

Challenge 1: Miami, My Garden - Gardens on the Go

YOUR CHALLENGE:

Picture your commute to school – whether you walk, are in a car, or ride a train, you probably pass by a lot of concrete. Gardens and greenery don't normally come to mind when we think of roadways. This year, we want to change that with your help by reimagining the bridges, highways, and sidewalks that criss-cross our city. Transportation is crucial to our daily lives so how can we use plants to improve these systems for us and our natural world? For this challenge, we ask you to draw a new vision of a part of the transportation systems of your community that incorporates plants in innovative ways.

Start by identifying a specific place or roadway that you pass by on the way to school — it could be a bridge, a bus stop, a train station, intersection, or highway that does not currently have many plants growing on or around it. When redesigning the space, think strategically and sustainably. What are some ways we can use features from our natural landscape to strengthen our urban environment? Present your chosen location as a drawing with a written summary of 200-300 words that describes your design and identifies at least three ecologically minded features meant to strengthen these areas.

SUBMISSIONS DUE: November 7, 2025

-  Digital Entry Form for each submission required
-  Physically submit all drawings and written descriptions delivered in person or mailed via certified mail to 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, Florida 33156, ATTN: Education Department.
-  Hand deliver drawings ANY day of the week 10a-5p at the Visitor Center.

Participants per submission: Individual Student

POINT SYSTEM:

Maximum Points	100 points per submission <u>2 submissions per school</u> = 200 max points
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✓ SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Drawing of a transportation space with a creative title. Original hand-drawn artwork by students in colored pencil, crayon, pens, markers only; no computer-generated design. Drawings must be no larger than 8.5" by 11".

On a separate sheet of paper, write or type a 200-300 word written description double spaced in 12-point font describing the redesign of your transportation space and how the addition of plants will impact that space.

The drawing AND written description must include the student's first name, last initial, grade, teacher's name, and school name **ON THE BACK of the drawings and written description.**

Physically submit all drawings delivered in person or mailed via certified mail to 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, Florida 33156, ATTN: Education Department. Hand deliver drawings ANY day of the week 10a-5p at the Visitor Center.

Digital Entry Form for school and student information only. **Electronic uploads of drawing and written descriptions will not be reviewed.**

Two submissions max per school.

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Prior Knowledge:

To be successful, students should be familiar with these concepts:

- The role of plants in an ecosystem.
- Ecosystem benefits that plants provide to spaces and the environment surrounding them.
- Recognize and describe transportation spaces (like roadways, bus stops, bridges, and railroads) and their purposes.
- Apply techniques to create detailed drawings of objects, spaces, and people, including the use of perspective, proportion, coloring and shading.
- Writing skills to describe the elements of a drawing, like the role of plants, activities that people or animals are conducting in their drawing, and interactions within the scene.

Standards/Learning Targets:

Subject	Strand	Standard(s)
Science	Nature of Science	SC.8.N.4.1 Explain that science is one of the processes that can be used to inform decision making at the community, state, national, and international levels
		SC.8.N.4.2 Explain how political, social, and economic concerns can affect science, and vice versa.
Math	Mathematical Thinking and Reasoning	MA.K12.MTR.2.1 Demonstrate understanding by representing problems in multiple ways. Mathematicians who demonstrate understanding by representing problems in multiple ways: • Build understanding through modeling and using manipulatives. • Represent solutions to problems in multiple ways using objects, drawings, tables, graphs and equations. • Progress from modeling problems with objects and drawings to using algorithms and equations. • Express connections between concepts and representations. Choose a representation based on the given context or purpose.
Visual Arts	Skills, Techniques, and Processes	VA.68.S.1.5 Explore various subject matter, themes, and historical or cultural events to develop an image that communicates artistic intent.

For more detailed information and resources, please visit the Middle School Challenge 1 webpage.

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Standards/Learning Targets Continued:

Subject	Strand	Standard(s)
English Language Arts (B.E.S.T.)	Communication	ELA.6.C.1.5, ELA.7.C.1.5, ELA.8.C.1.5 Improve writing by planning, revising, and editing, considering feedback from adults and peers.
		ELA.6.C.4.1, ELA.7.C.4.1, ELA.8.C.4.1 Conduct research to answer a question, drawing on multiple reliable and valid sources, and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
World Languages	Presentational Writing	WL.K12.NM.5.6 Pre-write by drawing pictures to support ideas related to a task.
		WL.K12.IH.5.3 Present, in writing, viewpoints on an issue and support opinion with clarity and detail.
Heath Education	Personal Health Concepts	HE.6.PHC.2.2 Identify environmental factors that affect personal health
		HE.7.PHC.2.2 Analyze how environmental factors affect personal health.
	Community and Environmental Health	HE.8.CEH.2.4 Predict how environmental factors affect community health.

Learning Goals/Objectives:

By the end of this project, students will be able to:

- Create** a unique plant-centered landscape design for an urban area in their community.
- Examine** the how plant selection in a garden can affect an environment.
- Communicate** the social, cultural, ecological, and economic importance of plants.
- Justify** their choice of plants and design elements to make human spaces more resilient.
- Design** an innovative garden that is beneficial to people and the urban spaces they use.

Differentiation:

ESOL students are allowed to complete this assignment in their first language.

Students with writing accommodations may have their observations dictated and transcribed.

Drawings can be group oriented for students lacking fine motor skills.

We strive to be inclusive of all students' learning needs. If you have questions about specific accommodations, please email us at challenge@fairchildgarden.org.

For more detailed information and resources, please visit the Middle School Challenge 1 webpage.

