

# Living or Non-Living?

**Grade Level: K**

**Approximate Length of Activity: One class period**

## Objective

### Teacher

1. Help students to distinguish between items that are living and nonliving.
2. Challenge students to think of the characteristics of being “alive.”

### Students

1. Students will, given a set of objects, organisms, or events, use observable properties to classify them.
2. The student will learn to classify commonplace things as living or nonliving.

**Michigan Content Standards: (Science) L.OL.00.12**

## Background

Plants and animals that are alive have the following things in common: 1) they need food; 2) they need water; 3) they need air; 4) they reproduce. Water and soil are not living things but they do provide homes or things that are alive.

## Materials Needed

- Examples of items that are living and nonliving (a butterfly, a cup, a growing flower, telephone)
- Copies of “Living or Nonliving” worksheet

## Activity Outline

1. Use the background materials to discuss what is required before something is classified as living.
2. In the classroom, have students identify living and nonliving things. If students understand and can easily identify living and nonliving things, make your questions more difficult. For example, point to a student’s desk and ask, Was any part of this desk at one time a living thing? Identify the part that was once alive.
3. Hand out student worksheets, and go over the instructions with your students.

Worksheet Answers:

The student should have crossed out the following pictures of nonliving things: truck; tractor; silo; rainwater; fence; barn; mitt; hay. (Point out that some of the nonliving things pictured were once alive (hay, leather baseball mitt, wooden barn and fence.)



## Discussion Questions

1. What are the characteristics of living things?
2. Name two things that were made from something once living.
3. Name something found on the farm that is nonliving.

## Related Activities

1. Set up two displays, one with living things and one with nonliving things. Have students contribute to the displays by bringing examples from home.
2. Have students create a bulletin board display of magazine pictures or student-made pictures of living and nonliving things.
3. Place a wide variety of items in a bag. Divide students into teams. Have them draw one thing out of the bag at a time and decide whether it is living or nonliving.

## Resources

1. "Linnea's Windowsill Garden" by Christina Bjork and Lena Anderson
2. "The Grouchy Ladybug" by Eric Cole
3. "My Puppy is Born" by Joanna Cole
4. "Benjamin's Barn" by Reeve Lindbergh and Susan Jeffers
5. "Greenbrook Farm" by Bonnie Pryor

*Acknowledgement: Adapted from "Living or Nonliving" provided by Oklahoma Agriculture in the Classroom.*

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Directions: Cross out the things that are non-living.

