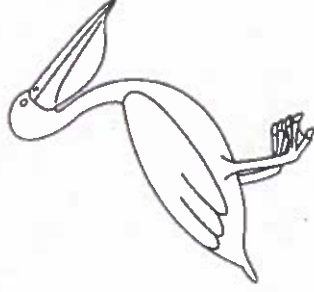


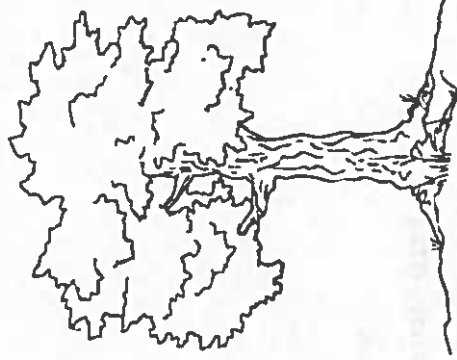
Eastern Pondhawk
Erythemis simplicicollis



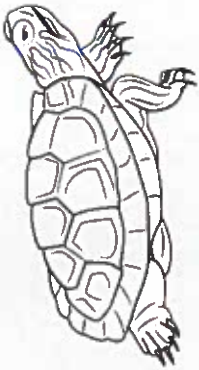
Brown Pelican
Pelecanus occidentalis



Mallard
Anas platyrhynchos



Southern Live Oak
Quercus virginiana



Common Slider
Trachemys scripta



Great Egret
Ardea alba



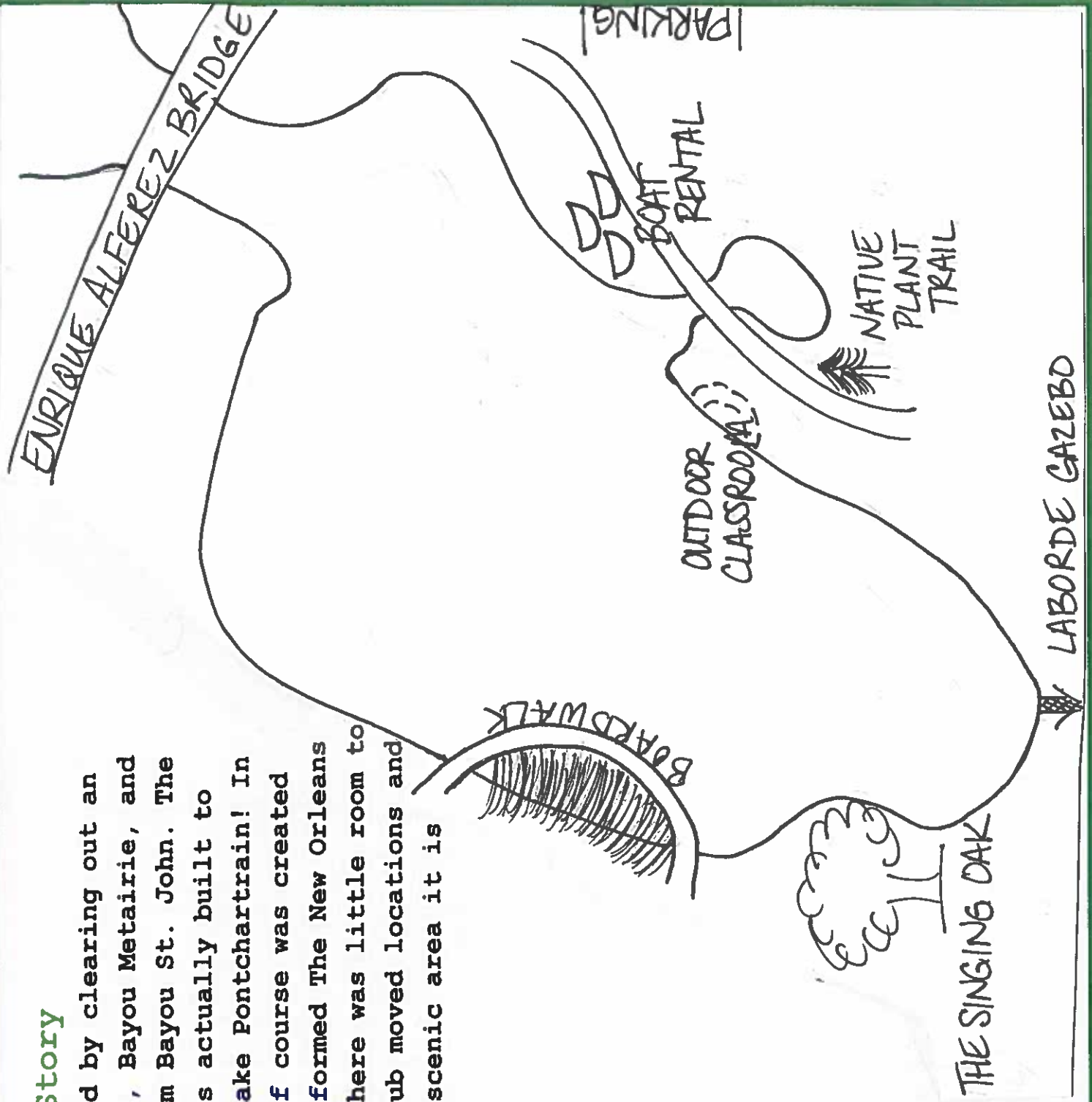
Big Lake Discovery Journal

NAME _____

DATE _____

Big Lake's Big Story

This lake was created by clearing out an area of an old bayou, Bayou Metairie, and pumping water in from Bayou St. John. The shape of the lake was actually built to mimic the shape of Lake Pontchartrain! In the late 1890s a golf course was created around the lake and formed The New Orleans Golf Club. Because there was little room to grow, the country club moved locations and Big Lake became the scenic area it is today.





Discover!

Draw one animal or plant you see from the Enrique Alferez Bridge!

Adaptations

The special characteristics that enable plants and animals to be successful in a particular environment are called adaptations. Camouflage, as in a toad's ability to blend in with its surroundings, is a common example of an adaptation. Adaptations give the organism a better chance to survive in its surroundings.

Discover!

Think about the two species you chose to draw.

Why do you think the two species were not found in opposite locations?

Draw one animal or plant you see from the Laborde Gazebo!

What about that area or that species makes that location better suited for them?

Take your notes here:

Becoming a City Park Naturalist!

A naturalist is someone who observes and studies plants, animals, insects, rocks and fossils.

What can you do to become a naturalist?

- Slow down and try to observe nature as you walk through it!
 - What different plants, animals, and insects do you see?
- Pay close attention to characteristics of these organisms so that you can try to identify them.
 - How does that organism behave? What is its habitat?
- Observe, but do not disturb nature! A true naturalist wants to keep the ecosystems they are observing healthy.
 - Do not touch any animals or bugs. Try to stay on paths so that you do not walk over any plants and disturb them.

Do you see anything happening at the water's edge? Take notes like a naturalist!

Big Lake Animal Survey Table

Track how many animals you see as you walk around Big Lake!

	Water	Shoreline	Surrounding Landscape
Birds			
Turtles			
Fish			
Insects			
Other			



Take a walk along the Big Lake Native Plant Trail...

The Native Plant Trail displays plants that are important for providing nectar, pollen, seeds and foliage that serve as food for native butterflies, insects, birds and other animals. These plants also can survive our hot humid summers!



Iden-TREE-fication!

Naturalists commonly identify trees by their leaves! Leaves are split into the blade, the wide more obvious part of a leaf, and the stalk, where the blade is attached to the stem.

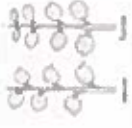
Broad vs. Narrow Leaves

Broad leaves have a wide blade, where you can often see a network of veins. Narrow leaves are slender and needle-like.



Leaf Attachment

Some plants have leaves that are attached with only one leaf at each location, which is called alternate leaves. Some have multiple leaves at each location, which are called opposite leaves.



Sometimes you can also identify plants by their fruits and flowers, so look out for these features as well!

Discover!

Do you recognize any plants on the trail?

Describe your favorite native plant that you have seen on this trail.

Draw the leaves on your favorite native plant below!

Reflection under the Singing Oak

City Park's Singing Oak is a large oak tree, which sits adjacent to Big Lake in the John S. McIlhenny Meadow. It is strung with a set of wind chimes that ring a pentatonic (five notes per octave) scale. This musical art installation was designed by artist Jim Hart. This tree is a nice place to relax and reflect on the discoveries you have made today!

Fun Fact:

One of the chimes in the Singing Oak is 14-feet long!

Naturalists use all of their senses in order to collect thorough and accurate observations. Lay down under the tree and make some notes about what you see, hear, smell and feel! (Let's not taste anything out here!)

I see...	I hear...
I smell...	I feel...

Healthy Cities Need Healthy Parks!

Big Lake is one of the many unique and special areas of City Park where visitors can enjoy, relax, and explore. Since urban parks provide so many benefits to people, people need to become stewards of our urban parks! Talk with the people around you about what you think it means to be a steward of City Park and how you can be one.