

Observing A Pond

Oliver and Kiara are playing hide-and-seek close to a nearby pond when something catches their attention. It's a beaver! They watch it swim and use its strong teeth to cut right through the wood.

The kids decide to rush home to find out more about beavers and the other plants and animals that live at the pond.

They learn a lot from their research and find out that beavers build dams in streams and rivers that make new ponds. They decide to keep a journal and draw pictures of the new things they observe at the pond.

Each time they visit the pond, they observe something different.

They see plants growing in and around the pond, providing food for a family of ducks.

Another time, they observe with their ears and hear lots of buzzing. There were bugs they had not noticed before, such as mosquitoes, dragonflies, water striders, and others they didn't know the names for.

One day, they could smell the pond before they could see it. Lots of stinky algae had grown on top of the water. They didn't stay long that day.

Kiara sits very still and motions for Oliver to join her. They notice snakes near the edge of the pond, where the water is not very deep. They are looking for a tasty treat of tadpoles, frogs, salamanders, fish, and worms.

Kiara and Oliver come back a couple of weeks later and hear a bird rustling in the plants nearby. It's a red-winged blackbird who built its nest in the cattails that grew out of the water. Oliver touches the leaves of one of the cattails. It's smooth and waxy to keep it strong in the water.

Finally, they observe a family of salamanders. There were black ones with yellow spots, brown ones with blue spots, and bright red ones with black spots! They breathe through their skin! But they must keep their skin wet to be able to breathe and stay alive.

Kiara and Oliver are learning so much about their pond by using their senses. What will you observe when you use your senses in nature?