



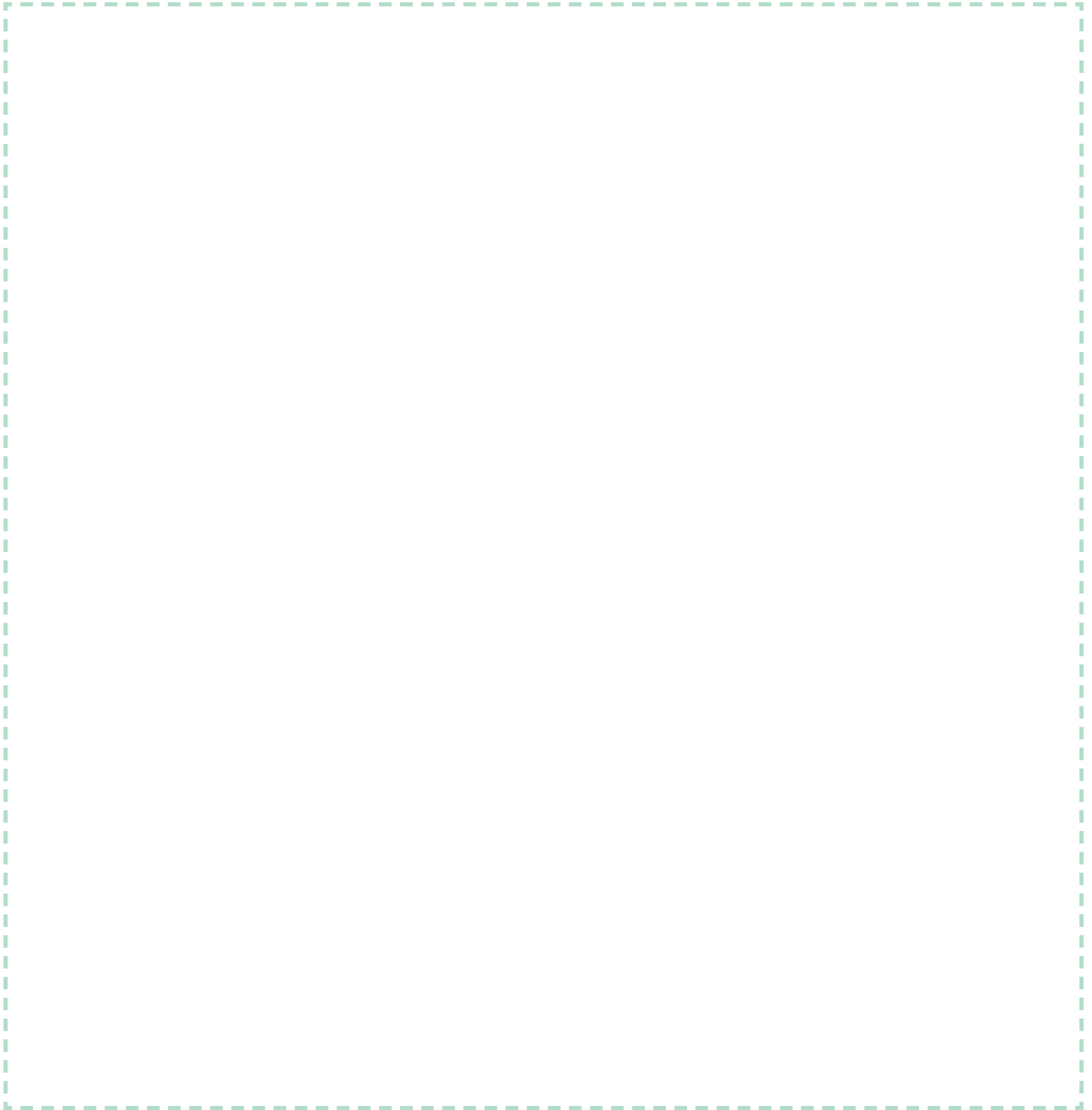


# Activity 1

*Together with your children, write down a list that describes what you feel when you look at the two images on the previous page. View each image separate to the other and for no less than 30 seconds. Feel free to create your own visual cue cards.*

## Picture perfect photos

Idea: Exposure to images of nature enhance our abilities to perform self-regulatory functions which are responsible for organizing and directing our thoughts, behavior patterns and emotional responses in a positive, pro-social, manner i.e. sustaining attention, inhibiting distractions and impulses, building resilience, valuing intrinsic aspirations rather than extrinsic [3].



## Activity 2

### Design by drawing

*Ask your children to draw/design their favorite place.*

Idea: Despite fewer opportunities for children to experience the outdoors, children consistently prefer natural environments. Numerous studies have documented that children's preferred environments consist of at least some kind of natural element. As a case in point, 96% of children participating in such a study, who were asked to draw their favorite place, drew outdoor places [4]. Furthermore, despite children having more interactions with humans, 61% of the dream content of children between the ages of 3 and 5 is composed of animals [5].











## Activity 3

### Appreciating nature

*With your children, go and explore a nearby natural space in the attempt to identify 3 important traits plants have to survive.*

Idea: A young child's concept of life and death is not the same as that of an adult. If a thing doesn't move it is dead [6] and as the life of a plant is not visible to the human eye, for young children, this part of nature is not alive.



# Activity 4

## Audit and awareness

*Conduct an audit of your own home or school setting noting the following physical characteristics, keeping in my mind the natural vs. unnatural and the benefit vs. detriment dichotomies:*

*Availability of toys and materials, including technology apparatus*

*Adequate space for privacy and exploration; high nature play affordances*

*Greenery*

*Natural light*

*“Views out”*

*Presence/use of bright colours*

*Natural habitats which encourage animal interaction*

*Access*

Idea: The notion that nature plays a buffering role in protecting children from the brunt of life stress [7] has powerful implications for policy (in an educational context) and design (in any environmental setting). Physical characteristics such as those mentioned above have been identified as protective factors/buffers against the adverse effects of stressors, such as moving home or schools.

