To experience the convergence of art and nature, participants can arrange a tour of the campus greenhouse, which includes an aquaponics system, the organic community garden project, and the many and varied trees and sculptures on campus (see additional brochures for self-guided sculpture and tree tours).

Permacultivate, a nonprofit organization in Reading, Pa., that provides permaculture consulting, education, and demonstration initiatives, as well as Albright’s community garden interns from the environmental studies department, have provided support for this program. Local artists, natural cooks and nutritionists from the Reading Hospital are also collaborative partners in this project. Together we are creating a garden-to-picnic movement and learning how Albright’s community garden celebrates the food plate.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN THE GREENHOUSE
How is a greenhouse different from growing plants outside? What does the term aquaponics mean? How does this type of system work? What more can you find in the greenhouse?

GOING TO THE COMMUNITY GARDEN
The garden is located on Linden St. in between the Geiser House and the MultiFaith Center. The word permaculture itself is derived from “permanent” and “agriculture.” The construction is built of many layers above the ground including coffee grounds, leaf waste, manure, mushroom soil, compost and straw. This is a sustainable garden. What does that mean? There is also a rain garden with flowers that attract bees. Bees and butterflies pollinate the plants. What is pollination?

CONSIDER THE TREES
As you walk across the campus you will notice a variety of trees. Did you know the tree is the oldest living thing? Besides art, trees also have a strong connection to literature and language. Consider the following tree metaphors:

• Someone connected to a community is “rooted” there.
• A sturdy friend’s feet are “planted” on the ground.
• The area from our neck to our pelvis is often called our “trunk.”
• Someone reliable is “solid as an oak.”
• Someone who is exploring new things is “branching out.”

To arrange a group tour of the Freedman Gallery, or to have your child participate in one of our after school experimental art, music or theatre labs or summer camps, contact Beth Krumholz at 610-921-7776 or bkrumholz@alb.edu. For information about the community garden, contact Brian Jennings at bjennings@alb.edu.

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Front cover image: Vaughn Bell, Village Green (one house), 2012, acrylic, soil, water plants, hardware. Photo by David Tanner.

Using giant strips of craft paper or note cards, each person in the group should come up with a single line of poetry. For inspiration, use the artwork on display in the gallery, objects in a room, or a fond memory. Put them together in many different configurations to see how the meaning changes. Read aloud to share.

SUGGESTED READING
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
The Earth and I by Frank Asch
The Little Yellow Leaf by Carin Berger
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

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Take a beautiful, fallen leaf and press it between the pages of a book for a simple and free bookmark!

ART AND NATURE CONVERGE AT ALBRIGHT

The Trees
by Philip Larkin

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said:
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.
Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? NO, they die too.
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.
Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In full-grown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

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To make a seedling necklace, press a few small seeds into a damp cotton ball and place this into a mini Ziplock bag. Punch a hole in the bag and thread onto a string or piece of yarn large enough to go over your head. The heat from your body will sprout the seed! Notice how long it takes for that to happen and record it in your journal. Then, plant your seedlings.

Alternate seed sprouting method: Kids can grow a tiny garden right inside of an egg carton. Plant seeds according to package instructions in an egg carton using potting soil and leave on a sunny windowsill where they can be watered easily. The first leaves to sprout will be the cotyledons or seed leaves, which supply nutrients to the young plant until the first true leaves (resembling those of the parent plant) appear. When plants have grown to about three inches and have at least two sets of true leaves, they are ready to be transplanted to the garden.

As the leaves begin to fall this autumn, pick up these treasures from nature and make bracelets or pressings. As you find interesting objects, attach them to a tape bracelet (the sticky side is on the outside).

This project is good for every season. Take a blank journal and a pencil with you on your next walk outside and write down what you see along your journey: “two robins in the maple tree, a pink tulip by the sculpture.” Write down where you saw things and the date. Take a picture and include it in your journal. Study your picture and make three drawings of how you think that same area will look during the other three seasons.

Be sure to come back each season to see how things actually look.