

## Getting Started: Management Strategies for Investigations in the Field

- **Get to know your site.** Look for easy access, diversity of habitat (micro-habitats) in cracks, along sidewalks or buildings, concrete/asphalt, and check for any safety concerns.
- **Establish expectations with your students** – no running or shouting. Let students know the simple rules will be enforced. “Three strikes and you're IN!”
- **Circle UP:** Gathering students in a large outdoor circle allows you to look every child in the eye to assess understanding, maintain focus, facilitate discussions and if need be, control misbehavior.
- **Establish boundaries outdoors.** You must be able to see students. They must be able to see you.
- **Use a whistle to communicate.** When students are spread out in the established boundaries communicate by whistle:
  - 1 tweet = Look at me. I have something to tell you.
  - 2 tweets = Come and circle up around me.
  - 3 tweets = Line up at the door where we exited the building.  
This is a good signal in an emergency or if the bell is about to ring.
- **The exit door sends a subtle message.** If possible do not exit the building through the door used when going outside for recess.
- **Maintain Focus.** Each student should have a task and something in their hands such as equipment and a journal for data collection or reflection.
- **Notify the office.** A call, or a note on the classroom door indicating where you are and when the class will return. Carry a phone or walkie-talkie.
- **Collect with Care.** Discuss the ethics of collecting. Take only small samples – a petal, not the whole flower. Never take the last one. The Rule of 100: It is okay to collect a little if there are more than 100.
- **Keep Stewardship in Mind.** For good Earth Manners, take along a small plastic bag so students can pick up unsightly trash as you explore outdoors.