an exploration of why diversity in nature is so important. Use this content about trees if needed. **What parts do all trees have?** Help kids name roots, trunks, branches, and leaves or needles. **These are parts of all trees, but they all look different in different kinds of trees. Those differences are what makes diversity in creation. An oak tree has leaves but it grows acorns. An apple tree has leaves but it grows apples.**

Science Concepts

Observing biodiversity, making comparisons, recognizing patterns

Supplies

- Nature Walk Patterns from page 55
- Clipboards, one per lab group
- Pencils
- Blank white paper
- Optional: lab coats and fabric markers

Tip

Scout out locations for an outdoor gathering spot and the nature walk that will last about fifteen minutes at a kid's pace. Walk the path a few times to check on accessibility and potential safety issues. Decide whether you can walk in rain or high heat and humidity.

The many patterns in nature help make God's creation diverse and healthy and mended. We'll look for some patterns on our nature walk. Show kids the Nature Walk Patterns sheet. Point out and name each pattern.

The Experiment

Guide kids through these steps.

1. Ask kids to gather in lab groups, and give each group a Nature Walk Patterns sheet. Assign Youth Leaders and Center Helpers to accompany specific lab groups of kids throughout the walk.
2. **We are going on a walk to observe patterns in nature. We can use our senses. We look, smell, touch, and hear to find the things that make patterns.**
3. Take a 15-to-20-minute walk, stopping often to take time for observation.
4. When you return to your outdoor gathering spot, pass out blank paper, pencils, and clipboards. **Your group can take turns drawing a few patterns you observed during your nature walk.**
5. Ask these questions. **What were some things you noticed during our walk? What patterns did you see? How were they diverse? I hope you remember the patterns on our walk when you pray. Prayer patterns are one part of our walk of faith. Remember that you can pray in many diverse ways and God will hear you!**

Thank your nature walkers for their observation skills and pray together before sending them to their next activity.

Dear God, thank you for feeding us and healing us and forgiving us. Help us keep talking to you with our patterns of prayer. Amen.

NATURE WALK PATTERNS

Look for these patterns on your nature walk.

