



# Meet a Plant

## Waskowitz Outdoor School



Students heighten their observation skills by observing plant characteristics.

**Time Frame:** 20-30 minutes

**Supplies:** writing boards, pencils, Meet a Plant Interview sheets, hand lenses, rulers

### **Introduction:**

Set the scene for students like the one below:

“We have some work to do today. What do you see as you look around you? (plants, trees). Yes and they are everywhere. But, they hold back a lot of secret information about themselves. Today our task will be to see how much we can uncover about the plants that live here. Imagine these plants as their own little community. What do they look like if we get up close? What kind of neighborhood do they live in? Who hangs out with them and what is going on inside? To find out, we will work in pairs. Each of you will have materials to complete your assignment. You are being sent to interview a plant. You must spend at least 3 minutes observing your plant up close before the official interview. Be sure you get to know your plant really well before you begin. A good detective watches his subject before beginning the interview process.”

“Let’s make sure we don’t leave any evidence of your work. When we are done there should be no broken branches, torn leave or major footprints. At the end of the process you should come up with a name for your plant based on its characteristics.”

### **Begin:**

1. Assign students to pairs.
2. Hand out interview sheets, hand lenses and pencils.
3. Send some pairs to a tress, some to a shrub, others to small ground cover plants.
4. Have them spend at least 3 minutes observing their plants before filling out their sheets.
5. After 5-7 minutes (or when you see attention span waning) bring the groups back together.
6. Have students answer the following questions.
  - What things were discovered about plants by looking closely? By looking from a distance?
  - What characteristics might be helpful in identifying the plant to someone else?
  - What words might be useful in describing the plant to someone else?
  - What do you think plants grow where they do?

### **Conclusion:**

- Plants have characteristics that help identify them.
- Taking a closer look at plants will help to identify those characteristics.

### **Extensions:**

1. Have student create a “WANTED” poster for their plants.
2. Create a class magazine like PEOPLE only call it PLANTS and have each pair of students submit a creative article highlighting the plant’s life.
3. Have students use their interview sheets and a field guide to find their plants real name & characteristics.

# Meet a Plant: Interview Sheet

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**This plant is as BIG as a...**

**This plant smells like...**

**And as small as a...**

**Draw or describe the stem or trunk of your plant.**

**Describe the place where your plant lives.**

**Draw or describe your plant's leave or needles.**

**I think a good name for this plant is...**

**because...**



**Take 20 steps away from your plant. What does it look like? Draw a quick sketch here:**

far away

**Now get as close as you can to a part of your plant. Maybe even use a hand lens to look at it. What does it look like? Draw a quick sketch here:**

up close