

CYCLES

The fastest cycle we live in is that of a day. Other longer cycles exist, such as that of Earth rotation (1 year).

Try:
from seed to plant (peas)
fruit development
lunar phases
leaves on a plant over time

DRAWING

Drawing the world helps us to better observe it and, consequently, to better understand it.

To start, use a pencil or ballpoint pen on printer paper, you will feel more free to experiment.

Your drawing should be:

- specific
- detailed
- large (for the most accurate and detailed drawing possible)
- coloured (or with notes on colour, see p. 7)
- with comments

TIP 1

OUTLINE

Put your subject of interest on the sheet of your notebook and trace around its outline: you will have a precise image and in real size.

Variations:

1. draw the outline of the shadow your subject projects on the sheet
2. rubbing: place your object (which must be rigid and rough, like a sheet for example) behind your sheet and rub with a soft pencil on the other side of the sheet of your notebook. You will have obtained a faithful impression of your subject.
It works well with bark, hard leaves...

TIP 2

MEASURE YOUR SAMPLE

If the object is too big for your notebook, measure it (p. 5).

You can draw it respecting its proportions by dividing your measurements by the same number.

N.B. Using a squared paper will help you be more precise.

10

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NOTEBOOK

JOURNALING

CREATE A NATURE

THE MINI-GUIDE TO



The Drawing Scientist

Veronica La Padula

11

16

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12

15



TIP 3

CLOSE AN EYE

When we close one eye we lose the perception of depth and therefore everything appears flat.

This helps us to see just the shape of an object, without thinking about its volume.

Variation:

1. You can use a "viewfinder": it is a tool that brings together a window and allows you to frame your subject.
It will seem to you to see it in photo!
2. draw from photo.
The photo flattens the vision for you.
This is not cheating, and it was done in very old times (grid systems, camera obscura, camera lucida...).

OBSERVE AND RESPECT NATURE

- 1: leave everything as you found it
- 2: Do not soil or water; do not leave waste
- 3: Do not use flames, which could cause fires
- 4: Do not leave evidence of nests
- 5: never collect too many copies of a species in one place
- 6: if you capture an animal (from the insect) to observe it, do not stress it and release it as soon as you are done
- 7: never kill an animal (even if it seems "ugly" or "bad")
- 8: Do not tear off plants, but cut them with small scissors
- 9: do not set traps
- 10: if you find something unusual, notify the competent authorities (university, natural history museums...)

COLLECTING

You can keep a few sample for later observation and further documentation, but keep in mind the principles I have listed (p. 16).

- You can:
- make a herbarium
 - collecting rocks
 - pick up empty shells (not too much, insects could use them to nest there)

14

MEASURING

Measuring a single sample (sl) is not enough to be sure that all other "family members" are the same.

Measure at least 10 sample taking the same break points, and average, i.e.:
Sum all values and divide by the number of units measured.

$$\frac{sl1 + sl2 + sl3}{3} \quad \frac{10cm + 12cm + 10,5cm}{3}$$

Caution: when measuring, always indicate the unit of measurement: cm or mm for lengths (ruler), ml for liquids...

COLOUR

When you draw live, you can not have time to color everything.
Then notice the color next to the drawing, you will finish it at home.

You can use a sample table of your colors with numeric references that you have created previously.

Note:

- the colours you see
- differences in colour between: stage: young-old

gender: male-female
position: shadow-sun
location: altitude
time of year (between seasons)
Weather: sunny and cloudy

SHAPE

The form of "natural objects" has great importance for their function.

It will therefore be necessary to be faithful in its drawing, without adding, removing or modifying features "to make beautiful".

Note:

- symmetry?
- specular?
- modular?

TEXTURE

The texture of an object is suggested by vision and confirmed by touch.

Note:

- rough?
- smooth?
- hairy?
- quills?
- resinous?
- slimy?
- irritating?
- tough?
- flat?
- wavy?

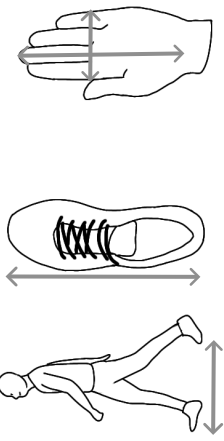
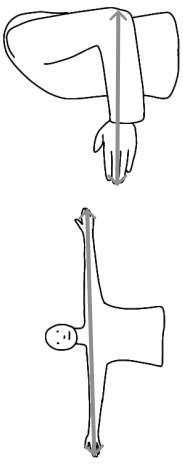
WARNING: some plants are very irritating if touched, such as nettle, ivy, sumac.

6
5

7
4

8
3

9
2



MEASURING

A FEW IDEAS

- collection (all flowers, leaves...)
- counting (how many...)
- distribution (where are placed?)
- colors (which? several?)
- smells (pleasant? what does it look like?)
- texture (smooth? hair?...)
- size (one? several?)
- motives
- evolution/growth/cycle
- one-day changes
- comparisons
- different points of view
- a detail (zoom)
- indoor/outdoor

STRUCTURE OF THE PAGE

The purpose of the nature journal is to note and draw nature objectively and realistically.
It is not about creating a work of art.

It is important to note at the top of the page:

- date
- hour
- place
- weather
- temperature (if possible)

This will allow to compare observations or to understand whether the weather influences an observed event, for example.
Depending on the time of day, some flowers open or close.

WHERE TO START

We are in the forest and everything around us deserves our full attention.
Take the time to observe, write down and perhaps also draw what you see on a notebook.

"But I don't know how to draw," you say.
It's not true, if you can write, you can also draw.

What you will need:
a notebook,
a coloured/pen/pencil/
your curiosity.

And possibly:
a magnifying glass,
scissors with rounded tips.