

NATURE JOURNALLING – TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS Young Adults

This is a perfect activity to do as part of ANY subject for 15-30 minutes to break up the day and refocus students. This activity can become a regular occurrence, building on their journal each time, or it can be a one off that inspires students to engage with their surroundings.

You will need:

- Paper and Clipboard OR Small A5 notebook for each student.
- Nature Journaling Inspiration Sheet Young Adults
- Pencils/ coloured pencils.
- Magnifying glasses if students want to look a little closer.
- A location with elements of nature (e.g. playground, courtyard, school garden).

What to do:

1. As a whole class **discuss** drawing and journaling and ask if anyone does either of these things in their own time.
2. Head to your chosen location and encourage the students to sit away from each other as this is an independent task. We are observing our surroundings and using creativity to transfer what you see and how you feel onto the page. This is a no phone activity.
3. A Nature Journal can be a very personal thing. It isn't about being the best, no one is going to mark your journal.
4. Students will go into a nature space (e.g. playground, courtyard, school garden) and focus on something made by nature (e.g. spiderweb, leaf, caterpillar, flowers, garden bed etc.).
5. Students can choose to:
 - **Draw** – small items, landscapes, combinations of both.
 - **Describe** – Description is a great way convey things that are hard to draw ie. “The breeze is cool on my skin”, “I can smell the sweetness of the flowers”, “A bee is buzzing nearby” “The surface of this leaf feels like sandpaper”.
 - **Pose questions** - e.g. I wonder if this plant has flowers. I wonder what colour butterfly this caterpillar will turn into. What does this bird eat? Where are these ants going?
 - **Colour** – use colour to convey feeling and observations.

Ideally a nature journal will be a combination of all these things expressed in a unique combination on the page.

6. Return to this activity and location throughout the year and encourage the students to observe seasonal or weekly changes, if any. If you make this activity a regular occurrence, students will connect more closely to their journal, and you might be surprised at the behavioural impact of this short activity.

7. **You may want to structure the activity to achieve a certain outcome or link this activity to subject content.** Depending on what subject you are teaching you can incorporate different outcomes and content. Below are some examples based on the 2026/27 Geography and Science curriculums.

Examples:

Stage 4 Geographical concepts: **GE4-COM-01, GE4-DFC-01**

- The use of Maps could be incorporated into this task.
- Space: noticing and observing the ways in which people organise and manage the spaces where they live.
- Environment: Students can envision how this place would have looked before European settlement. What is the extent of any remaining natural features?
- Interconnection: Notice and describing interconnection of people, places and environments and how people are affecting the environment.

Stage 5 Geographical concepts: **GE5-COM-01, GE5-DFC-01**

- Place: Representing characteristics of places and incorporating personal significance and meaning of places for themselves or others.
- Space: Identifying the significance of location of different features, consider how the space is organised and managed.
- Environment: Connecting the significance of the environment in human life, interrelationships, and its function and importance. E.g. shade, biodiversity.
- Students can use measuring equipment and weather instruments to deepen their observations and draw conclusions.

Stage 4 Science: **SC4-LIV-01**

- Living Systems: Observe, describe, annotate a living thing or living system. Plant systems, natural or man-made, ecosystem components.