

## Using Your Nature Journal

Nature journals help us see, understand, and appreciate the world around us. They help us tap into our senses, develop our observation skills, discover our creative side, and even help us slow down and relax.

Now get outside!

### Supplies:

1. Your nature journal
2. Pencil
3. Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
4. Nature to observe

### Steps:

1. Grab your nature journal.
2. Go, or look, outside.
3. Write the following on the top of your first blank page.
  - a. Date
  - b. Time
  - c. Location
  - d. City and State
  - e. Weather
4. Write the following on your page.
  - a. I Notice
  - b. I Wonder
  - c. It Reminds Me
5. Be still and quiet.
6. Notice the nature around you.
7. Pick one thing that you find interesting (leaf, branch, insect, animal, flower, clouds).
8. Draw a picture (It's not about making a pretty picture; it's about recording accurate observations).
9. Write down your observations with the "I Notice, I Wonder, It Reminds Me" prompts.
10. Use drawings, numbers, words, descriptions
11. Write down questions that you have about your item.
12. Take your time and ask lots of questions.
13. When you feel done take a break and then look one more time.
14. Share your nature journal entry with a parent or teacher.

Share your nature journal with us! [Facebook](#) or [Joy@acparks.org](mailto:Joy@acparks.org)

### Parent Resources:

Nature journals help us see, understand, and appreciate the natural world around us. They help us use our senses, develop our observation skills and our creative side. Very importantly, they help us slow down and relax, and that can be hard to do, no matter your age. Kids, and parents, can continue to use their nature journals to help them to learn and grow, to record their scientific observations, or even just things that made them smile.



From John Muir Laws (<https://johnmuirlaws.com/>)

- The definitive resource for nature journaling. It includes free resources.

The Art of Simple (<https://theartofsimple.net/nature-journaling-with-kids/>)

- General concepts of how to use a nature journal.

Scratch Made Journal (<https://www.scratchmadejournal.com/blog/nature-journaling-for-kids-age-by-age>)

- What to expect from various age groups when nature journaling.

Questions and Prompts from John Muir Laws

- Look over the observations you just made. Are there any things you observed but did not record? Take a moment to add those in.
- Are there any other questions you could add? Or can you add to one of your questions? Sometimes the question behind the question is really interesting.
- What big idea is this page about? Add a title in bold or block letters on the top or down the side of the page. Extra points if you can come up with a pun!
- Are there different topics of information on the page? Try to make your page easier to scan by adding subheadings or color coding, or by putting lines or boxes around related information.
- Would it help to draw arrows to connect related ideas, observations, and questions?
- Look over all of your observations and questions. If you saw or asked something that is particularly interesting, give it a little emphasis by drawing a big block letter, exclamation point, question mark, star, heart, or happy face next to it.
- Last, check to make sure you added the metadata: date, location, weather, and other pertinent information.