

# CIRCLE OF LIFE SAFARI



UFASA

One of Simba's earliest lessons from his father, King Mufasa, was about the great circle of life. Simba was taught that within this circle, every living thing found throughout the Pridelands is connected. All creatures, from the smallest ant to the mightiest lion, interact with each other in a variety of ways. Herbivores like elephants, zebras and wildebeest eat plants, which provides room for more plants to grow. Carnivores, like lions, cheetahs and painted dogs eat other animals which prevents them from overpopulating. Plants provide food for some animals. In turn, those animals help the plants to reproduce by pollinating and dispersing seeds. Even after plants and animals die, they provide food for decomposers, such as millipedes, fungi and bacteria. These release nutrients back into the environment, continuing the great circle of life.

From dry deserts and tropical rainforests to the deepest parts of the ocean and even your own backyard, this great circle can be found in ecosystems all over the world. Have you ever stepped outside to observe nature, discovering the types of birds flying near your home or which flowers bloom during spring? All around you the great circle of life is in motion, even if you can't see it. Scientists and conservationists from around the world are investigating the circle of life every day with the goal of protecting nature. By identifying and understanding how animals interact with each other and their ecosystems, scientists can determine their habitat needs, identify reasons for their decline and address human-wildlife conflicts.



Whether observing from near or far, you can practice your own observation skills by stepping outside to explore the natural world. Head to the next page to start your own journey of documenting the nature in your ecosystem. You might just be surprised at the tiny worlds thriving near you!

## EVERY LIVING THING PLAYS A ROLE IN THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

Now that you've learned a little bit about plants and animals that share the savanna with Simba and his pride, go on your own safari to observe and document the living creatures that inhabit your community!

Head outdoors with an adult to a favorite local nature spot—it could be a nearby park or your backyard! Go on "safari" and discover the wildlife around you. Look high and low to observe plants, insects, reptiles, birds and other animals that may be present. Write down a description or name of what you see. Next, in the empty circles below, draw in some

of the wildlife you observed. Consider how each living creature is connected, and try to place the plants and animals in order of how they interact. If you need help, utilize books or the internet to research your local ecosystem. How are the living things in your local ecosystem similar to or different from the plants and animals of the African savanna?

**NATURE NOTE:** When heading out on safari, be sure to bring an adult and take care when exploring a new outdoor

### MY SAFARI OBSERVATIONS:

\_\_\_\_\_

An animal that crawls on the ground or soars in the sky.

\_\_\_\_\_

A plant that provides shelter or is food to an animal.

\_\_\_\_\_

An insect that has bright colors, or one that blends into the environment.

\_\_\_\_\_

An animal that makes a unique sound.

More observations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

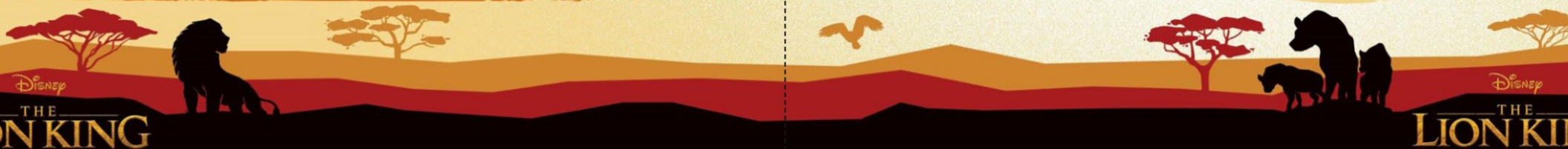
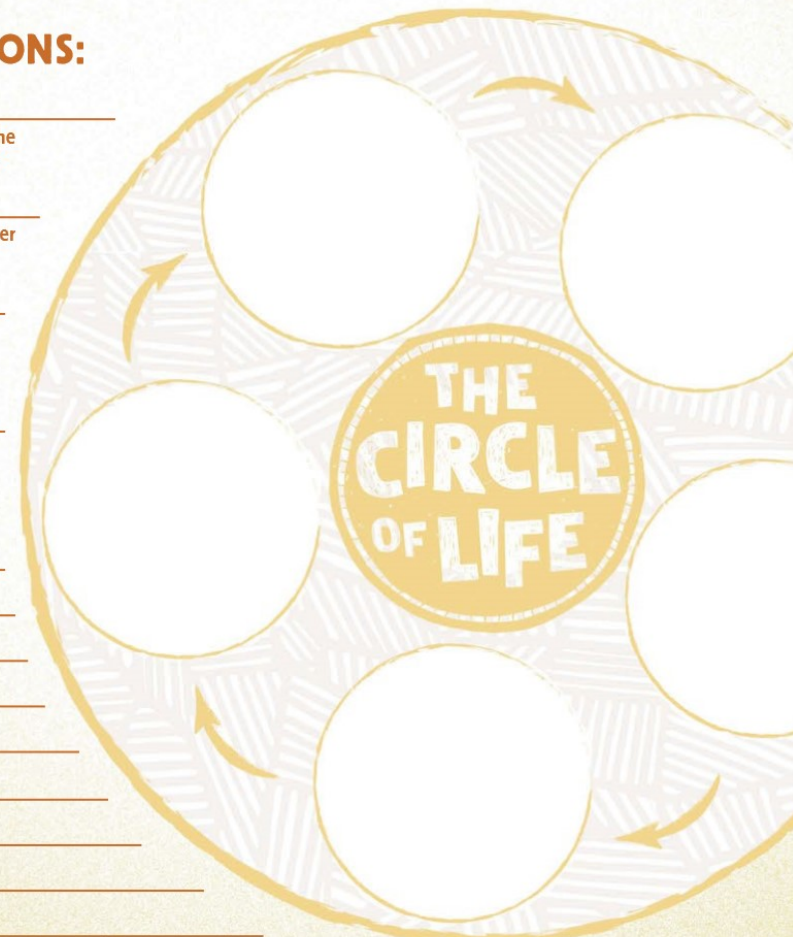
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Disney  
THE LION KING

Disney  
THE LION KING