

Inspired By Nature Instructions and Answers for Teachers

- Venue: Flower Dome and Cloud Forest
- Estimated duration to complete all questions: 2 h 45 mins

Level / Subject:

- Lower Secondary (Art)

Learning Objectives:

- Observe nature and art
- Record observations and experience
- Identify themes in artwork by interpreting an artist's intent

Materials Required (for each student):

- Camera
- Drawing materials



ACTIVITY 1: Observe and Record (1 hour)

At the *Succulent Garden* and *The Baobabs* at the Flower Dome, you will find many plants that have adapted to a dry environment with prolonged exposure to sunlight and extended periods of drought. Some of these adaptations include becoming leafless, succulence (i.e. juicy, filled with water), possessing a thick skin / outer layer, having ribs along the surface of their stem, developing shade at the top (e.g. more wool / hair / spines) and having some form of protection against predators (e.g. spines / camouflaging themselves).

Read more about the purpose of these adaptations at the panels located in these two areas.

(a) Pick two plants that intrigue or inspire you. Observe them carefully. Can you identify the adaptations they have? Sketch these two plants in the space provided. Name them and label their adaptations.

Note to Teacher: Students should observe and draw the plants and their adaptations accurately.

(b) When you are done with (a), take a walk in the Flower Dome and record the sights and sounds of your favourite scenes, plants, sculptures or other objects along the way, with your camera.

Note to Teacher: Allow the students to explore the Australian Garden, South American Garden, South African Garden, Olive Grove, Mediterranean Garden and / or Flower Field before leaving the Flower Dome.

ACTIVITY 2: Magnificent Sights and Sounds (45 mins)

As you enter the Cloud Forest conservatory, enjoy the spectacular view of the waterfall that greets you at the entrance.

Cloud forests are moist tropical or subtropical montane forests with persistent low-level cloud formation. They are important sources of freshwater and home to a huge biodiversity. The plants capture rainwater and vapour that condenses from fog and clouds. Some of this makes its way down the mountain through streams, rivers and waterfalls, supplying people, plants and animals living downstream with a water source, while adding freshwater back to the ecosystem.

Walk through the Cloud Forest conservatory and record the sights and sounds of your favourite scenes, plants, sculptures or other objects along the way, with your camera.

Note to Teacher: Allow the students to explore The Falls, Lost World (Level 7), Cloud Walk, Crystal Mountain, Treetop Walk and / or Secret Garden before leaving the Cloud Forest.

ACTIVITY 3: Ants on Trees (30 mins)

Proceed to the Canopy (near the Flower Dome Entrance).

Find the art piece *Ants on Trees* by local artist Eng Siak Loy and observe it.

Discuss the following questions in your groups.

- (i) What is depicted here?
- (ii) What do you think the ants are doing?
- (iii) Why do you think the artist used ants?
- (iv) Do you ever notice ants? What would make you notice an ant?
- (v) What do you think ants feel / think when they see us?
- (vi) What do you think / feel when you see an ant?

- (vii) What do you think / feel when you see *Ants on Trees*?
- (viii) What do you think the artist is trying to convey or achieve with this sculpture?

Notes to Teacher: Share with the students that by making the ants gigantic, the artist makes it hard for us to ignore the ants. The artist wants to draw a connection between nature and our urban lifestyle. Living in a city, we sometimes forget about the existence of nature. The giant ants force us to see nature and think about how we can co-exist in an urban landscape. Art often allows us to look at the world around us using different perspectives and helps us to notice things that we may not have before.

ACTIVITY 4: Inspiring Creativity (30 mins)

What have you learnt or enjoyed at the Gardens today? What inspires you? If there is one thing / story / experience that you would like to share with others about the sights and sounds you have encountered today, what would it be? If you could translate these into an art piece, what form would it take? What media and materials would you use?

Plan your art piece in the space provided and create it when you are back in school.

Art Form	
Media	
Materials	
Objective / Story / Meaning	
Sketches	

Suggestions to Teacher: You may choose to conduct Activity 4 as a post-visit programme. It could be an individual or a group activity. Set aside some time for students to critique each other’s work.

Notes to Teacher:

For more on *Arts Education*, check out these Secondary School programmes:

- Art in the Conservatories
- Art in the Outdoor Gardens

For reference material on the sculptures at the Gardens, check out this book at our Gift Shop:

- Guide to Gardens by the Bay Sculptures

Please refer to our website for more details.