City Safari & NGSS Alignment

Grades K–2

Focus: Observing nature in cities, asking questions, and recognizing patterns.

- K-LS1-1: Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to survive. *Explore how city critters like pigeons, or squirrels find food, water, and shelter.*
- K-ESS3-1: Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of plants/animals and the places they live. *Visit a city park as a "habitat" model; compare it to an asphalt schoolyard*.
- 2-LS4-1: Make observations of plants and animals to compare diversity in different habitats. *Compare a playground to a garden.*

Grades 3–5

Focus: Ecosystems, human impact, and problem-solving.

- 3-LS4-3: Construct an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat, some organisms can survive well, some less well, and some not at all. *Discuss why raccoons thrive in cities while wolves would struggle.*
- 4-LS1-1: Construct an argument that animals have internal and external structures that support survival. *Discuss how city birds' beaks or squirrels' claws help them survive.*
- 5-ESS3-1: Obtain and combine information about ways communities protect Earth's resources and environment. *Discuss green roofs, rain gardens, community clean-ups.*
- 5-LS2-1: Develop a model to describe movement of matter among plants, animals, decomposers, and environment. *Discuss food webs in a city (crumbs to pigeons; pigeons to hawks).*

Grades 6–8

Focus: Interactions, adaptations, and sustainability.

- MS-LS2-2: Construct an explanation that predicts patterns of interactions among organisms across ecosystems*. Discuss how crows sharing information in pre-roosting trees each evening*.
- MS-LS4-4: Construct an explanation based on evidence that describes how genetic variations increase survival and reproduction. *Discuss how urban birds have become louder than their rural cousins.*
- MS-ESS3-3: Apply scientific principles to design a method for monitoring and minimizing human impact. *Build a compost bin and monitor how much waste is reduced in school.*
- MS-ESS3-4: Construct an argument about how human population and per-capita consumption of resources impact Earth's systems. *Discuss how cities influence green space, biodiversity, and climate.*

Teacher Takeaway

City Safari can:
- Launch inquiry with half of the book dedicated to teaching kids how to be "urban ecologists."
- Support field investigations (backyard, schoolyard, park).
- Tie into sustainability projects (gardens, recycling, habitat mapping).