

Lesson Title: Creating a Nature Journal

Grade levels: Appropriate for all grade levels K-5

Applicable SOL: (English)

Kindergarten K.12 (writing)

First Grade 1.13 (descriptive writing)

Second Grade 2.12 (descriptive writing)

Third grade 3.9 (writing for a purpose)

Fourth grade 4.8 (writing for a purpose)

Fifth Grade 5.7 (writing for a purpose)

Materials:

- Heavy duty paper bags (one for each child)
- Hole punchers
- String and /or brads
- Printed title pages (one for each student)
- At least 10 other pieces of plain paper for each student
- Pencils, color pencils, crayons or markers
- scissors

Procedure:

Building Supporting Knowledge:

1. Explain that you will be creating nature journals which will be used to record observations outdoors. Since you will use these throughout the year, you want them to be sturdy.

2. Show the title pages. Explain that all of these photos were taken show pride in Virginia's outdoors. At the 1939 World's Fair held in New York, Virginia had a tent. It was filled with photo albums showing things that made Virginians proud. These are some of those photos. They are kept in a special collection in the Library of Virginia. Allow each child to pick one for their title page.

Main Lesson:

1. Give each child their materials and explain how to put the journal together, or go through step-by-step, depending on your grade level and your students.
2. To put the journal together, cut two pieces from the paper bag for the cover. (Alternatively, cut at one of the folds to create the two sides of your cover.) Punch holes and either use string or brads to attach the cover and papers together.
3. Show a book or magazine from your classroom which has a photo on the cover or title page. Show how books often have a brief explanation for the picture.
4. On the back of the title page, have each student write a brief description of their photo. (They can use their imaginations for this!)

Follow-up:

1. Allow time for each student to decorate their covers and finish the title page with the title and their name.
2. Decide on a good, accessible place in the classroom to store these journals for use throughout the year.

Assessment Opportunities:

An assessment could be taken on the writing the students do about their photo.

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