



Center of Excellence: Environmental Playground

This project is a partnership between Beyond School Bells and Civic Nebraska

- Program Goals:** using geographically diverse Nebraska after school sites, programs will collect and record environmental data and observations
- Environmental data and observations from across the state will be hosted online
- Student Goals:** Students will practice gathering scientific environmental data
Students will gain experience in environmentalism
Students will see a relationship between the environment and their city/town/farm
Students will connect with other programs across the state to discuss their own unique habitat and ecosystem
- Outcomes:** new training videos
Publishable data
A positive experience in the science of environmentalism
- Method:** 3 Sets of Activities; programs can make choices from each set of activities and can certainly add or make changes. We ask that programs do a minimum of one activity per set.

1. BioBlitz

- a. What is your habitat?
- b. Weather "Weather Channel" app
- c. Soil testing "[Rapitest](#)"
- d. Air quality EPA "AirNow"

2. Campus Field Work

- a. Plants around your school “Picture This” app
- b. Bugs around your school “Picture Insect” app
- c. What is the human footprint?
- d. Pick a tree – tape measure; apps
 - i. [Tree Rings Explained](#)
 - ii. [Tree Rings Explained for lower grades](#)
 - iii. [Tree Rings Explained for lower grades includes interpreting rings for more than age](#)

3. Interviews or videos

- a. How to Conduct an interview – CNE video available; [YouTube](#)
 - i. Short list of questions that we want across all programs
 - ii. Add questions of your own
- b. Student video on an environmental issue

Notes: There are mobile apps for several of these activities. Some are listed in the activity descriptions, but you may find some that suit your program, students, or technology better. Please feel free to look for your own. CNE/BSB can pay for some apps, if you are planning on buying several, check with Kent first. Students can use the apps on their own phones to gather data, or they can download the apps on the tablets provided by CNE, or they can photograph their observations to research on desktop computers back in the classroom.

Data: data recording forms are available for most of the activities.

Celebration: online pizza party with all stakeholders

What Civic Nebraska can provide:

1. Training virtual and/or in person
2. The loan of a video camera, tripod, and microphone, possibly green screen
3. Two Amazon Fire tablets for each program to keep
4. Documents, forms, instructions for data recording
5. Apps for smart phones or tablets
6. Tree cookies large and small
7. Tools for collecting samples
 - a. Collection bags
 - b. Rubber gloves
 - c. Grabbers
 - d. Insect capture jars
 - e. Rapitest Soil Test Kit
 - f. Other needs as determined by the program
8. Publication and promotion
9. End-of-project pizza party with all programs on Zoom