

Journal Making

Meriweather Lewis and William Clark kept detailed journals of their daily activities and discoveries during their journey west from 1803-1806. That's why we know so much about their expedition! You can keep a journal of your visits to state parks, reservoirs and other natural and historical sites, too.

A journal can be much more than a daily diary. It can be a place of celebration, a collection point for creative insights and ideas or an idea-catching system. You can be creative or learn to record scientific observations. You can create a memory book that you can pull out on a cold winter day and be reminded of a summer camping trip, a hike through a meadow or a trip to explore an old home or farm.

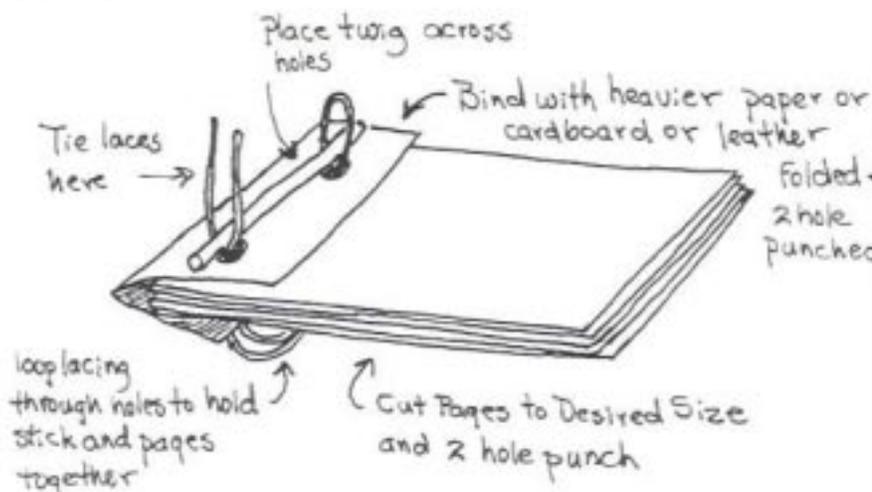
To start a journal sit quietly in a location and take in your surroundings. Be still and watch and listen for a while. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel? Who is with you? What is the weather like? Then on the left page create a color image of some sort reflecting the location. On the right page write words and ideas that come to you at that time and place. Don't try to organize the words you think about--just write them down!

Try these ideas for your journal:

- Keep more formal recordings, like daily notes or observations, in the front of the journal and start your more creative entries, like poems or sketches, in the back of the journal.
- Use clear adhesive or gluesticks to fasten objects into your journal records.
- Use an object from the site to trace around, then write your entry around the tracing, following the shape of the object. Pair up pages, titling one "observations" and the facing page "reflections".
- Try using pens, markers, charcoal pencils, colored pencils or crayons for different pages.

Remember, each page does not have to be a work of art. Don't be afraid to experiment! It is your journal and it will be like no other journal that has ever been made!

A simple journal can be constructed using the plan below. You will need paper cut to the desired size. 8 1/2 by 5 1/2 works well. Wrap a heavier paper or a piece of leather around the end of all the sheets of paper and punch two holes through the whole stack. Place a stick on top, across the two holes and lace a shoestring or leather lace through the holes, around the stick to hold it all together. Tie the lacing off on top of the stick. You can string beads on the lacing if you would like.



State Parks
& Reservoirs
Discovery
Team

Earn your own
EXpedition
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Kit

Thanks to Warren Gartner,
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DNR

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