



# “It’s a Small World.”

LAB CRAWL 2008

ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY ACTIVITY #1

Summer 2008



Adult Cicada

Regardless of where your school is located, there is most likely an area where students could be allowed to experience and observe nature.

## “It’s a Small World.” Environmental Survey Activity #1

This activity is designed to encourage students to carefully observe and write about science in a way that blends quantitative and qualitative data.

By designating a small, specific area to be observed, students can focus their attention on a limited area, thereby increasing the amount of detail they should be able to record.

One square meter

was chosen as the upper limit for student observations, although smaller plots can be used, based on ability level.

By combining drawing, scientific observations, and math, this should serve as a high interest activity to launch topics such as biodiversity, habitat types, seasonal differences, etc.

## MATERIALS

- METER STICK
- YARN
- PAPER CLIPS
- JOURNAL
- SMALL SHOVEL\*
- SPECIMEN JARS\*
- FORCEPS\*

\*OPTIONAL

## Activity Directions

Students will be using the paper clips and yarn to cordon off one square meter. If desired, additional paper clips and yarn can be used to further break the plot into quadrants or smaller.

Once the plot is set, students begin recording some general information (top section of worksheet) about the area their plot is located.

Not all of the data on the top of the student sheet may be able to be completed in the field.

If you have access to a weather station (or like equipment), build that data collection into the activity. Otherwise, provide students with up-to-date information before they begin (weather.com).

When students have staked out their plot, instruct them to begin drawing a map. They should, as accurately as possible, draw and label their square meter sections, including a key for interpretation.

### Extension Activities:

1. Students can dig a small hole into their plots, describing how the ground changes as they dig.
2. Students may use forceps and specimen jars to collect organisms, signs of life, etc. to examine later
3. Have students swap plot maps and see if they can find a partner’s plot based solely on their map

## S.S.S. Science Addressed:

SC.B. 2.3

SC.C.1.3  
2.3

SC.D.1.3  
2.3

SC.F.1.3

S.C.G. 1.3  
2.3

SC.H.1.3  
2.3  
3.3



NATURE SURVEY ACTIVITY

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

TEMPERATURE:

LOCATION:

WIND DIRECTION:

CLOUD PATTERNS / CLOUD COVER:

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF GENERAL ENVIRONMENT:

OTHER CONDITIONS INFLUENCING THE METER<sup>2</sup> (MOISTURE, SOIL TYPE, ETC.):



Map


KEY:

Conclusion Questions:

1. What "landmarks" would you use to find this same plot of land, if you came back in one month?
2. What was the most surprising item found during your survey?