

Life in your Backyard

TEACHER'S GUIDE: ACTIVITY SHEETS I & II



- Activity sheets I and II are designed for Grade VI–VIII students.
- Each activity can be done over 2–3 days. Some tasks can be done in class. Others need to be done outside class.
- Introduce these activities in class by:
 - a) Reading or narrating the story 'The Disappearing Vultures' to your students. Also, encourage students to discuss the story in their communities and think about how interdependent all living beings are on each other and the environment they are part of. This will help them become more deeply aware and sensitive to the vulnerabilities of all beings around them, even those that may appear fearsome. Empathy and compassion will emerge naturally.
 - b) You could also show this 22-minute film (entirely or parts of it) 'Vulture Trilogy, Past, Present and Future' (URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzgNe9uMgAs&t=49s>) in class. This can be done on your mobile phone.
 - c) For Activity Sheet I: If possible, show the images of the vultures on a computer screen. If this is not possible, you could print the images, paste them on a piece of cardboard or any other firm surface, and display them in class.
 - d) For Activity Sheet II: Share any anecdotes, local cultural practices, or beliefs about vultures that you know of with your students. Remind them to listen with attention to what the elders and others in their community tell them about vultures and carefully record these details in their notebooks. If possible, invite an animal health worker and/or the local vet to the class for a discussion.

Connections to the middle-stage science textbooks:

These activities, and discussions around them, can be connected to the following textbook chapters from the middle-stage science curriculum:

- **Chapter 2 ('Diversity in the Living World') of the Grade VI science textbook (NCERT, Reprint 2024–2025):** Here, students are introduced to habitats (places where animals and plants live, feed, and shelter). They also learn about how animals have special features (adaptations) that help them live and survive in these habitats. In Activity 10 in the 'Let us enhance our learning' section at the end of the chapter, students are invited to observe the feet of a duck and think about which activity these feet may help ducks perform. Activity Sheet I may allow teachers to extend this to vultures. In the 'Learning Further' section of the same chapter, students are invited to interact with elders in their family or neighbourhood to find out about animals that they saw earlier, but do not see now. Activity Sheet II may allow teachers to extend this to vultures.¹
- **Chapter 5 ('Conservation of Plants and Animals') of the Grade VIII science textbook (NCERT, 2024–2025):** Here, students are introduced to concepts related to conservation. This includes the extinction of animals (and plants) due to



changing conditions (like deforestation due to human activities) in their habitats. The story of 'The Disappearing Vultures' and Activity Sheet II can highlight factors other than deforestation that can endanger the lives of animals. Students also read about how wildlife sanctuaries can help conserve large animals such as tigers, lions, and elephants. Teachers could extend this to discuss why vultures need to be conserved and the role vulture sanctuaries can play in this.²

- **Chapter 2 ('The Invisible Living World: Beyond Our Naked Eye') of the Grade VIII science textbook (NCERT, 2025-2026):** Here, students are introduced to pathogens, the spread of disease, and the role of microorganisms as decomposers and recyclers of dead organic matter in decaying plants and dead animals. Teachers can invite students to compare the roles that vultures and microbes play in decomposition. They can also extend this to discuss the role vultures play in preventing the spread of disease.³

References:

1. National Council of Educational Research and Training (Reprint 2025-2026). 'Chapter 2: Diversity in the Living World'. Curiosity, Textbook of Science for Grade VI: 9-34. URL: <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php?fcu1=2-12>
2. National Council of Educational Research and Training (2024-2025). 'Chapter 5: Conservation of Plants and Animals'. Science Textbook for Grade VIII: 53-65. URL: <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/hesc105.pdf>
3. National Council of Educational Research and Training (2025-2026). 'Chapter 2: The Invisible Living World: Beyond Our Naked Eye'. Curiosity, Textbook of Science for Grade VIII: 8-27. URL: <https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php?hecu1=2-13>

