



MAY YOU SURVIVE AND THRIVE

An Endangered Species Curriculum



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTRY FOR EARTH**

Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.

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Introduction

We hope you will enjoy this curriculum which invites learners of all ages into an exploration of Endangered Species. We owe deep gratitude to Aly Tharp, Co-Director of UUMFE for conceiving of this project and piloting it for a number of years. Using Aly's vision, we have created a five-lesson curriculum with a culminating event – “The Council of All Species” – to be presented, ideally, on Biodiversity Sunday as part of a child-centered Worship Service. Please reach out to UUMFE if you have any questions or need additional information. We enjoyed creating this for you and we hope that you and your congregations will learn something new!

- The Rev Dr Leonisa Ardizzone and Vassar College students Elliot Porcher '22, Oliver Mendel '22, James Grosjean '22, Grace Gazzaniga '24.

What are endangered species?

An endangered species is any group of living creatures – fungi, plants, or animals – that is at risk of extinction for any sort of reason. Endangered species are classified, or sorted, through the determination of their conservation status. A conservation status estimates the risk of an animal's extinction in the near future.

As part of an environmental education project, we will be learning about our home environment. This will begin with an ecology scavenger hunt and will end with presentations of artistic representations as part of Biodiversity Sunday. The lessons can be adapted for various age groups as you see fit.

Lesson 1:

Reconnect with Nature

In this lesson, children – and adults – are encouraged to explore the grounds around the congregation to explore and connect with nature in all its wonder.

Primary Activity

1. Ask students what senses they use to do observations.

2. Discuss what we learn from using each of our Five Senses.

- a. Sight
- b. Hearing
- c. Touch
- d. Smell
- e. Taste

3. Invite learners to connect with the natural world via a Nature Scavenger Hunt

- a. See attached handout.
- b. For younger children, you can create a field notebook using paper bags (see image in Appendix.)
- c. Children can work alone or in teams. This is also a great opportunity for peer interactions (older kids pairing up with a younger child).
- d. Remind students that during their observations, they can collect items for further study but they are not to harm any living things. (This includes pulling green leaves or shoots off of plants).

4. While learners are completing the handout, class facilitators can monitor and ask questions. Not everything on the handout can/will be found but learners can keep their Field Guide and continue to complete it on their own time.

Follow-Up Activity

1. When you return to the classroom, learners can share their observations and their “wonderings”.
2. You can also have students create a drawing and “sense poem” for one of the natural specimens they encountered on their exploration.
 - a. How to do a Sense Poem:
 - i. Have students find a living thing that they can observe (or can recall or examine through a picture).
 - ii. Ask them to write how the living thing looks, sounds, smells, feels, and tastes (but no real tasting!! Use your imagination!)
 - iii. Then they can turn their sensory observations into a poem or short story about their living thing.
 - iv. Share this in class or display their work in the congregation.



NAME:



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FIND EVIDENCE OF...

ENCUENTRA EVIDENCIA DE...

Animals/*Animales*

Plants/*Plantas*

Non-living things/*Cosas sin vida*

Erosion by water/
Erosion por agua

Damage by storms/
Daños por tormentas

New life/*Vida nueva*

Human pollution/
Polución humana

Things that trees drop/*cosas
que dejan caer los árboles*

Life on a rock/*Vida sobre una
roca*

Living (Biotic)/*Viviente (Biotico)*

Non-living (Abiotic)/*No viviente
(Abiotico)*

Human Made/*Hecho por
humano*

NAME:

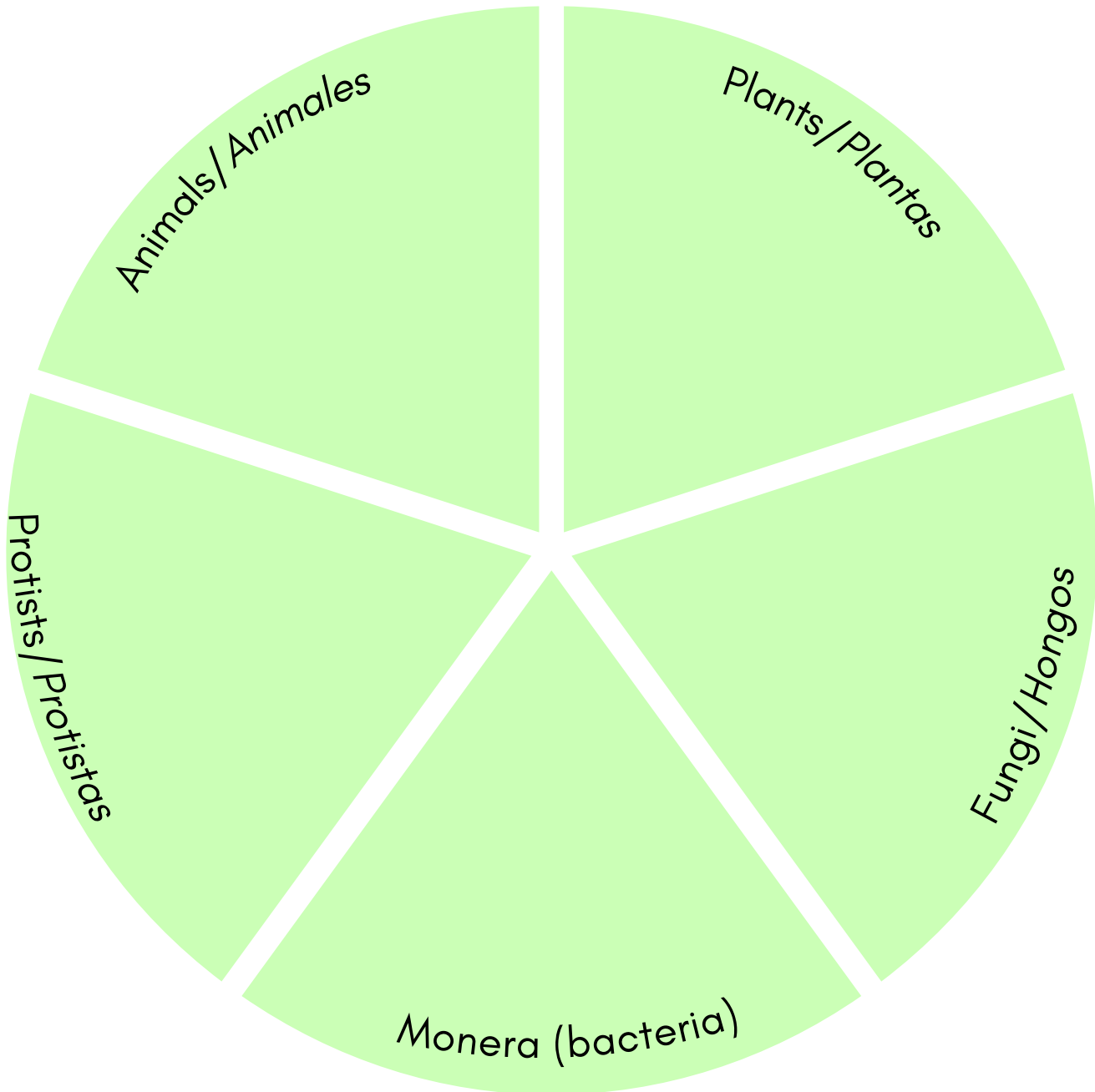


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SORT WHAT YOU FIND INTO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES...

CLASIFICA LO QUE ENCUENTRES EN DIFERENTES CATEGORIAS...





Name: _____

OBSERVATION/ OBSERVACIÓN

Sounds/*Sonidos*

Scents/*Olores*

Find two LIVING things. Draw one in each box and notice their similarities and differences/
Encuentra dos cosas VIVIENTES. Dibuja una en cada caja y escribe sus similitudes y diferencias.

What questions do you have about the natural world you just observed? What more do you want to know? (These can be big or small Questions!)/*¿Qué preguntas tienes sobre el mundo natural que acabas de observar? ¿Que más quieres saber? (¡Estas pueden ser preguntas grandes o pequeñas!)*

