

Journaling



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Activity Name: Journaling

Ages: 6-12 (also works for older students)

Activity Level: Low

Length of time: 20 to 30 min

Number of Participants: 30

Concept/Introduction: We have used journaling for all sorts of applications over the years in our programs. Primarily we use them to record important findings while participants engaged in activities such as “Build A Marine Ecosystem” or “Micro Trails or Parks”. We also incorporate journaling times into our schedule for students to have some regular quiet, reflective time.

Materials Required: Good journals: The best we have found are journals that have blank pages, a solid back (so you don’t need a flat surface to write on), and good quality paper. Pencil crayons, pencils, crayons, erasers, and sharpeners.



Methods: We hand out journals early in our programs. Participants are told that these are their journals, they will take them home with them at the end of the program. They are their private journals, they will be asked to write in them throughout the program, but they will never have to share what they have created in their journal unless they would like to. We also remind all of the participants that the journals are our own private journals and not to look in anyone’s journal without them offering to share. We explain that they will use their journals to record findings in some of our activities and they will also have time everyday to spend some quiet, reflective time working on their journals on whatever they would like.

During journal time participants are given some journal prompts which they can choose to use or not and then asked to find a quiet solo spot far enough away from everyone to be able to work in their journals without distraction.

Some participants include natural items such as pressed leaves, flowers, or seeds in their journals. Others populate them with drawings or stories - it's really up to the child to decide.

Tips for Teachers:

- Having good quality journals and allocating regular time (doesn't have to be a long time - too long and participants lose interest) really helps to engage participants in this activity.
- It's important to stress that there is no right or wrong way to do a nature journal. It's a personal activity.