



2. *Bosque Discovery Booklet*

- Description:** Students participate in an active discovery experience guided by their own Bosque Discovery Booklets, and are encouraged to record observations of what they find.
- Objectives:** Bosque Discovery Booklets will:
- introduce students to the bosque environment;
 - enhance observational skills and sensory awareness; and
 - encourage an excitement for learning more about the bosque through an active, guided exploration.
- Materials:** a booklet for each student (masters included in this activity; copies consist of two double-sided pages for each student)
 stapler for stitching booklet together
 scissors or paper cutter
 construction paper for cover (optional)
 journal tools such as colored pencils, charcoal or crayons for bark rubbings, glue sticks, tape, pens, etc.
- Procedure:**
1. Prepare booklets ahead of time. To keep the idea “new” to the students, you may wish to ask parents or volunteers to help assemble these.
 - a. Copy the master sheets as two-sided copies making sure to keep the pages and orientations as they are in this guide. (Optional: add an additional blank sheet.)
 - b. Fold the two pages in half and in half again as in the diagram below. (Optional: add a 5.75” x 8.75” piece of construction paper to the outside of the booklet as a cover.)
 - c. Staple the center of the booklet along the fold.

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Grades: 1–5

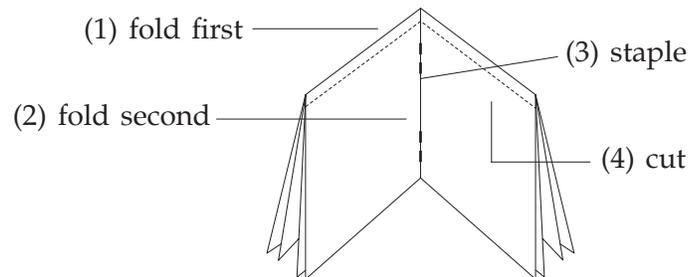
Time: Material preparation: about one hour to make 20 journals.
 Class activity: flexible. This is a field trip, requiring time to plan your destination, plan transportation, etc. Allow at least one hour for the activity itself when in the bosque.

Subjects: science, English, art

Terms: *bosque, journal*



- d. With scissors, cut the tops of the pages to create a 16-page booklet (or 24-page booklet if a blank page was included).
- e. You may want to personalize with the student's name on the cover.



2. Tell the students before the trip that you will be going on a Discovery Hike and that they will get to experience the bosque in an exciting new way, but don't tell them the specifics of the activities in the book before the trip.
3. On your trip to the bosque, tell students that they will now get to be Bosque Discoverers, and they will get to go out and explore the forest in a fun way, rather like a scavenger hunt. They will have things to find, things to do, things to observe. Then give each student a Discovery Booklet. Explain that this booklet is a journal for the students to record their own observations. They should do the things on each page, and they can write responses, draw pictures, tape in leaves, and so on in the spaces provided. They may use the blank pages in any way they wish. Emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers. They should be encouraged to write or draw what they see or think or feel. Don't worry if they don't fill up the entire book—the purpose is to get them out and looking around.
4. Set a few ground rules at the beginning of the hike. In addition to your personal class rules for discipline, you need to set some guidelines for how to treat the bosque. You may want to let the students develop their own rules but guide the discussion to include the following:
 - a. Use walking feet and quiet voices so as not to disturb animals.
 - b. When students find something that they want to share, let them do so but please return everything (except trash!) to the place where they find it. Point out that many organisms (animals, plants) live in the bosque and that you are visitors in their home. Everything belongs there and should



- be left, whether it is a rock, a feather or a piece of bark. The exceptions will be leaves that they may wish to tape into their booklets as indicated.
- c. Please do not pick living plants. If students take leaves to put in their booklets, they should only take one leaf from each plant. Encourage students to take leaves from different individual plants than their friends, or, better yet, pick up leaves from the ground rather than from living plants.
 - d. When walking, take care not to trample the plants.
 - e. Be gentle with any creatures you might pick up. Please discourage squashing spiders or stepping on ants; remind the students that these creatures are living beings just as we are.
5. Once students receive their booklets and start discovering, your main job will be to keep them on track. Encourage exploration, encourage experiencing. Check to be sure that they get something down on paper, but let the students use the method they prefer, whether writing or drawing. Keep track of potentially hazardous or destructive behavior.
 6. We hope that you will be in an area where you can go off established trails. If you are in a place like the Rio Grande Nature Center, please inquire ahead of time as to where you might be allowed to go off the trails. Do not permit excessive trampling in any one area, but rather minimize impact while still experiencing the bosque as fully as possible.
 7. At the end of the walk, point out that the students now have more knowledge about this wonderful place. Use the enthusiasm they now have to get them excited about the upcoming classroom activities.

Related

Activities:

Although this activity is similar to the “Field Explorations Booklet,” the focus here is on observation skills, while the latter focuses on helping students think about the bosque.

Assessment:

Have students share a part of their booklet with the class. Have students hand in booklets and review them. Send booklets home with the students to show their parents.

Extensions:

Add a blank sheet of paper between the two master sheets to provide a 24-page booklet with eight blank pages.

For younger students, use only one or two pages, enlarged on the copier, as the focus for a trip.

Follow-up

Activity:

This should be followed by the “Changing River” activity.

Find a comfortable place near a tree or a bush and sit quietly for several minutes. Use letters or symbols to describe the sounds that you hear, but don't try to name what is making the sounds.

Grab a handful of leaves from the forest floor. Smell their rich scent. Try to find other interesting smells in the bosque. Draw pictures or use words to describe several of these.

Find a Friend . . .

Find a natural object that can fit in your hand such as a rock, leaf or feather, or anything that looks neat. Get to know it. How does it feel? How does it smell? What colors do you see? Carry your friend with you for a while, but *be sure to return it to its bosque home before you leave*. Draw a picture of your friend here, or use words to describe it.

My Bosque Discovery Booklet



Name _____

Date _____

How many shapes of leaves can you find? Can you find a lacy leaf? Tape some here or draw their pictures.

Walk near the edge of the river (*carefully*). Which way is the water flowing? Where do you think the water comes from?

A drop of rain that falls in southern Colorado could float all the way to the sea . . .
What about a drop of rain that falls on Sandia Peak?

Look at all the different kinds of ants in the bosque. Can you find where they are? Look on the ground, in trees, in bushes—anywhere! *List some differences you see among the ants.* Shape? Color? Size? Location?

Can you make a rainbow?

See how many colors you can find around you. Glue or tape samples here to create your own rainbow. Use colored pencils to capture colors for those you cannot catch, like the sky or a butterfly.



Dig down under the layer of leaves on the forest floor. Use a magnifying glass to look for small treasures there. Draw pictures or use words to describe several of the neat things that you find.

Where are all the animals? They are all around us, but we often don't see them. Still, we can find signs that they were near. Look for signs of animals . . .

a feather
a footprint on the trail
a chewed leaf
a hole in the ground
some scat

Find a tree with rough bark. How does it feel against your hand? Against your cheek?

Find several other interesting textures and draw pictures or use words to describe them here.

Find a large tree with heart-shaped leaves. Stand with your back against its trunk and see how its branches seem to reach to the sky.

Pretend you are a tree and reach your branches up into the sky. How does it feel to be a tree?

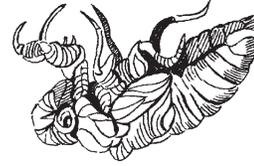
Dig your roots down deep and sway with the wind. Could you stand strong against winter storms?

Would you like to provide a home for birds and insects and spiders and mammals and lots of other critters?

Lie down on the ground and look up to the sky. How does the forest look from this viewpoint?

Many of the critters in the bosque are tiny, so their view of the world is very different from ours.

How many legs did the animal have? Can you tell what kind of animal it was, based on the number of legs?



Can you find the skin of an animal that looks like this? Where did you find it?

Have you seen anything that doesn't seem to belong in the bosque? Draw or describe it (or them) here.

Animals live throughout the bosque. *Can you find evidence of their homes?* Draw some here or use words to describe them.