



Activity Guide - Thinking like a bear

Understanding a bit more about a species' basic needs helps us to better understand human-wildlife conflict. A few months ago, Junior Rangers were challenged to "Think like a deer", looking for food, water and shelter. We learned that all sorts of human-deer conflict can occur when deer find these basic needs in our backyards.

Well, guess what? The same is true for black bears! Black bears are extremely **food-motivated**, which means they will go to great lengths for a good meal. They also have an incredible **sense of smell** to help them find new food sources in their habitats. What do you think happens when they find food in town? Unfortunately, it sometimes results in messes, property damage, safety concerns for you and your neighbours and in some cases, the death of the bear. Luckily, if we remove the food, we can remove the reasons for these conflicts!

Your mission:

Find an adventure partner and head out for a walk around your neighbourhood. As you walk, your mission is to think like a bear! You will be seeking out the basic things you (as a bear) must find to survive. Check off all the examples of food, water and shelter you find on the worksheet. Once you get home, there are a few extra questions to answer about your experience.

Did you know?

At this time of year, bears need to pack on lots of weight to get ready for hibernation. In order to do this, they can spend up to 20 hours a day looking for food! An adult black bear can eat up to 20 000 calories a day!

You'll need:

- A printed copy of this Activity Guide
- Clipboard
- Pencil
- Adventure partner

Safety first! Always bring an adventure partner with you (parents are great for this!) and pay attention to your surroundings. Stick to sidewalks for this activity and watch for cars.

Thinking like a bear

Junior Ranger Name: _____

Hometown: _____ **Date:** _____

1. Record all sources of bear foods, water and shelter that you see during your walk in town:

Water Sources

- a river
- a creek
- a lake
- other

(describe: _____)

Shelter

- a stand of trees
- a forested park
- other

(describe: _____)

Food Sources

- a garbage can
- litter
- a birdfeeder
- a barbeque
- clover
- an anthill

pet food bowls

a composter

a fruit tree

(what kind? _____)

grass

other

(describe: _____)

2. Circle or highlight all **unnatural** food sources or wildlife attractants above.

3. Based on what you saw today, do you think a black bear could find all its basic needs in town? (Circle one)

YES

NO (Why not? _____)

4. We know that having bears in town can be dangerous for people, but can you think of any reasons why it might be risky for the bear? List any possible dangers:

5. What can people in your neighbourhood do to keep bears wild and your community safe?