



Connecting to the Earth Through Observation

Grades 3-5

What makes the world around us unique and special? You will explore this question by developing your observation skills and using your creativity to think about our connections to the Earth and our environment and then recording your observations in a field journal. All activities can be completed without an electronic device. There is one link to an online video that you can visit, if you wish.

You will need a pencil, crayons or markers, and paper or a notebook.

Note to parents: French Second Language students are encouraged to do their work *en français*. While the entire document has not been translated, some French instructions and explanations are included. Word wall images have been included to support vocabulary growth for all learners.

Connecting to the Earth through Observation

Field **journaling** has been used for centuries by naturalists to record observations and thoughts about the **environment** that they are exploring.

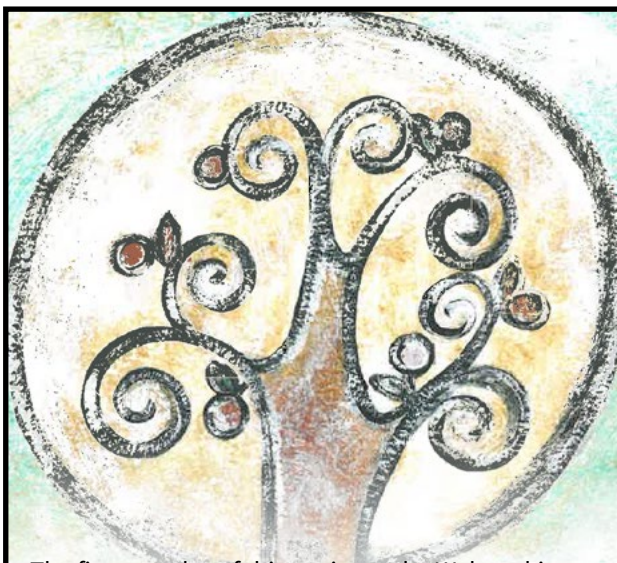
You make observations by using your senses to find out about objects and events. You can observe their characteristics, properties, differences, similarities, and changes.

An observation can be a:

- **description:** describe your observation using **adjectives** or **adverbs**
- **measurement:** record the size or amount of what you are observing.

Observation can be made directly with your senses or indirectly through the use of instruments like a ruler, magnifying glass and a probe or stick.

Les observations peuvent être faites directement avec vos sens, ou avec des instruments tels que des règles, des loupes, ou même un bâton.



The first peoples of this territory, the Wabanaki peoples, are experts at observation. “In the Mi’kmaq language, trees are called by the sounds they make as the wind passes through their branches, in the autumn, during the special period before dusk. Trees are known and talked about in terms of how they interact with certain aspects of their surroundings – and in terms of how the individual person perceives them.”

Source: To Be Indigenous Is to Be Free (Grade 4 Treaty Education)

Definitions

journaling: the action of writing or recording

environment: where people, animals and plants live

adjective: describes or modifies a noun

adverb: describes or modifies an adjective or a verb

organisms: an animal, plant or other form of life

technology: FaceTime, WhatsApp, phone, etc.

observations : ce que tu vois et ressens

environnement : ce qui entoure un animal ou une personne

organismes : des êtres vivants

règle : objet de mesure

loupe : objet en verre ou en plastique qui aide à magnifier un objet

A naturalist is a type of scientist who studies the effects living **organisms** have on each other and on their environment. Jane Goodall is a famous naturalist who studied chimpanzees to learn about their lives and behaviour through her observations.

Un ou une naturaliste est un type de scientifique (biologiste) qui étudie et prend note des effets des relations de divers organismes et leur environnement. Crée un journal de nature en prenant ton temps, en ralentissant pour apprécier les endroits que tu visites. Pour t’aider à faire ceci, essaie de regarder lentement, et de prendre le temps à observer plus loin que premier regard.

Journaling is a way for you to think about and make connections to the world around you. If you know more than one language, you may journal in the language of your choice. You may wish to journal in all the languages you know! You may also choose to use drawings to record your observations.

Watch this video to learn more about field journals: [Be a Field Scientist!](#)

All journal entries should include:

- the date
- place visited
- time of day
- weather conditions
- other important information like who you are with or why today is special

Crée ton propre journal, incluant la date, où tu as visité, avec qui, comment tu te ressens et ce que tu penses. Quand tu as fini ton journal chaque jour, partage ce que tu as créé avec ta famille, ou avec un ami en utilisant de la technologie, si possible.

Try to journal every day. When you are finished, share your journal with a family member or with a friend, if you can connect with them through **technology**.



Day 1 Journal Activity: Using your Senses

Take a walk, sit by an open window, or imagine that you have been transported outside to a place in nature. Slow down. Observe. What do you notice? Try to use your senses of sight, smell, and hearing.

Write or draw your answers to these questions in your journal. Record other ideas, thoughts and feelings, too.

Fais une promenade en nature, assis-toi proche à une fenêtre ouverte, ou imagine que tu es dans un endroit dans la nature, et prend note de tes idées, pensées et sentiments en te ralentissant et utilisant tes sens.

Remember whenever you do field explorations outside to:

Leave no trace of your visit

Make no damage, leave no **litter**.

Be a respectful observer

Watch and listen. Don't do anything that might **harm** the plants and animals or prevent them from living their lives **uninterrupted**.

Gather with great care

Only handle plants and animals that you know to be **safe**.





 Day 1: Using my Senses 

I see...

I smell...

I hear...

I feel...

 My thoughts and ideas... 

My feelings right now...

 Jour 1: Utiliser mes sens

Je vois...

Je peux sentir...

J'entends...

Je ressens...

Mes pensées et idées... 

Mes sentiments sont... 

Day 2 Journal Activity: Looking 10 x 2

Creating a nature journal takes time and requires attention to detail. Slow down and take time to appreciate the spaces and places you visit. Use a **slow looking**¹ strategy while on your walkabouts; it will help you notice interesting things. Slow looking means taking the time to observe beyond your first **glance**.

Write or draw your answers to these questions in your journal. Record other ideas, thoughts and feelings, too.

1. Look at your surroundings for at least 30 seconds. Let your eyes **wander**.

Regarde tes alentours pour 30 secondes, laisse tes yeux aller n'importe où.

2. List 10 words or phrases about anything you notice. Use descriptive words like lonely, old, rough, damp, and quiet. Utilise 10 mots ou phrases de n'importe ce que tu vois.

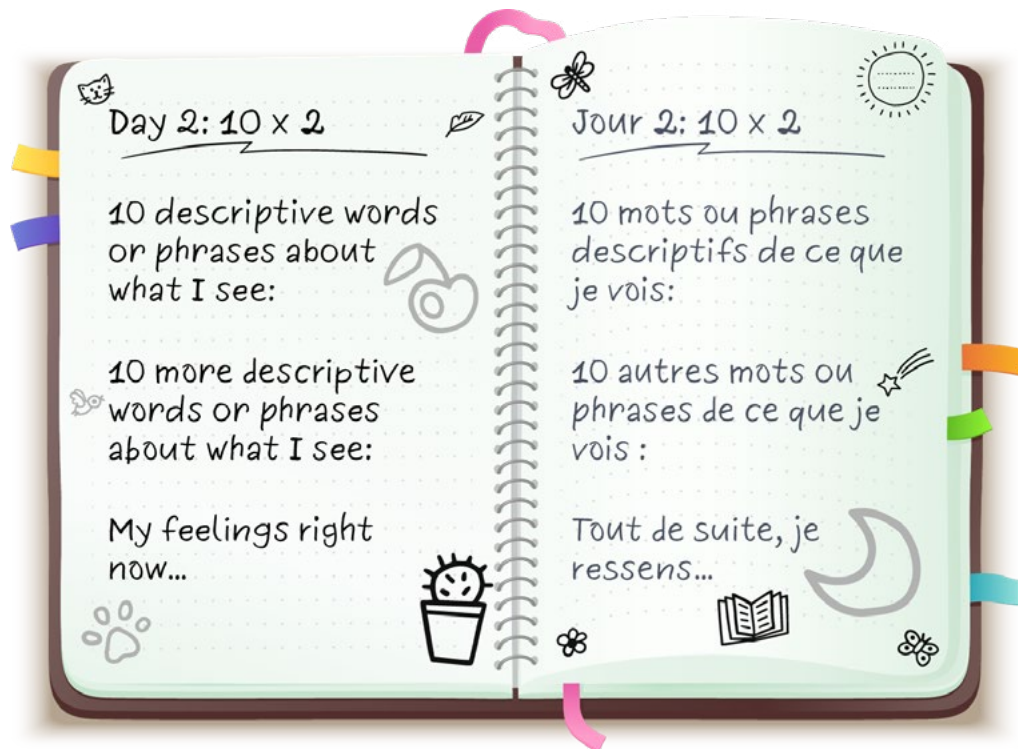
Utilise des mots descriptifs comme seule, vieux, silencieux, humide.

3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 again, adding 10 more words or phrases to your list. Use drawings, if you like, or record your words in the language of your choice.

Répète les étapes un et deux, incluant 10 autres mots ou phrases à ta liste. Ajoute des dessins si tu veux!

4. Notice and record how you feel as you let your eyes wander.

Prend note de ce que tu vois et laisse tes yeux aller où ils veulent.



¹Adapted from: Tishman, Shari. (2018). Slow Looking: The art and practice of learning through observation. New York, NY; Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Day 3 Journal Activity: Colours, Lines, Shapes, Patterns and Textures

For this journal entry, you are going to focus on colours, lines, shapes, patterns and textures.

What colours do you see?

What shapes do you do see?

What lines do you see?

What **patterns** are created by the colour, lines and shapes?

What **textures** do you see? What do you think they feel like?

What do the patterns make you think about?

How do the textures make you feel?

Could you recreate these patterns and/or textures at home using **found materials**?

Quelles couleurs, formes et lignes vois-tu?
Prend note de quelques-uns. Décris ce que tu penses et ressens en regardant les couleurs, motifs, formes, textures et lignes.

Definitions / Définitions

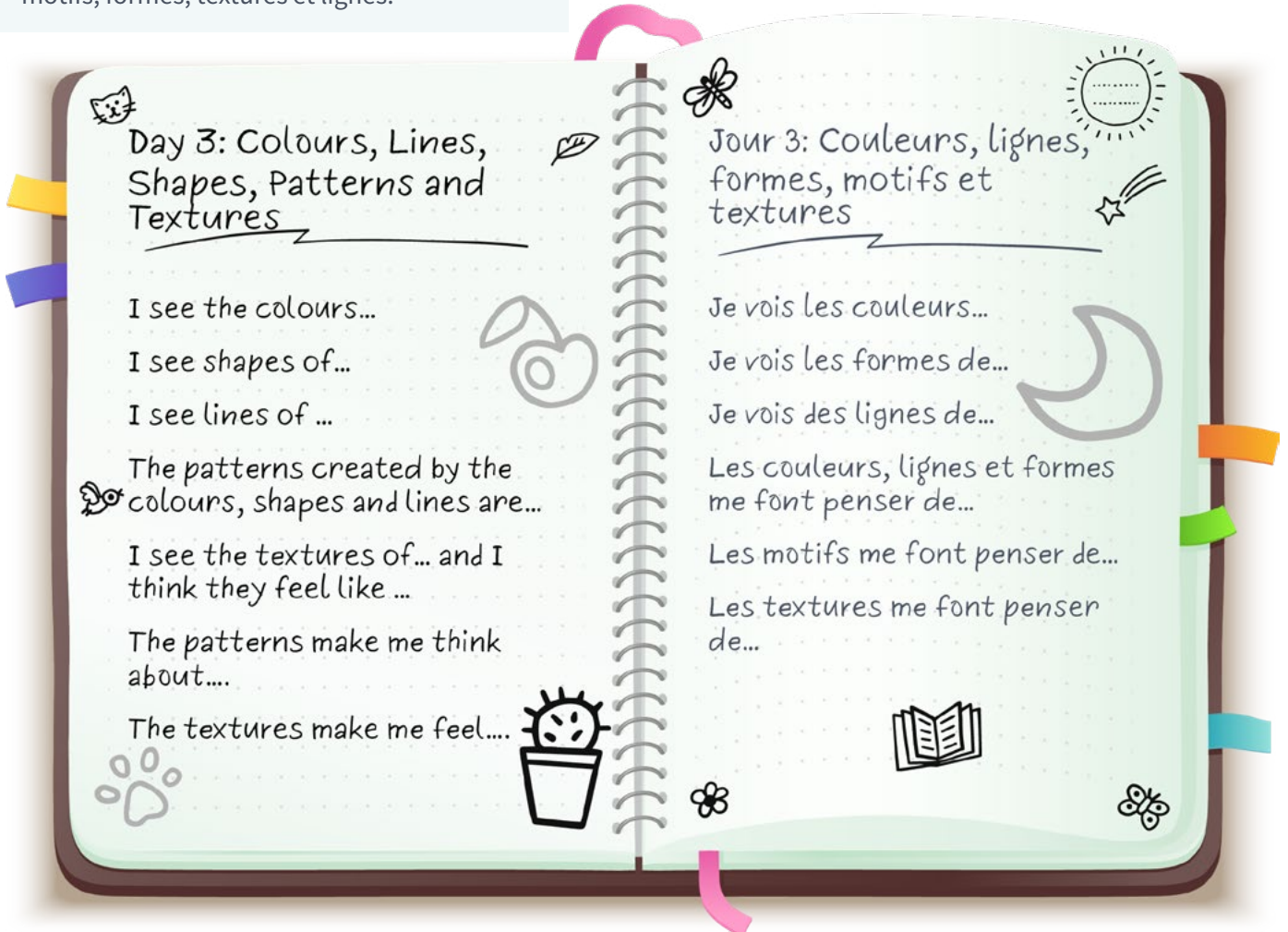
pattern: a repeating shape or form

texture: the way something feels to the touch or looks

found materials: repurposed items found in or around your home that would otherwise go in the garbage or recycling.

motifs : des formes qui se répètent

textures : arrangement, disposition des matières ou éléments



Day 4 Journal Activity: Letters of the Alphabet

Today, as you take note of your **surroundings** in nature, use as many letters of the alphabet as you can to guide your journaling about what you see, hear, smell, and think. In order to not harm themselves, scientists **do not** touch things in the environment that are unfamiliar. They use a probe. You might choose to use a stick to touch items in nature.

The alphabet will guide your **inventory** and help you to explore in a different way. You may also use the alphabet of another language you know!

Aujourd'hui, en prenant note de tes alentours en nature, utilise les lettres de l'alphabet pour t'aider à écrire un inventaire dans ton journal.
P. ex : A est pour arbre, B est pour branche.

Definitions / Définitions

surroundings: what is around you

inventory: your list of what you see, hear, smell, feel, and think

alentours : ce qui est autour de toi

inventaire : une liste de ce que tu vois, entends, sens, ressens et pense

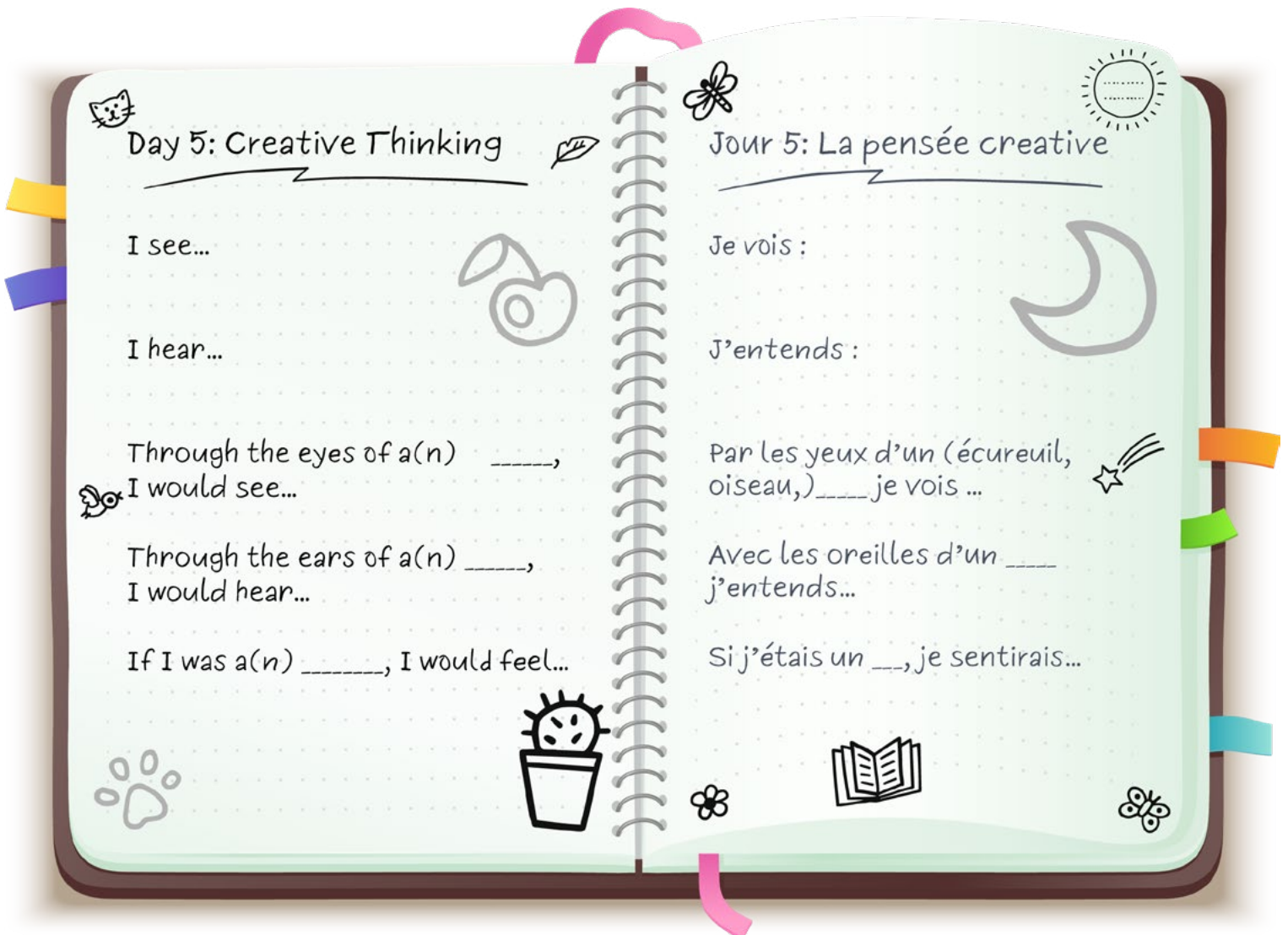
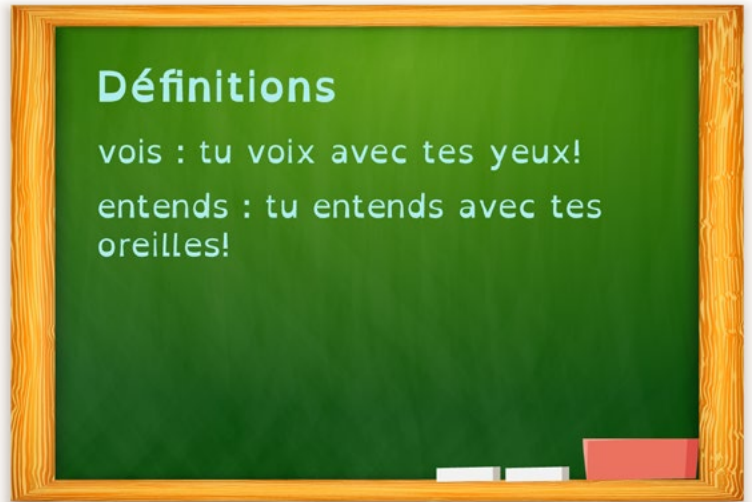


Day 5 Journal Activity: Creative Thinking

Today, your journal activity is to think of everything you see and hear and then to think of how you would see and hear the same things if you were an animal.

Aujourd'hui ton activité est de penser de tout ce que tu vois et entends, puis de penser comment un animal verra et entendra ce que tu vois.

1. Write the words "I see". Take 1 minute and list everything you see.
2. Write the words "I hear". Take 1 minute and list everything you hear.
3. Now, choose an animal. Complete the following sentences through the perspective of the animal you chose.
 - Through a(n) _____'s eyes, I would see . . .
 - With a(n) _____'s ears, I would hear . . .
 - If I was a(n) _____, I would feel...



Conclusion

And that's the end of this activity!

The 5-days of journaling challenge has come to an end, but your discovery of the amazing places and interesting organisms living in the natural world around you has just begun! Your nature journal is your personal record of your journey into spaces and places that are important to you; no two nature journals are alike.

If you enjoyed doing this activity, make going on nature walks a part of your everyday routine. Remember, you can do this at any time of the year. There is so much to discover! Happy journaling.

