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Inspiring Environmental Responsibility in the YL Classroom

Hello! My name is Gabby Salazar, National Geographic Young Explorer, photographer, and conversationist, and President of the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA).

I believe that photography is an important, and vital, tool in connecting people with the world. An amazing photo can capture the imagination and inspire awe and respect for the world we live in.

That's why, in addition to my work documenting the recovery efforts of endangered species around the world, I continue to teach photography to young learners and teenagers. By giving our students the tools to connect with their environment, we can inspire meaningful environmental responsibility at an early age.

There are a lot of projects that you can do in your own classrooms to teach photography to your students and connect them with the global community.

Here is one of my absolute favorites,

Photo Scavenger Hunt.

I hope you enjoy doing this project with your students!



Thanks!

Gabby Salazar

National Geographic Young Explorer

President, North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA)

GabbySalazar.com

[Facebook@GabbySalazarPhotography](https://www.facebook.com/GabbySalazarPhotography)

[Instagram@GabbyRSalazar](https://www.instagram.com/GabbyRSalazar)

[Twitter@GabbyRSalazar](https://twitter.com/GabbyRSalazar)

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Photo Scavenger Hunt



Photo Scavenger Hunt Checklist

Take a photo of:

- ☐ **Something outside that's soft and green.**
- ☐ **Something outside that's round.**
- ☐ **Something outside that's thin and dry.**
- ☐ **Something outside that's wet.**
- ☐ **Something outside that moves.**
- ☐ **Something outside that has stripes or spots.**

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Photo Scavenger Hunt: Lesson Plan

Objectives

Students will:

- take photos of nature, either in the schoolyard or at home
- follow the checklist to find colors, shapes, and patterns in nature
- print and cut out photos to make a collage
- share the collage with classmates

Materials small camera or camera phone, computer and color printer (to print the photos), *Photo Scavenger Hunt Checklist*, paper, glue, scissors, crayons

Prepare

- Ask *What can you find outside? What can you find in nature?* Write the words that students call out on the board. Ask *What can you find in our local parks, playgrounds, or backyards?* Put a checkmark next to each item as they respond.
- Say *We're going to take photos of nature.* Hand out the *Photo Scavenger Hunt Checklist*. Say *We're going to find things in nature and take photos of them. Then we're going to make a nature photo collage. For example, let's find something outside that's soft and green. What's outside that's soft and green?* Read through each item on the *Photo Scavenger Hunt Checklist* to make sure the students understand each clue.

Practice

- With a classroom camera or camera phone, show students how to take photos. Let students practice by taking photos of objects in the classroom. Once students feel comfortable taking photos, take them to a designated location outside during a break, or have them take photos at home after school.
- After printing the photos, give each group or student the materials for making nature photo collages. Make sure students have enough time to complete the activity. If necessary, help them cut and glue their photos. Have students label each photo in their collage.

Share

- Have students share their collages with a partner. Ask *What did your partner find outside in nature?* Have students talk about how their nature collages are alike and different.
- If in groups, ask each group to share their collages with the rest of the class. Be sure to leave enough time for questions and answers.
- **Modify** If students do not have access to a camera, ask parents to donate old cameras or camera phones, and then make this a group project so students can share them. If you don't have access to a printer, students can create digital collages instead.

Be the Expert

Use the *Tips for Nature Photography* handout to teach your students about holding the camera steady, as well as simple ways to improve focus, perspective, and composition!

Teaching Tip

When students create art projects, encourage them to use unit vocabulary as they work together. As students work, ask them about their photos and what they are making.

Project Rubric

- ✓ Did students take pictures of nature for each item in the checklist?
- ✓ Did students make collages and label their photos?
- ✓ Did students share their collages with the class?