



Kid Naturalist 2025

Guidelines for teachers

1. Objective of the programme

As a result of the exam-oriented education system, the students have limited time to engage in outdoor activities and to interact with the natural environment. Therefore, it is very important to train children to interact with nature and become responsible citizens who appreciate their living environment with love, and respect. Hence, Kid Naturalist Programme is organized annually by the National Science Foundation which is under purview of the Science and Technology Ministry for children of grade one to six in all government registered schools in the country including private sector institutions.

2. How children could participate the programme

The basic concept of this programme is for a child to observe and record a selected environmental phenomena/living organism/plant in their village environment or around the school for a period of 6 weeks. They need to record their observations and prepare a “nature journal” based on their daily observations. A period of 8 weeks is given to this whole exercise.

3. Ideas for selection of a project

1. Children can observe **one bird species** coming to their home garden, paddy field or other convenient location and study their behavior, their foraging habits (e.g. foraging on the ground, hunting and eating plant material, etc.), the way their body is shaped to find food (e.g. beak, foot, neck, etc.), their gregarious behavior (living in a flock, pair, or solitary etc.)

can be observed and reported. Also guide the child to find out the benefits or harms of these animals to the environment, special adaptations and behaviors unique to them.

2. Give the child some time to **choose an insect species in the garden** (e.g. ants, spiders, beetles, ladybirds, moths etc.) and observe its behavior. To make close observation train students to use hand lenses. Let them observe how they are naturally adapted to protect themselves from enemies (camouflage), color patterns, body shape etc. how they prepare their living habitats, their food habits etc. Give guidance for students to find out the benefits or harms they do to the environment or people.
3. Encourage children to observe animals that visit the home garden, such as squirrels, lizards, monkeys, or moose. Guide them in observing behavior, eating habits, appearance, and camouflaging techniques. **Select one animal for detailed study.** Assist the child in researching the scientific name, common names, and the environmental impact (both positive and negative) of the chosen animal. Record their findings. Select animal that can do regular daily observations.
4. If you are selecting bird's feeder, try to observe it on a regular basis focusing on **one bird species** visiting, its behavior and its interactions with others. Please observe their behaviour, feeding pattern, special features etc.

4. Projects that should be avoided

The following observations as a project are not encouraged as they may not yield sufficient materials or new information or meet the main objective of the programme.

1. The behavior patterns of domestic animals, pets, domesticated birds and farm animals.
2. The clouds pattern in the sky during rainy seasons
3. The observation that is already included in the school syllabus such as seedlings of mung or wing bean, life cycle of butterflies and tadpole.

5. Observation Procedure

1. Select a project that you can successfully conduct daily basis and continue for up to six weeks.
2. The observation should be made every day in an exact time period and within the project period of six weeks and it should be indicated in the journal when writing the observations. In addition, the student can record the weather condition during the observation period. In special cases, the student can do observation at additional times as well.
3. You can draw pictures to support your observations and emphasize your observations clearly.
4. The students who find difficulties in writing can use more drawings and pictures to express their observations. The drawings must be strong and clear enough to depict the observation made by the student. However, the students above grade 01 are expected to write their observation rather than using only drawings.
5. In preparation of the journal, allow the child to present his observations freely using different mediums like diagrams, dried flower leaves, pictures etc. Please use properly dried plant materials only.
6. Guide students to refer books, internet, or find information from known person to the problems encountered during the project period.
7. Help the child to use language, grammar and wording as accurately as possible without interfering with their thoughts or expressions.
8. Use photographs only where necessary. Typesetted journals are not accepted. Always give priority to the child's creativity. Do not use images taken from other sources like magazines, books, internet etc. to prepare the journal.
9. Use the format of nature journal provided by the NSF (Annexure III) only as a guide but do not hinder the child's creativity or use printed format of it to write the observations.
10. The cover page must be a handmade creation by child and titles must be handwritten.
11. National Science Foundation will organize a lecture series on Kid naturalist programme in August 2025. Further information about this can be obtained by connecting to the

official YouTube channel and official Facebook page of the National Science Foundation.
(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWziS21LQ1L9xSDUZAKD5dw>).

6. Matters to be considered in preparing the nature journal

1. Avoid directing children to use highly technical, scientific terms or language used by adults in reporting. Let the children write the journal using their own words.
2. Add the pages of the nature journal as indicated in the instruction sheet. Loose papers or irregularly collected papers will not be considered as a journal during evaluation.
3. Avoid using expensive paper or stationery. Use plain paper (white or color) for preparation of the journal.

6.Enrolling to the programme

Students who wish to participate in the program can register by submitting application using the google form using the following link.

<https://forms.gle/9eBpxXfe1C3RvcHdA>

Important days to remember:

1. Deadline for registration for the programme: 29th August 2025.
2. Initiation of the project: 29th August 2025 (6Weeks will be given for observation and 2 weeks will be given for Journal preparation)
3. Deadline for journal submission: 31st October 2025

7.Submission of the Nature Journal

The duly completed application with the assertion of the principal should be forwarded to the following address.

Director General
National Science Foundation
47/5, Maitland Place

Colombo 07

Note:

Please note that the submitted journals can be collected within a period of month after announcing the winners of competition at the official website of NSF (www.nsf.gov.lk). The journals which are not collected within that period will be discarded.

For more information please contact:

Ms Chamarika /Ms Anjalee

Tel : 0112696771

Ext : 185/181