

ACTIVITIES & MAIN IDEAS

Sensory/Observation Activities*:

- Focus on sounds: counting sounds, quality of each sound, sounds as music, deer ears. *(Inspired/Derived from Joseph Cornell, Jon Young, Tom Brown)*
- Focus on touch: body, air, ground, then compare 2 objects. *(Inspired/derived from Tom Brown)*
- Focus on smell: air and nearby objects. *(Inspired/derived from Tom Brown)*
- Focus on vision: colors, shadows, & light, using "Owl Eyes." *(Inspired/Derived from Tom Brown & Jon Young)*
- Observing a tree from as many different perspectives as possible. *(Inspired/Derived from Steve Van Zandt)*
- Other sensory/observation activities [Sit Spots, Nature Drawing, Journaling, Card Hike etc.]
- "Slow down, get down, look around."
- Using hand lenses
- Body Radar [wandering wherever your body feels like going, and checking things out] *(Inspired/Derived from Jon Young & Coyote Mentoring)*
- Beauty Breaks/Appreciation Breaks *(Inspired/Derived from Emilie Lygren)*
- *I Notice, I Wonder, It Reminds Me Of...* *(Inspired/Derived from John Muir Laws)*

*Inspired by John Muir Laws, Joseph Cornell, Tom Brown, Coyote Mentoring, Steve Van Zandt, Emilie Lygren, & Todd Newberry

Main Ideas:

- The answer to almost every question about teaching is "it depends!"
- Don't be automatic with instructional decisions, but make thoughtful choices about how to guide students depending on the situation.
- Observation skills encourage wonder, curiosity, & emotional connections with nature.
- Names are useful, but answering student questions or telling names right away can sometimes discourage exploration, observation, thinking, curiosity. It's often effective not to "lead" with a name, but to "trail" with it.
- We should be sensitive to the moment, and to the spirit of inquiry, when deciding what information to provide, and when to do it.
- Instructors who share information judiciously, and after students have had opportunity to wonder and think about it, find that students can get more out of their observations.
- Anthropomorphism can cloud accurate perceptions of nature. But sometimes anthropomorphism is a way for students to connect with the natural world.
- By subtle word-coaching and by encouraging open-mindedness, we can help students see nature from different and more accurate perspectives.
- Being a good observer takes practice and training.
- Making scientific observations is meant to be our best attempt at describing the world as accurately as possible.
- We have a tendency to focus our attention and miss out on other things. We can choose to direct our focus of attention.
- Scientific observers should strive to be "humble" and attempt to make accurate, detailed observations.

