

Grade 7 Literacy  
Week of October 26 – October 30

**Lesson 5: Read About Nature**

**Nature Journaling**

The next activity will give you a chance to connect with nature and become more aware of the places around you.

**What is it?**

Nature journaling is the regular recording of observations, perceptions, and feelings about the natural world around you. The recording can be done in a variety of ways, depending on your interests and purpose. Some people prefer written prose or poetry, some through drawing, painting or tape recording. There are people who record data with mathematical precision, using scientific shorthand. Many people use a combination of all these techniques.



**Why do it?**

"Many people keep journals to explore their own creativity and express observations and experiences of the world more fully. Some keep journals to record information and data about a place they may visit many times. They keep journals to help improve and sharpen writing skills, and in the process learn to observe better. Drawing is used as a prime record-making tool because drawing and observing are mutually reinforcing activities. With practice, it can be faster to draw a squirrel jumping from one branch to another than to write out a full description of the squirrel's actions! Working in our journals gives us a chance to slow down, reflect and focus on a place - and in the process, we establish a greater connection to the natural world. The information we collect in our journals can be used for research projects and shared with scientists and land managers that work in the areas we visit. Nature journaling helps you develop a real sense of a place and your role in that place. In our busy world, we often move quickly from place to place, without much thought or knowledge about the actual landscape we live in. Nature journaling gives us the chance to slow down and observe the world around us."

*Clare Walker Leslie and Charles E. Roth*

**How do I do it?**

Begin by reading this excerpt from Bev Dolittle's, *The Forest Has Eyes*:

*My thoughts fly up like birds in the sky*

*I am free. I can fly.*

*I go everywhere. I see everything.*

*Towering mountain ranges*

*And a tiny flower growing in the desert.*

*I see cities and highways and a fallen tree.*

*I see a grandmother telling a story to a child.*

*I sit quietly. But my thoughts fly up like birds in the sky.*

*Only I know where they go.*



Complete the following:

## Observing and Recording Details

Find a place in nature that is close to you where you can sit and observe without being disturbed. Use all your senses to observe the natural world surrounding this particular spot.

Close your eyes and focus on your surroundings for a few minutes. Try to separate yourself from civilization. What do you hear? Smell? Taste? Feel?



- Jot down your feelings, emotions, and sensations.
  - What are your attitudes toward your present surroundings?
  - What connections do you feel to this particular spot?
- Observe cloud patterns. Observe wildlife, including insects. Observe a tree, a bush, or a plant.
- Illustrate what you see.
- Listen to the wind and record what it sounds like. Try illustrating the wind. Be specific. Use an analogy to compare what you see.

You complete your journal using point form, sketches, text, etc. Use a blank page and let your observations fill the page!