

# My World

This activity is designed for first through third graders. I have successfully used it at all grade levels, including adults.

The objective is:

- to become aware of the diversity in a micro-environment
- to become aware of different micro-environments in one location

Background:	When we talk about an environment, we tend to speak about a large area. Often we are discussing an entire park, city, or state. For some beings, their environment may be less than one square foot. If they do not have the proper conditions to live, they must move to a new location or perish. A micro-environment is a small (about one square foot) area. If you study an area this small, you may find that by moving only a few feet, you are in an entirely different environment.
Skills:	The children should be able to recognize at a generic level different plants, animals, soil types. If the children cannot write, they should be able to draw what they find or tell a person who can write it down for them.
Age:	Grades K – adult
Material	A piece of string, yarn, or other material that can make a defined area. (I often use a hula hoop.), magnifying glass, a plastic spoon or a wooden craft stick, a pencil and paper.
Activity:	<p>Ask the children what they might find on or in the ground. Discuss what might live or be in the area.</p> <p>Group the children into small groups of three or four. Have each group find an area in the playground, back yard, park, that they would like to explore. Place the string on the ground, and explain that the area within the string is their world. They should write down everything they find, living and non-living. They may dig into the dirt if they put the dirt back after they explore.</p> <p>Allow about fifteen minutes for exploration.</p>
Discussion:	Have each group recite the things that they found. Was everyone's similar? If there were differences try to determine why. If one group was in a marshy area and the other group in a sandy area, discuss how the environment for small animals and insects can change even if they are only a few feet apart. Was anyone surprised by what they found?

Brownie Try-It	Earth and Sky – The Soil
Junior Badge	Ecology - #1