

# Nature Journaling



Audubon Center  
of the North Woods

**Purpose:** People have explored nature through literature and the arts for centuries. Nature Journaling is a historic and classic pursuit that is practiced by naturalists all over the world. The sketches and journal excerpts from famous naturalists, such as John James Audubon, Lewis & Clark, and Aldo Leopold continue to inspire us. This class is an attempt to develop in students, a deeper sense of awareness and appreciation for nature. This class will challenge students to be keener observers, to use their imagination and to record their observations in creative ways.

## Concepts:

- Nature can inspire us to express ourselves in many different ways
- We can observe and record objects and events in nature in order to help us understand natural phenomena
- We can use the five senses to become tuned in to the environment around us
- We can use creative expression to explain our feelings about the natural world

## Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to

- List three reasons for journaling
- Describe and demonstrate three journaling techniques
- Illustrate four close up nature observations
- Design a journal of their own to take home with them

## Minnesota Academic Standards: (example)

**REVISOR:** JAIME SOUZA, 2007-08

**CLASS LENGTH:** 3 HR

**AGES:** GRADES 4-12

**SEASON:** F, SP, S

**GROUP SIZE:** 15-17 students

**SAFETY:** Students should be dressed for the weather and follow the rules for hiking.

**MATERIALS:** Unnatural items for unnatural trail, 10 - 4 ft. long pieces of string, 10 magnifying glasses, pencils, colored pencils, crayons, pre-cut journal covers with 2 holes punched in them, pre-cut blank paper (8 pieces for each student) for journal pages with 2 holes punched in them, old magazines for cutting up, 10 pairs of scissors, Example journals, Lewis and Clark Expedition journal excerpts, Pictures of Lascaux cave painting, Pompeii mural, and Egyptian hieroglyphics sample of journal

**PRE-CLASS PREP:** The instructor will need to gather all of the class materials. Covers for the journals and journal pages will need to be cut and two holes punched in each. The instructor may gather sticks to hold the journals together, use popsicle sticks, or have the students collect a stick during class. The instructor should choose an area ahead of time for shape observations and solo sits. Choose a short trail for observation warm-up hike, and set out objects. Sharpen pencils.

## CLASS OUTLINE:

- I. Ten Minutes to Teaching
- II. Introduction
  - A. Unnatural hike (20 min)
- III. Nature Immersion and Warm Up Activities
  - A. Microhike(10 min)
  - B. Camouflage (20 min)
- IV. What is Nature Journaling
  - A. Journal as a Process
  - B. Journal as a Project
  - C. What do you journal about
  - D. Types of journals
  - E. History of the artist/naturalist
- V. Create a Journal (20-30 min)
- VI. Journaling Exercises
  - A. Contour drawing exercise (10 min)
  - B. Writing Warm-up (15 min)
  - C. The Short Story (10 min)
  - D. Journaling Journeys
    - The Living Camera (20 min)
    - Zoom (20-20 min)
- VII. Reflection
  - A. Solo sit (10-15 min)
- VIII. Authentic Assessment
- IX. The Sending (10 min)
  - A. Sharing journals & John Muir Quote