



NATURE JOURNALING



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

OBJECTIVES

LEARN HOW SCIENTISTS AND ARTISTS MAKE OBSERVATIONS, COMPARISONS, AS WELL AS DOCUMENT AND COMMUNICATE THEIR FINDINGS BY MAKING AND USING THEIR OWN JOURNAL.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS JOURNALING?
2. WHO USES JOURNALS?
3. WHY USE A JOURNAL?

CONCEPTS

- JOURNALS HELP THE USER REMEMBER IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT WHAT THEY OBSERVE.
- SKETCHING AND WRITING HELP TO CREATE MULTIPLE MEMORIES OF THE EVENT SO IT IS EASIER TO REMEMBER.
- THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY TO KEEP A NATURE JOURNAL.

MATERIALS

OPTION 1:

- SEVERAL SHEETS OF PLAIN WHITE PAPER
- 1 SHEET OF CARDSTOCK OR CONSTRUCTION PAPER
- STAPLER (IF UNAVAILABLE A HOLE PUNCH AND YARN CAN BE USED.)

OPTION 2:

- SEVERAL BROWN PAPER LUNCH BAGS
- STAPLER (IF UNAVAILABLE A HOLE PUNCH AND YARN CAN BE USED)

FACTS

1. JOURNALS HAVE BEEN USED SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.
2. ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS ALIKE USE JOURNALS AS A WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AROUND THEM.
3. LEONARDO DI VINCI, ALBERT EINSTEIN, MARIE CURIE, AND LEWIS & CLARK ALL KEPT JOURNALS.



INTEREST APPROACH-ENGAGEMENT

ASK A QUESTION(S):

- WHAT DO YOU NOTICE? "I NOTICE..."
- WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOUR OBSERVATIONS CREATE? "I WONDER..."
- WHAT DOES THIS REMIND YOU OF? "IT REMINDS ME OF..."

**Illinois
Master
Naturalist**



ACTIVITY 1: MAKING THE JOURNAL

- TAKE PLAIN WHITE SHEETS OF PAPER AND FOLD THEM IN HALF, WIDTH-WISE "HAMBURGER-STYLE" IF USING BROWN PAPER BAGS, DO THE SAME.
- DO THE SAME WITH THE PIECE OF CARD STOCK.
- SANDWICH THE FOLDED WHITE PAPER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CARD STOCK, MAKING A BOOK.
- STAPLE ALONG THE FOLDED EDGE OF THE PAPER.
- IF A STAPLER IS UNAVAILABLE, HOLES MAY BE MADE ON THE FOLDED SIDE OF THE PAPER AND YARN LACED THROUGH THE HOLES TO KEEP THE JOURNAL TOGETHER.

ACTIVITY 2: OBSERVATION

PRACTICE YOUR OBSERVATION SKILLS. GO OUTSIDE AND CHOOSE A SMALL AREA TO WRITE DOWN OR SKETCH EVERYTHING YOU NOTICE. USE ALL OF YOUR SENSES. (PLEASE DO NOT TASTE ANYTHING YOU ARE NOT 100% SURE IS EDIBLE.)

ACTIVITY 3: QUESTION

USING YOUR OBSERVATIONS AS A STARTING POINT, WRITE DOWN AS MANY QUESTIONS AS YOU CAN THINK OF RELATED TO WHAT YOU NOTICED. DON'T WORRY IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS. THIS IS THE PROCESS THAT SCIENTISTS USE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND SOMETHING.

ACTIVITY 4: MAKE A CONNECTION

FINALLY, USE THE PROMPT, "IT REMINDS ME OF..." TO RECORD THE CONNECTIONS YOU MAKE BETWEEN WHAT YOU ARE OBSERVING AND WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW.

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE OBSERVATIONS:

- MEASURE
- SKETCH
- DESCRIBE COLORS, ODORS, AND TEXTURES
- DESCRIBE ANIMAL BEHAVIORS.