

Sample Entry for a Nature Journal

Date – note seasonal changes, length of day

Place – defines ecosystem or habitat and things in the ecosystem/habitat

Time – affects light and animal activity

Weather and temperature – influences animal and plant activity

Listen quietly for one minute and write down three sounds you hear

Add observations – notes on wildlife activity, plants, or interactions between them

Beaver Ecology & Adaptations

1. Which beaver adaptation would you want? How would you use it?
2. Beavers change their ecosystem by creating a pond. How might this affect the organisms already living there?

Birds of Rivers & Reservoirs

Look or listen for birds around you. How are they adapted to live in the ecosystems present at Kerr Lake State Recreation Area? Do you see evidence to support this in your observations?

Journaling with Haiku

as shared by Kim Smart, NC Museum of Natural Sciences

Choose a small, but interesting object.

Look at it with your naked eye. Write 5 observations about it.

Look at it with your Private Eye loupe. Write 5 more observations.

Think: "What else does it remind me of?"

"What else does it look like?"

Write 5 more observations

Sketch your object. Add color.

Using your list of observations as "the bones of a poem," write a haiku (5-7-5 syllables)

You may add more words.

You don't have to use all the words on your list.

Use your journal for all drafts.

Grade 4 Example Journal Prompts

1. Observe two animals and describe their features. Look closely and, for each animal, record features you think help this animal survive in its environment.
2. Use as many of your senses as you can to observe the environment around you. Record your observations in your journal. Next, observe two animals and describe how these animals collect information about their environment using their senses.
3. Observe an animal and pretend that you are that animal. Where might you hide? Describe your hiding spot and note any other features that might help you hide from a predator.

Grade 5 Example Journal Prompts

1. Select a spot to sit and observe the weather conditions, including the sky. Record your observations about the weather and be sure to note the condition of the sky. Based on your observations, predict what the weather might be like in a few hours. If possible, compare your observations to weather data available for your location.
2. Select a spot and take few minutes to observe all of the living organisms you notice. See if you can find examples of producers, consumers, or decomposers and draw an example of each.
3. Observe two plant-animal interactions. Draw what you see and describe their interaction – is the animal eating the plant, seeking shade/protection within the plant, etc.
4. Select two different spots in the schoolyard and compare the characteristics, including the plants and animals you see. If you don't see any animals, do you see signs of animal life? Record your observations.