Make a Plant Pal

From the tallest tree to the tiniest flower, plants are an incredibly diverse group, and people and animals all around the world rely on them for food, medicine, and shelter. Use this guide to practice the power of observation, and make friends with one of your plant neighbors.

Materials
Nature journal (or blank paper)
Pencil, pen, marker, or crayon
Flat surface to draw on, like a clipboard or cardboard (optional)

Directions
1. Watch the “Meet a Plant” video for a guided experience.
2. Choose a plant. It can be a tree, a flower, a bush, or even a houseplant. Find a comfortable place to sit near your plant.
3. Observe the leaves of your plant, noticing as many details as you can.
   a. How big are the leaves?
   b. What shape are the leaves? Do they have any veins?
   c. What color are the leaves?
5. Use your senses! Gently touch the leaves. What do they feel like? What do they smell like? Does your plant rustle in the wind? Are there pollinators buzzing in your plant?
6. Sketch the other parts of your plant. Look for patterns in how the branches or stems grow.
   a. Does it have flowers? Are they blooming? Can you count the petals?
   b. Does it have fruits or berries? Note: Never eat a plant you find without asking an adult who knows exactly what it is.
   c. Does it have cones?
7. Photograph your plant using the Seek or iNaturalist app on an adult's phone to find out more about it, or use your photo and drawing to find your plant in a guidebook.
8. Extension: Do this activity with friends or family members, with each person observing a different plant. When you are finished, trade notebooks for a plant scavenger hunt!