This activity guide is intended to help people ages 7-13 explore, experience, and enjoy the Rail Park. It highlights the environment, history, and future vision for the Rail Park in Philadelphia.

Some activities in this guide will take you to the park itself, but others can be done from anywhere! Many of them involve reading, writing, and drawing, so make sure you have a pen or pencil handy.

This guide features illustrations from talented Philadelphia-based artists:

**Chenlin Cai** – a muralist and painter from China. He now lives in Philly. He loves to use murals to beautify the city and tell stories. [caichenlin.com](http://caichenlin.com)

**Xingzi Liang** – a graphic designer who comes from China, she is often inspired by life and pays attention to details. [xingziliang.com](http://xingziliang.com)

**Cindy Lozito** – graphic designer and illustrator from New York, living in Philly. [cindylozito.com](http://cindylozito.com)

**Marian Bailey** – a self-taught visual artist located in Philly—they are an illustrator, muralist, logo designer, and even an occasional model. [marianbaileyart.com](http://marianbaileyart.com)

**Kate Otte** – a designer and illustrator whose work spans a variety of disciplines, including branding, hand lettering, environmental graphics, and watercolor illustration. [kateotte.com](http://kateotte.com)

**Juan Tang Hon** – an illustrator and printmaker from Panama who enjoys the company of his friends, watching movies, games, and pottery. [juantanghon.com](http://juantanghon.com)

To learn more about the Rail Park, this activity guide and the Rail Park Youth Ambassador Program, visit therailpark.org.
In 2018, the first part of the Rail Park opened to the public. It is full of trees, flowers, and other plants. The Rail Park has views of art murals, of the city skyline, and of the streets below—plus it has plenty of space to move around. People visit the park every day to relax, exercise, walk dogs, study, see the flowers, swing on the swings, and simply enjoy the outdoors.

But this is just the beginning. We want the park to grow even more. In fact, our goal is to help the park grow into three miles of green space that crosses through ten different Philadelphia neighborhoods—that’s the length of almost 53 football fields!

About the Rail Park

The Rail Park sits on historic railroad tracks that were built in the 1890s. After the last train traveled on the tracks in 1984, the tracks were left behind. A few decades later, a group of neighbors got together with the idea to turn the unused train tracks into a park that everyone could enjoy. Friends of the Rail Park was formed to create the vision for the park, and along with many partners and neighbors, took on the task of turning the space into a safe and beautiful place for the entire community.
Connect the Dots

Where the Rail Park is now, there used to be a train line. Philadelphia was home to the Baldwin Locomotive Works, a factory that produced over 70,500 steam engine trains during the 125 years that it was open. Many years ago, some of the trains that used the Rail Park tracks were Baldwin Locomotive trains.

1. On the next page, draw a line from the 1 dot to the 2 dot.
2. Draw a line from the 2 to the 3.
3. Continue drawing lines in order until you’ve connected all the dots.
4. Watch the train engine appear!

Supplies Needed:
• A pen, pencil, or other writing utensil

There is a Baldwin 60000 train on display at the Franklin Institute. In 1933, it took five days to move the train from 24th and Vine street to the museum!

Find It

The Rail Park is home to lots of insects! When you visit the park, keep an eye out for all these bugs. If you see one, go ahead and observe it carefully, but don't touch or hurt it—parks are for animals, not just people.

Try to find all these hidden insects on the next page:

• **Ladybug** – Ladybugs can eat up to 5,000 insects in their lifetime.
• **Butterfly** – Butterflies use their feet to taste.
• **Spider** – All kinds of spiders have 8 legs and they all make their webs with silk.
• **Dragonfly** – After they hatch, young dragonflies live in water for about a year.
• **Praying Mantis** – Praying mantises can rotate their heads 180 degrees.
• **Cicada** – Know that loud, buzzing, whirring cicada sound? Only male cicadas make it!

Philadelphia is home to the oldest club of insect scientists in the Western Hemisphere! The American Entomological Society was formed here in Philadelphia in 1859.
Time Capsule

The Rail Park sits on an old train line that used to transport passengers and goods such as food, candy, books, clothes, and even train engines themselves! The train line used to carry all kinds of things to and from the Reading Terminal Market and out into the world.

You are making history right now, too! Try creating a time capsule to capture today’s history. A time capsule is a collection of documents and other objects that are put into a container and then hidden or buried, ready to be discovered sometime in the future. Create a time capsule that represents today, then stash it away so someone can open it later and remember this time in history.

1. Collect items that represent who you are and the world you live in today. You could use clippings from newspapers or magazines, a photo of yourself, objects that mean something to you, a dried flower or leaf, or even a note about this moment in history.

2. Put your items inside a container and close the lid.

3. Write today’s date on the container.

4. Pick a date when your time capsule should be opened, and write that on the container, too.

5. Hide or bury your time capsule and forget about it! You can bury it in a flower pot or a backyard, or hide it away in a closet or a corner of the basement.

Supplies Needed:

- Container with a lid that seals
- Items or notes that represent this moment in history for you
- A place to bury or hide your time capsule
- Optional: a shovel or spoon to dig a hole

The Reading Terminal Market is an active historic site that is still open today. You can visit it at 51 North 12th Street and shop for local food, treats, and other goods.
Small Animal Spotting

In the center of a big city like Philadelphia, it can be hard to find places filled with nature. That’s one reason the Rail Park is so important. The Rail Park isn’t just for people, it also provides shelter and food for small animals, insects, and birds.

While visiting the Rail Park, sit still and try to see or hear any of these animals:

- Easter Chipmunk
- Dark Eyed Junco
- Brown Snake

These animals are all harmless. If you observe them at the park, feel free to look at them, but do not bother them. Leave them alone to enjoy the park, just like you.
Park Tac Toe

There are over 1,000 plants at the Rail Park. You can enjoy the plants by sitting in the shade of trees, admiring the colors, and even just hearing the wind breezing through the leaves. You can also interact with leaves or small sticks that the plants have dropped, without disturbing the plants at all. So find a friend and head over to the park for a game of Tic Tac Toe together.

1. Look throughout the park to find a handful of rocks, a handful of fallen leaves, and a small stick.
2. Draw a Tic Tac Toe board in the dirt, or use the one on the next page.
3. Give one player the rocks, and the other player the sticks.
4. Take turns, with each player adding their mark to a square.
5. Keep playing until one player has three in a row.

Supplies Needed:

• A friend—this activity is best with 2 players
I Spy

Part of the Rail Park is raised above the street, which means it has great views of the streets below, the city’s buildings, and nearby murals. You can even see Philadelphia City Hall from here! As you explore the park, observe your surroundings—both throughout the park and beyond it as well.

1. Look around and pick something you can see. It helps to pick something that doesn’t move and that you can describe easily.

2. Finish the sentence: “Here at the Rail Park, I Spy something that is...” Fill in the blank with a descriptive word or two about your chosen thing. For example, if you chose a plant as your item, you could say, “Here at the Rail Park, I Spy something that is green.”

3. Then let your friends or family try to guess the secret item. The person who guesses your secret item will be the spy next.

You don’t have to stick with visual clues! You can try giving hints that use other senses as well. For example, you could say, “Here at Rail Park, I Spy something that feels smooth,” or “Here at the Rail Park, I Hear something that goes ‘chirp.’”
Shadow Puppets

The Rail Park is just a short walk from Philadelphia’s Chinatown, a cultural hub where Chinese and other Asian American and Pacific Islander cultures and communities are celebrated. There are many places to eat delicious food, shop, and see Asian and Asian-inspired art installations and performances.

Puppet shows are an ancient Chinese art form. You can create your own puppets and put on a show—at home or at the Rail Park!

1. Cut out the silhouettes on the next page.
2. Use a pencil tip to poke two holes in the puppet and thread the puppet onto your pencil.
3. Position the puppet between the sun and the ground to cast a shadow on the ground.
4. Let the show begin!

Supplies Needed:
• Scissors
• Pencil, pen, or stick

This activity works best outside on a sunny day. If there’s not a lot of sun, you can also use a flashlight or lamp to create shadow indoors.
Rail Park Scavenger Hunt

The Rail Park is a wonderful place to explore. The more you pay attention to your surroundings, the more there is to discover.

1. Start by observing the park around you. You can start anywhere in the park and you can sit still or take your hunt throughout the park.

2. Look and listen to what’s around you.

3. If you see or hear any of the items below, mark them off on your list.

4. Try to find everything on the list!

- Rail Car
- Hat
- Baby
- Train Track
- Dog
- Skyscraper
- Swing
- Rock
- Tree
- Bird
- Squirrel
- Poem
- Mural
- Bike
- Airplane

Art by Cindy Lozito
Design a Mural

A mural is a big work of art on a wall in a public space. Philadelphia is known for its murals. Many of them have bright, beautiful colors and many have a message for the community. Can you find the one below at the Rail Park?

This mural is called “The Stamp of Incarceration.” It was created by the artist Shepard Fairey. His subject is a man named James Anderson, and the work is designed to raise awareness about criminal justice.

Use the space below to design your own mural—it can be of anything or about anything, because your art is up to you.

Supplies Needed:

• A pen, pencil, crayons, or colored pencils
Design the Park

The Rail Park is growing and we need your help to design it!

Show us what your ideal park would look like. What kind of plants and nature would you see there? What kind of activities would you do there? What kind of art would you want to experience there? Think about what YOU want in a park, and use the space below to draw your dream design for the park.

Supplies Needed:

• A pen, pencil, crayons, or colored pencils
Thanks for visiting!
See you soon.
You’re invited to become a Rail Park Ambassador!

As an Ambassador, you’ll get to share the knowledge you learn about the Rail Park, as well as the surrounding community, the City of Philadelphia, the local history, and the nature at the park help protect the park and share your love of it with others.

When you complete all of the activities in this book, we’ll send you a free Rail Park swag bag so you can show off your park pride!

YES! I COMPLETED THE RAIL PARK YOUTH ACTIVITY GUIDE.

Printed Name

Signature

MAIL MY RAIL PARK SWAG BAG TO:

To become a Rail Park Youth Ambassador and receive your swag bag, sign this page and send it back to us. Just take a photo and email it to us at friends@therailpark.org, or mail it to us at:

Friends of the Rail Park
1219 Vine Street, Suite M
Philadelphia, PA, 19107
Phase One is part of a larger vision for the Rail Park—one that will stretch three miles, connecting 10 different neighborhoods from Fairmount Park through Center City. The ultimate vision includes three distinct sections: The Viaduct, The Cut, and The Tunnel. Together, this expansive greenway will be filled with pathways and open spaces, gathering places and greenery, and all kinds of programming that will service Philadelphians and visitors alike.

Behind the park, there are people. We are Friends of the Rail Park, a nonprofit with one simple mission: to bring the Rail Park to life. And you (and parents, too!) can help. Join us as a volunteer, become a Friend, or learn more about the park: therailpark.org

This activity guide was developed in collaboration with the Temple University Institute on Disabilities and PopUpPlay.

Thank you to our supporters: