

Teacher Preparation

Building BALANCE



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

What would you put in a “perfect” park?
A playground? Picnic tables? Trails?

In Building Balance, students become designers as they draw a park of their own, and then explore how the choices we make affect the wildlife around us.

Through their build-a-park creations, hands-on wildlife specimens, animal sounds, photos and stories of local toads and bobcats, students will discover how parks and preserves serve different purposes and how thoughtful choices can create space for both people and wildlife.



GRADES K - 2



~55 MINUTES



YOUR CLASSROOM!

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT



EDUCATION@OPENSPEACEAUTHORITY.ORG



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DURING THIS PROGRAM, STUDENTS WILL...

- Explore what open spaces are and why they are important
- Discover how parks and preserves serve different purposes
- Draw their own park and consider how different features can affect wildlife
- Explore ways people can make choices that reduce impacts on plants and animals
- Meet two very different open space residents – toads and bobcats – and investigate what they need from their habitats
- Discover why protecting and connecting open spaces helps wildlife survive and thrive



SPACE NEEDED

- Students will participate in full- and small-group discussions with peers. For the drawing activity, students will ideally be in a seated place where they can draw comfortably with paper and pencils.
- Students can either remain seated in their seats if they can clearly see the front of the room, or if there is space, sit in a half-circle on the floor.
 - Students should be seated so they can easily turn and share ideas with a partner.
- Leave enough space for the educator to move around the classroom and share wildlife specimens with students.

BEFORE WE VISIT

Spark students' curiosity and help them start thinking about our topic generally.

Example guiding questions: Ask students to think about an outdoor place they enjoy visiting. What do they like to do there? What makes that place special to them?

KEEPING THE MYSTERY

Please help us keep a few surprises! Our programs include opportunities for students to guess, investigate and make discoveries along the way. You don't need to introduce the featured animals or key concepts ahead of time – curiosity is the only preparation students need!