

Earthwalk Activities

This is a series of activities designed to get people observing nature using all of their senses. Each activity focuses primarily on one sense.

1) Artist's palette:

Materials: a piece of cardboard for each participant. Double-sided sticky-tape

Location: Outdoors, preferably in a woodland.

Method:

Each participant gets a card completely covered in double-sided sticky tape. They peel off the backing just before starting the activity. Ask the students what colour the woods are- they will probably answer "green and brown", depending on the season. Then give out the cards, remove the backing and tell them they have 10 minutes to find as many different colours as possible and stick them onto the card.

If it is spring or summer and there are plants in flower, you may have to have rules about what can and cannot be picked.



2) "Eye in the sky"

Materials: 1 small mirror per student

Location: Woodland

Method: In small groups, students go for a walk with the tutor through the woods. They hold the mirror in front of them and look at the canopy. This should be a silent, very slow, nearly meditative walk. The idea is for the students to focus on life in the canopy of the woodland.

As a follow-up, they could draw a picture or write a description of the canopy, maybe from the point of view of a bird, squirrel or butterfly that lives up there.



3) "Nature's concert"

Materials: A piece of card and a pencil per student.

Location: Anywhere outside

Method: While walking outdoors, make a show of looking at your watch/asking the time then getting everyone to rush to a previously-chosen location, preferably one where there is space for everyone to sit or stand quietly. When you arrive, tell the students that they are just in time for a concert. It will start in 2 minutes, and they have to "record" it on their card. (sometimes I draw play, pause, forward/rewind buttons on the card to make it look like a tape recorder or similar device).

Announce the start of the concert and that everyone must be silent. Everyone listens to the sounds around them, and they can record them in whatever way they want on the card. After about 3-5 minutes or whatever feels right, the students "play back" their concert to each other.



4) "Touchy Feely"

Materials: Blindfolds, egg-boxes or similar. A variety of items from the habitat you're in, all with different textures. Put each item into an egg-box. You also need an empty box for each group of students.

Location: Outdoors, preferably in a woodland.

Method: Divide students into groups. The students either close their eyes or are blindfolded. Then they touch the item in one of the boxes. They decide together how they would describe the texture, then the box is taken away and they remove the blindfolds. They must now take an empty box and go and find as many things as possible in the area that have the same texture.

Each group will be looking for a different texture. When a group comes back they can be given another box to touch and can go off to look for another texture.

