

# What's Alive?

The students will observe an indoor and outdoor location to compare and contrast the living and non-living things they find there.

**Engage**

## Supplemental Reading

Grades K-2:

*What's Alive?* By Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld

Grades 3-5:

*Is It A Living Thing?* By Bobbie Kalman

### Grade Levels:

K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

### Curriculum Correlation:

NCSCS—Science

K.L.1.2, 1.L.2.1, 1.L.2.2, 4.L.1.2, 5.L.2.2, 5.L.2.3

### Materials:

Whiteboard or Smart Board; notebook

paper; pens or pencils

### Duration:

30-45 minutes

### Location:

Indoor classroom space and Outdoor Study

## Procedure:

1. Draw a two-column chart on a board with the headings Living and Non-Living. Have the students look around the classroom for 3-5 minutes to see how many living things they can find. List their ideas in the “Living” column on the chart. Complete the same for the non-living column.
2. Ask the students questions such as:
  - What makes something a living thing?
  - Are you a living thing? How do you know?
  - What does it mean to be non-living?

Write the student’s definitions of Living and Non-Living on the board. If necessary, take the time to explain the difference between non-living and once living.

3. After the classroom chart is complete, have each of the students make a new chart on a sheet of paper. Take the group to an outdoor space to find a quiet **Sit Spot**. Ask them to use more of their senses, like listening (bird songs, airplanes), feeling (wind blowing, warmth from the sun), or even smelling (flowers, car exhaust) before they use their eyes to identify what is living or non-living in the area. Here they will repeat the classroom activity on their own charts, starting with living things, then non-living. Come back inside once their charts are complete.

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4. **Think, Pair, Share:** Have the students think on their own first to compare and contrast the classroom list to the outdoor list. Next, ask the students to find a partner to share what they found. Then ask the group to come together for a larger discussion. The following questions can be asked during the group discussion:

- What surprised you about the amounts of living and non-living things?
- Which chart has more living things? Why do you think that is?
- Did any of the non-living things listed once come from a living thing?
- Looking at both charts, how do the living things use the non-living things?
- Do the living things use other living things? Do the living things use any once living things?

## Extension: (Grades 3-5)

1. Design a visual map that illustrates the relationships discussed between living and non-living things. Try to incorporate the vocabulary and concepts discussed.

### Learning Targets:

1. Compare the characteristics of living and non-living things.
2. Recall what living things need to stay alive.
3. Infer simple connections between living and non-living things in different environments.