



## FACTivity

The question you will answer in this FACTivity is: What is the environmental condition of the land around your school? The method you will use to answer this question is: First, you have to decide what the best indicators are of the environmental condition of the land around your school. You also have to decide what the indicators mean. To do this, divide your class into groups of 4-5 students. Each group will hold a discussion and submit one indicator to the class. It is okay for more than one group to suggest the same indicator, but if your class does not have at least 5 indicators, assign the groups to develop more. Examples of indicators that you might use are:

1. The number of trees per acre. More trees indicate a better environmental condition.
2. Whether you have a bird bath, pond, or stream on the land surrounding your school. A source of water for birds and other animals indicates a better environmental condition.
3. The number of bird nests on the land surrounding your school. More bird nests indicate a better environmental condition.

After your class has developed five indicators, the class should determine the values of

each of the indicators and what the values represent. Here are examples of the values and what they represent for the examples given above.

1. The number of trees per acre. (You will have to find out how many acres of land surround your school.) Less than 5 ( $<5$ ) trees per acre = poor condition; 6-10 trees per acre = good condition; more than 10 ( $>10$ ) trees per acre = very good condition.
2. A source of water available to birds and other animals. No = poor condition; Yes, we have a bird bath that is cleaned and filled daily = good condition; Yes, we have a pond or a stream on our school grounds = very good condition.
3. The number of bird nests on the land surrounding your school. None = poor condition; 1-5 = good condition;  $>5$  = very good condition.

Select a student to write the indicators and their values on the board. Hold a class discussion over what the indicators indicate about the condition of the land surrounding your school. Do the indicators tell you clearly whether the condition of your school's land is good or poor? Why or why not? Hold a class discussion about how this FACTivity is similar to the method used by the scientist in this study. In what ways is it different?