

Backyard Adventures in Franklin Township

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Honorable Mention, third grade

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New Jersey is a very crowded state. It is nice to live in Franklin Township where there is open space. Franklin Township has trails for hiking and biking and places to fish and picnic, but my favorite place to enjoy nature is my backyard.

I live on a dead end with few cars. My family and I go for walks in the neighborhood but I am lucky to have a big backyard with grass and a forest where my brother and I can play. There is plenty to do in each season of the year – winter, spring, summer, and fall.

In the winter my brother and I like watching Dad cut firewood. We put on our snowsuits and sled down the hills. Once the snow was hard as ice and I could not break through it.

In the springtime, Mom planted a garden next to the house and we grew tomatoes, carrots, mint, parsley and strawberries. My brother and I help pull out the weeds so the plants can grow. It's nice when the weather is good and sunny but even when it rains I play outside, wearing a raincoat, boots, and carrying an umbrella.

There is so much to do in my backyard in the summer. My brother and I ride bikes; my Pop-Pop taught me how to ride a bike without training wheels and how to play baseball in my backyard. My family eats dinner outside on our deck a lot in the summer. During thunderstorms I like to watch the trees wave in the wind. On summer nights my brother and I watch bats and I have a telescope that I use to see the stars, moon and planets. I hear a lot of crickets at night in the summer. Sometimes we watch a movie in the backyard on a sheet tied between two trees. We also make S'mores on a campfire.

In the fall my brother and I make leaf piles and we love to jump in them and throw the leaves into the wind. The leaves smell like fall. We have a campsite in the woods where we can sleep over and enjoy nature. There are vines in the forest that we climb and swing from. We love hot chocolate in the fall!

When I see deer in my backyard eating berries and hear the birds chirping I think that being outdoors in Franklin Township is great even if it is in your own backyard. Be careful and watch out for mosquitos, ticks, and poison ivy!