

Nature Journaling and Upcycling your Schuylkill Explorers Kit



Materials Needed for Nature Journaling

- Journal
- Pencil/ pen to write
- Coloring pencils to draw and sketch
- Optional: other coloring materials such as crayons, markers, etc.
- Explorer tools such as binoculars and a magnifying glass can help observe the world around us!

Nature Journaling is a great way to connect with nature. Not only does nature journaling encourage us to stop and observe nature mindfully, but it also helps us learn about the world around us by noticing patterns and trends, and peaking our interest and curiosity in the world around us.

Sample Nature Journal Entry

Date: **May 23, 2020**

Time of day : **1:30pm**

Today's **75 degrees**

Weather: **Sunny and clear, no clouds!**

Location: **My house**

My **Here you can write about**

Reflection: **whatever you would like. You can write about your feelings, emotions, and surroundings. Feel free to write and draw.**

Here are some activities you can do and ideas you can reflect on to get you started:

- Leaf or tree rubbings (put the leaf or object under the page and color on top of it to create an outline and pick up on the object's design)
- Look for patterns in nature
- Sit silently and create a sound map. Draw a dot in the middle of the page, representing yourself, and listen to the sounds around you. Draw or write the sounds that you hear around you.
- Poetry and Quotes
- Nature stamps (collect fallen objects and paint them and press into your journal) Smear some juice from a berry or fruit you are drawing.
- Lists of birds, insects, leaves, or flowers you have observed
- Record sit spot seasons – sit in the same spot at least once during each season. Record how it is different.
- Record animal tracks – ask questions like: where are they going? Who do they belong to?



Feel free to sketch and draw anything you find! It is ok if you do not know what the species is, research later if you can.



Upcycling is the reuse of discarded objects or material of in such a way as to create a product of higher quality or value than the original.

Recycling is important, but there is a hierarchy of what to do with waste.

Remember the 4 R's

Refuse

You can cut down on your waste simply by refusing to buy individually packaged items and single-use plastics.

- Start bringing metal straws and coffee mugs for your drinks
- Use eco-bags whenever you go shopping instead of using paper and plastic bags
- Avoid buying individually packaged candy
- Avoid using disposable plates, utensils, and cups

Reduce

Part of throwing away less is buying less, and being more mindful as a consumer. Before you purchase something, consider whether you really need it, and how many uses you'll get out of it.

- Take good care of your clothes, shoes, and bags so they don't wear out as quickly
- Look for reusable alternatives
- Donate old clothes and any items that are still in good condition to charity, instead of tossing them out

Reuse (Upcycle!)

Before tossing out your trash, consider whether it can be repurposed as something else.

- Use a chipped mug as a pen or toothbrush holder
- Keep ribbons from gifts and use them to wrap your presents
- Re-use old jars, pots, bottles, and plastic tupperware
- Purchase rechargeable batteries
- Compost coffee grounds and tea bags and use them as fertilizer
- Turn single-use plastics into ecobricks

Recycle

As we've mentioned, after refusing, reducing, and reusing, recycling is the last resort in the waste management hierarchy. Make sure to properly sort and clean your items before recycling.

Ways to Upcycle your Schuylkill Explorer Kit

Drawstring Bag

- Use your drawstring bag as an everyday bag. You can use this when you go out to take a walk, or when you go out to explore with your explorer tools!

Glass Jars

- Use your glass jars in a number of new ways after your experiment. Try using them as storage for small items such as bobby pins or small stationary. Wash and use them as containers to pack snacks in, like goldfish or nuts. Be creative and paint them for a new piece of decor in your room!

Binoculars and Magnifying Glass

- Use these tools to continue to explore the world around you. Whether it is exploring your back yard, front step, local park, or other area, pack these with you to look for birds and insects!

Mini Screw Bottle Vials

- Use your mini screw top vials to store small items or collect bits of nature like different types of sand or small pebbles.

Aster Flower Seeds

- If you have extra seeds, plant them outside for pollinators to enjoy!

Coloring Pencils

- Use your coloring pencils to continue to nature journal and color in your coloring pages!