

YOU ARE AN EXPLORER

Your mission is to document and observe the world around you as you've never seen it before.

Take notes and keep a nature journal. Collect things you'll find on your walks and travels. Document your findings. Notice patterns. Copy. Trace. Question and look up. Focus on one thing at a time. Record what you are drawn to.

Here's a good way to get started with your own nature journal:

Slow down. This is important so you can use ALL your senses. Close your eyes for a minute and listen, inhale and smell. What do you feel? Can you feel the weather? With your eyes closed, how many words can you say that describe the weather today? Open your eyes and add more words to that list.

What do you hear? Water, birds, traffic? What is going on around you?

Now you are ready to start your first journal page.

1. In a corner of the page, note the date and time of day
2. Then write down where you are (park, school yard, backyard garden...)
3. Describe what it looks like (rocky, flat, tree, grass etc.)
3. Make a note about the weather (rain, clouds, sunny, windy)

Explore a natural object.

SKETCH — Sketch something you see that interests you. Can you capture its shape and color? Are there any signs of life? Bite marks, tracks, wearing away, growth? Try to sketch the details.

LABEL — Next to the sketch you have drawn, label the drawing and name at least three parts (stem, leaf, antennae, legs) you can identify. If you don't know, make a guess and SAY it's a guess.

WRITE — Write a short paragraph describing what you've experienced or make a list of words that describe what you see.

Remember your goal is to make lots of observations and to show them accurately. If you're more comfortable drawing, draw more to show what you see. If you're more comfortable writing, you can use more written descriptions—but use both writing and drawing to show what you see.

Learning shouldn't end on site. Try to save something to lookup when you get home. Stretch your vocabulary by describing something that will help you learn about it later.