
Reflective Journal

Activity Overview

Students reflect on the restoration process and their experiences in nature through journaling.

Objectives

Students will:

- Be able to express their personal reflections
- Express the details of their individual restoration process

Subjects

Language Arts

Grades

K through 12

Activity Time

Varies

Season

Spring and Fall

Materials

Writing materials, some art materials

State Standards

Language Arts:

Use effective reading strategies (A.4.1, 8.1, 12.1)

Read, interpret, and critically analyze literature (A.4.2, 8.2, 12.2)

Read & discuss texts to understand human experience (A.4.3, 8.3, 12.3)

Read to acquire information (A.4.4, 8.4, 12.4)

Create or produce writing (B.4.1, 8.1, 12.1)

Plan, revise, edit, & publish writing (B.4.2, 8.2, 12.2)

Understand forms, structures, & punctuation marks (B.4.3, 8.3, 12.3)

Conduct then communicate research (F.4.1, 8.1, 12.1)

Source

Kathleen Morgan

Background

Journaling provides students an opportunity to personally reflect about the natural world and their involvement in the native planting project. Journals offer a variety of avenues to express ideas and reflect on experiences through drawing, writing, poetry and art. Journaling allows time to think, ponder and express thoughts and ideas. For many, being outside without structure and to be allowed to relax and observe is revitalizing. It is also valuable to have the chance to be able to step back and become a part of the natural world away from television, video games, and cars.

Activity Description

Use your restoration journal to record what you see, feel, hear and experience while you are restoring a natural place on your schoolgrounds. You may decorate your journal as a personal space to write and draw your reflections. Feel free to compose poetry, make rubbings, and use water colors. It is your journal to experience and express the natural world around you.

Here are a few suggested journaling topics. Incorporate these into your journal or create your own ideas.

- list, or free write whatever you happen to be feeling and thinking
- write about how the plants are growing in the restoration
- paste pictures and glue in pressed flowers

Questions to ponder include

- what are the insects/animals are doing?
- what is the weather?
- how has the site changed since your last visit?
- what work have you been doing at the restoration site?
- what thoughts/feelings does this work evoke?
- how does the site effect all your senses?

Extensions

- Develop a video or sound recording of the restoration process based on your journal.
- Make poster boards, slide shows or other presentations based on your journal at the end of the year.

Reflective Journal (cont.)

Additional Resources

- Keeping a Nature Journal. http://www.kporterfield.com/journal/Journal_Nature.html
- Leslie, Clare Walker. (1998). *Nature journaling: Learning to observe and connect with the world around you*. Storey Publishing, LLC
- Leslie, Clare Walker and Charles E. Roth. (2003). *Keeping a nature journal: Discover a whole new way of seeing the world around you*. Storey Publishing, LLC.

Assessments

- Students can write three observations or things they learned by keeping this journal.
- Students can share three unique aspects of their journals to their peers as a way of demonstrating different methods of expression, reflection and observation.

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