



Uncovering the Everyday*

Exploring Hidden Lessons in the Everyday world—indoors and outdoors

A resource from the Out of Eden Learn initiative at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

What: A flexible activity that helps us to slow down and explore the complexity of the world around us.

Where: In your local indoor and/or outdoor environment.

For whom: Preschool age through adult, working individually or in partners.

Timeframe: 20-90 minutes, depending on how long you spend on each step. Do the activity once, or try it multiple times on different days, exploring different themes listed in the box below.

Facilitation: Self-facilitated, or lightly facilitated by a peer/teacher/caregiver.

Uncovering the Everyday THEMES

- **Hidden beauty:** Find something beautiful that often goes unnoticed.
- **Everyday design:** Look for things that have been carefully designed that you don't usually pay attention to.
- **Everyday jobs/hidden work:** Find evidence of work someone has done, or a job someone has, that often goes unnoticed. For example, maybe it is something someone built, delivered, transported, repaired, or takes care of.
Everyday systems: notice a system you normally don't think about. (A system is a group of interacting parts that move or work together to make something happen.)
- **Hidden nature:** Notice plants or animals thriving in an unlikely place.
- **Hidden distance.** Look for things that might have come from far away. They can be human-made things, or things in nature.

Step 1: Uncover the Everyday (20-45 minutes)

- a) Choose a theme from the list above. With a partner or by yourself, take a walk in your local environment (indoors or outdoors) and find several examples of the theme.
- b) Select one or two examples to carefully observe and describe: For instance, take pictures or make a video, make a drawing, create a list of descriptive words, write a descriptive paragraph or poem, make a song or a dance, or make a 3D model.
- c) Think up two interesting questions about what you have observed. Write them down.

Step 2: Share your findings (20-45 minutes)

- If you are in a class, or part of a group of people doing the same activity, come together online or in person and share what you found. Discuss your questions. What new ideas do you have about the theme?
- If you like, share with a wider online community: **Follow** Out of Eden Learn on Twitter @OutofEdenLearn. **Share** your short video, illustration, pictures, sculpture and/or story on social media using #EdenLearn and #UncoveringtheEveryday!

Facilitation and Extension ideas

- Work with a partner of a different age or generation: older/younger sibling; parent, grandparent.
- If you are teaching an online class, assign the activity as homework, then share together online.
- Make up your own themes, or invite guests such as neighbors, grandparents, or other experts to suggest a theme. Just to spark your imagination, here are some possible guest-created themes:
 - **An etymologist:** hidden bug life
 - **An anthropologist:** everyday customs
 - **An architect:** everyday built environments
 - **A journalist:** hidden story opportunities
 - **A kindergartener:** places to play

*Uncovering the Everyday is inspired by the Out of Eden Learn (OOEL) project. For similarly themed activities and curricula, see the [Out of Eden Learn](#) website. For short activities, visit OOEL's [Activities for All](#) page. For longer learning experiences, visit OOEL's [All Curricula](#) page.