



Overview and Instructions for “Nature Journal Artist’s Workbook”

The “Nature Journal Artist’s Workbook” is an educational resource for students and their teachers. It is designed as a simple, easily reproduced workbook to encourage kids to observe nature and record their perspectives through sketches, paintings and notes in a nature journal. The only materials needed for each student are four sheets of paper printed on one side and a mechanical pencil (additional art supplies are optional). It can be used in the schoolyard, neighborhood park, vacant field, or a wilderness, but does not depend upon a field trip far from home. It could be used as a teacher-led exercise, or kids at a higher reading level could print their own at home and use it in their back yard or take it on a hike.

The purpose of the workbook is to provide a fun and easy way to connect with nature, exercise skills in observation, and offer opportunities for creative expression. Nature journals serve as valuable witness to environmental conditions over time. Scientific illustration has long been an important part of exploring expeditions. This workbook offers a fun way to enrich science and art curriculums, and introduce students to ideas and skills that may become a personal passion or a professional career.

The workbook is designed to be printed on standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. With only four pages printed on one side, it keeps the amount of paper and printing cost to a minimum and leaves the blank side open for drawing. It has some color images, but works in black and white if copied. When printed and folded, it turns into a 16-page booklet.

CONTENT

- Introduction and directions
- Warm-up drawing exercise – draw your own hand
- The journey – preparing for your trip outdoors
- Up close – observing and drawing details
- The big picture – drawing landscapes
- Animals move – tips for sketching wildlife
- Tell a story – using drawings to show connections, explain nature
- Where you are – mapping places
- Covers – use the wide-open space of the front and back covers for special artwork
- Keep going – ideas for continuing nature journal art

PRINT AND ASSEMBLE THE WORKBOOK

1. Print and copy on ONE SIDE (two-sided won’t work) standard 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, color or black and white.
2. Stack the four sheets with the printed pages facing up, with page spread 2-15 on the bottom, then page 4-13, then page 6-11, and page 8-9 on top.
3. Fold the stack in half, making a booklet that is 5 ½ inches x 8 ½ inches.

4. Bind along the center fold with two staples, or punch two holes marked on pages 8-9 and tie with a ribbon or string.

NOTE: This document will look “out of order” in the web view, but will make sense when you print and collate following the instructions above. It may seem odd to have a blank front and back cover and some missing page numbers, but this design leaves lots of room to draw and keeps costs down.

ART SUPPLIES

Recommended

- Inexpensive mechanical pencil. It comes with its own eraser and never needs sharpening. Other pencils are acceptable, but may need to be accompanied by an eraser and a sharpener.

Optional

- Black felt-tip, fine-point pen
- Color media, such as colored pencils, watercolor paint and brush, watercolor pencils and brush

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The “Nature Journal Artist’s Workbook” was created by illustrator and wilderness advocate Suzanne Stutzman. She was selected in 2013 as an Artist-In-Residence for the “Voices of the Wilderness” program in Alaska. The Voices of the Wilderness artist residency is modeled after traditional residencies in the national parks...with a twist. Instead of staying at a cabin, she accompanied two wilderness kayak rangers on a 9-day patrol of Endicott Arm in Tracy Arm Fords Terror Wilderness, about 60 miles south of Juneau, Alaska. While they conducted their wilderness stewardship activities of monitoring, research and education, her job was to capture the meaning of wilderness as well as its stewardship through her nature journal and illustration. The nature journal she created during the residency, along with a finished illustration were donated to the program. In addition, she created this “Nature Journal Artist’s Workbook” as a community outreach project to inspire others to explore and connect with wilderness.