

7th-8th Grade

Lauritzen Gardens Guide

Gardens are full of surprises and fun things to discover!
This guide is designed to give ideas in various subject areas.

Festival Garden (Biology)

- Find a plant that looks familiar to you and read its common name.
- Why do you think people gave it this common name?
- Find the plants scientific name (genus followed by species).
- Can you pronounce it?
- Who might use scientific names rather than a common name? Why?
- Find a plant you know or think is pretty. Repeat both its common name *and* scientific name over and over to memorize and share.

Woodland Pond and Waterfall (Ecology)

- Look at the waterfall and forest understory.
 - If you were an artist what would you draw? Why?
- What characteristics would it take for a plant to live near the ground? To grow to the top?
- What animals/ insects might you find here? How does the life cycle of the insects affect the trees? How do the trees affect the animals? How do the animals impact the landscape?

Victorian Garden (Art)

- If you drew a line down the center of the garden, it would look the same on one side as on the other. What kind of symmetry is this? _____
- Create a work of art that captures this symmetry and the color of this garden.

- Find an architectural artifact from the Omaha area and read its history.
- Draw a still life of your favorite artifact.

Garden in the Glen (Biology)

- Shade plants thrive in this garden. What produces the shade?
- A storm uprooted several Black Locust Trees, what did the gardens put up in place of the trees to provide shade?
- What would have happened to the plants if shade was not provided?
- Can you find any animals that enjoy the water and shade in this garden?
- Most Hosta varieties were developed right here in Nebraska in the 1940's. How many varieties of hostas can you find in this garden?
- Find a Japanese Maple. What is the name of its genus? How does it compare to most Maples in our area? Consider size, leaf shape, leaf color, etc.

Arboretum and Bird Sanctuary (Biology)

- Can you see any tadpoles or fish swimming in the entrance pond? There is another pond on the circular pathway to your right you can look for more water creatures there.
 - What similarities do you find among animals that live in the water?
 - What similarities do you find among animals that live on the land?
 - What similarities do you find among animals that live in the air?
- An arboretum consists of several plant communities. What do you know about ecosystems and plant and animal relationships? What are some examples of the relationships between biotic and abiotic factors in the communities found here?

Model Railroad Garden (Physics)

- What is the strongest shape used in building? Can you find any triangles used in the Railroad Garden?
- Sound travels through physical compression of molecules.
 - Will a train whistle travel faster through a solid, a liquid or a gas?
 - Will a train whistle sound like a higher pitch (frequency) when the train is speedily moving toward you, or away from you?

Rose Garden (Genetics)

- What characteristics are similar between all the roses? Different?
- Breeders cross different roses to get different genetic varieties. Some roses were bred to only look beautiful but have no smell. What other characteristics do you think a breeder would consider in crossing two plants to create a new one?

Song of the Lark Meadow (Native plants, Literature)

- Loren Eiseley is a famous poet, writer, and science educator from Nebraska. His writings inspired our sunflower forest project. Can you find any sunflowers in the meadow?
- Create an acrostic poem that describes sunflowers.
- Write an essay from the perspective of an animal or insect that lives in the meadow.

Garden of Memories (Literature)

- Pause in this garden, and sit on the bricks. People have written on the bricks people and events they want to remember.
- Read the quotations found in the garden. Write a quotation about nature or life that would fit the style of quotations found in the garden.