

Field Journaling

Created by: IRRC adapted from the An Ecoregional Curriculum-“From Salmonberry to Sagebrush”	Time Required: 1 hour- this can be repeated several times.
Subject: Science	Grade Level: 4 th +

Overview	Students will keep a field journal to record observations and questions. They can draw sketches; write thoughts, feelings or poems.
Goal(s) & Objective(s)	Students will practice observation skills using sight, sound, smell and touch. They will use a field journal as a tool to gather, analyze, record and interpret data in field research.
Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lined and plain white paper 2. Construction paper 3. Pencil 4. Color pencils/crayons 5. Stapler 6. Glue stick 7. Field Journal Ideas & Guidelines
Teaching Activities: Instructional Approaches/Strategies	<p>Introduction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain what a Field journal is and how important it can be. Lots of explorers (such s Lewis and Clark) kept field journals about what they observed on their expeditions. <p>Procedures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain expectations: Students can draw sketches of animals, insects, plants etc. (colors should be realistic).They can also write thoughts, poems, or describe what they see and hear. 2. Create Field Journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pick a color of construction paper for the cover of their journal. • fold it “hamburger” style so it looks like a book. • staple both lined and plain white paper in their book. 3. Personalize field journal:Front cover must have three things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Title) Field Journal • (Owner) Student’s Name • (Record dates)Dates of use (this is at the discretion of the teacher, whatever dates you are going to have them do this.) 4. Attach “Field Journal Guidelines and Observation Ideas” to inside cover

	<p>page of journal</p> <p>5. Field Trip: pick an area where the students can spread out and sit down. Explain field trip rules: No talking Don't sit close to someone else</p> <p>6. Quietly observe surroundings without writing or talking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smells • what they feel (this includes thoughts & emotions as they sit there) • sound • what else is there with you (this does not mean to list all your class members. Are there insects, animals, etc?) <p>7. Journaling: write or sketch observations for 10-20 minutes.</p> <p>Closure:</p> <p>1. Ask for volunteers to share 1 thing they observed and included in their field journal.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Verify in each student's field journal that they recorded all senses: sight, sound, scent and feel.</p> <p>Verify that their observations are realistic for your fieldtrip area.</p>

Attachments:

Field Journal Ideas

Field Journal Guidelines & Observation Ideas

Guidelines:

- Begin every journal entry with the date, time of day, location, and weather.
- Observe your surroundings before writing.
- Pick at least 5 ideas to pay attention to. You can do them all if you'd like. When recording your data, you may: sketch a picture, write down thoughts, create a poem, or write an essay. **Each entry should be a different method.

Ideas to consider while observing:

- Sound- what noises do you hear, are there any? Listen carefully for loud and softer sounds. (wind, insects, birds, etc.)
- What sensations do you feel; coolness or warmth, something soft, hard, sharp, fuzzy?
- What scents do you smell? Explore the scents of nature: the ground, plants, the breeze.
- What feelings do you have? (This can include thoughts, emotions)
- Who or what else is there (don't make a list of the people you are with, consider insects, animals, birds etc.)
- Look closely at leaf margins or bits of soil, far away at the horizon and distant movements, look for the unnoticeable. What's in-between the rocks or in the nooks and crannies.
- Who or what has been at your spot before? What signs show you they were there?
- How's your spot part of a larger area surrounding it?
- What is happening at your spot? Are there processes or food webs you can observe? (Are things growing, dying or getting eaten around you?)

