



EcoSchools U.S.
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal Overview

A Sit Spot is a routine practice that cultivates awareness, observation skills, well-being, and nature connection by visiting one specific place in nature on a regular basis. The natural environments surrounding your school offer a variety of opportunities for learning, discovery, and meaningful interaction within nature.

This activity can take anywhere from 5-60 minutes per sitting and is best when repeated over a period of time (i.e., daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonally). Turned into a routine, a Sit Spot can also help improve self-expression, and creativity through nature journaling, as well as uplifting your mental, emotional, and physical health.

Deepen your relationship with nature and reflect upon your role in reconciliation through this simple, yet profound, place-based learning activity.

Important considerations before you begin

- If you are planning to leave your school grounds for this activity, ensure you follow school and board/district policies by consulting with your school administration and ensuring that students have permission forms signed by parents/guardians, when necessary.
- If you are visiting a public park, acknowledge and respect the park's regulations. Some parks require permits or authorizations to conduct group activities.
- Do a risk assessment of the area, and clearly communicate any boundaries and rules for the activity. It is always recommended to bring a first aid kit on outdoor excursions.
- Review the local weather forecast and ensure that students are prepared with appropriate gear (e.g., sunscreen, sun hat, rain boots, snowsuit, etc.).



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal Overview

Steps to leading a Sit Spot activity



Reflection

Begin this activity with the Pre-action reflection questions (page 3). This will help participants start to explore their relationship with the local environment. This time can also be used to reflect on their current feelings or mood, which can be revisited after the activity to assess any changes in how they feel.



Define Your Sit Spot

Identify a suitable spot in, or adjacent to, a natural or semi-natural setting where you can find a space to sit and focus on different sensory experiences. Ideally, the spot is quiet and on or near the school grounds (e.g., a school garden or local park), where participants can safely observe the natural surroundings.



Objectives and Themes

Set the expectations, goals, and objectives for this practice with all participants. Each excursion can focus on one or more themes that may be connected to curriculum expectations or participant interest. These may include relaxation and stress management, development of observation skills, history of the land and Indigenous relations, wildlife and native species, conservation and ecological responsibilities, the arts, etc.



Observe and Feel

Guide participants to comfortably sit in their selected spot. This activity can last anywhere from 5-60 minutes. Encourage them to remain in silence when possible and connect to their different senses and feelings. Consider sharing various strategies to relax when beginning the activity (e.g., close your eyes, breathe deeply, etc.). You may choose to increase the amount of time that all participants sit, as they gain experience.



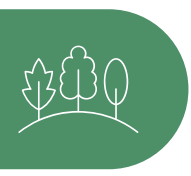
Record Observations, Perceptions and Feelings

Encourage participants to use the My Sit Spot Field Journal template for screen (page 6) or for print (page 7) to explore and record their experience.



Repeat!

Return to the same Sit Spot regularly over a period of time (i.e., daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonally) and continue to record observations, perceptions, and feelings over time. Use the Extended Learning - Additional reflection questions (page 5) to prompt deeper engagement, reflection, and stewardship of the environment.



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal

Reflection Questions

Educator Note

This resource includes pre- and post-action reflection questions to help participants better understand and explore their relationship with nature.

Use the pre-action reflection questions before starting your Sit Spot routine. Use the post-action reflection questions after participants have done one or more Sit Spot to assess change over time.

Pre-action reflection questions

Prepare for the Sit Spot activity by having participants answer some, or all, of the following questions. You may choose to have participants write or draw their responses. Alternatively, use these questions as prompts for class discussions.

- 1 Are you most comfortable indoors or outdoors? Why?
- 2 Where do you feel most relaxed and peaceful? Why?
- 3 How do you feel when you are sitting in and/or observing nature?
- 4 What is your favorite place to be in nature? Why?
- 5 Do you have any concerns and/or fears when spending time outdoors? Please describe.
- 6 What is your favorite season? Why?
- 7 Do you like observing the local plants and animals and how they are impacted by seasonal changes? Please describe.
- 8 When you are outside observing nature, what do you notice the most ?
- 9 In what ways can you see the impact of your own actions on nature?
- 10 How do you feel about practicing Sit Spot? What are you the most excited about? Do you have any concerns?
- 11 What is your current mood, thoughts, or feelings before practicing Sit Spot?



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal Reflection Questions

Post-action reflection questions

Reflect on the Sit Spot activity and any subsequent learning by having participants answer some, or all, of the following questions. You may choose to have participants write or draw their responses. Alternatively, use these questions as prompts for class discussions.

- 1 How do you feel after spending time at your Sit Spot? Is there a change from before the activity?
- 2 What senses did you notice most during your Sit Spot activity (i.e., sights, smells, sounds, touch)?
- 3 When you are outside, what observations captivated you the most?
- 4 Why do you think it is helpful to record observations and feelings over time?
- 5 What are some methods or tips you have used to help you relax, slow down, observe, and feel in nature?
- 6 After spending time at your Sit Spot, do you feel more connected (emotionally, physically, mentally, and/or spiritually)? Please describe.
- 7 What is something interesting or new that you noticed or learned during this activity?
- 8 How do you think the Sit Spot will change through the different seasons?
- 9 What can we do to enhance and protect this natural space?



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal

Reflection Questions

Educator Note

In addition to participants' personal connections to land, consider reflecting and learning more about the original people of these lands and the impacts of colonialism and environmental degradation over time. Use the following questions as prompts.

- 1 What are the Indigenous territories, treaties, and/or languages in the area you are conducting this activity?
- 2 How has colonialism, urbanization, litter, and/or consumerism affected the local environment? Pick one topic as a point of reflection or research.
- 3 What are some strategies to help protect the local natural spaces? Are there any lessons we can learn from traditional knowledge systems or Indigenous leadership in conservation?
- 4 How can we interact with nature to promote sustainable practices and enhance ecosystems resilience and well-being?
- 5 How can we ensure our actions create an inclusive space for all people to engage in meaningful ways?
- 6 Extend reflection to include imaginative exercises:
 - Is the land where I visit alive?
 - How does the land feel about my presence here?
 - How do I know this land and how does this land know me?
 - Over time, how can I give thanks to the land?
- 7 Consider stories of the land in the past, present, and future.
 - What did this land look like 100 years ago?
 - What about right now?
 - What do you think it will look like 100 years from now?
 - Ask students what role they play in this story.



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal

My Sit Spot Journal - For Screen

A field journal is helpful to record observations, experiences, and feelings over time. The template below can be used to guide a Sit Spot journaling activity. Journaling can take the form of drawings, sketches, writing, and botanical collage. Include journal entries from each of your Sit Spot excursions in a binder to catalog your observations and reflect on learning.

Complete this section before going to your Sit Spot.

Name:

Date:

Season:

Local Indigenous territory:

Time:

Weather:

Feeling/mood:

Feel

Do you feel anything on your skin or with your hands?

Hear

What's the loudest and quietest sound you hear? What natural sounds and human-made sounds can you hear?

Smell

What do you smell? Can you describe it?

See

What do you see? Don't forget to look all around (up, down, front, back, and side to side!)

Feelings: How are you feeling after sitting for some time in your Sit Spot? Has your mood changed?

Observations: Note 2-3 observations in detail (e.g., plants, wildlife, buildings, etc.).

Additional Notes and Questions:



Sit Spot Reflection and Field Journal

My Sit Spot Journal - For Print

A field journal is helpful to record observations, experiences, and feelings over time. The template below can be used to guide a Sit Spot journaling activity. Journaling can take the form of drawings, sketches, writing, and botanical collage. Include journal entries from each of your Sit Spot excursions in a binder to catalog your observations and reflect on learning.

Complete this section before going to your Sit Spot.

Name:

Date:

Season:

Local Indigenous territory:

Time:

Weather:

Feeling/mood:

Feel

Do you feel anything on your skin or with your hands?

Hear

What's the loudest and quietest sound you hear? What natural sounds and human-made sounds can you hear?

Smell

What do you smell? Can you describe it?

See

What do you see? Don't forget to look all around (up, down, front, back, and side to side!)

Feelings: How are you feeling after sitting for some time in your Sit Spot? Has your mood changed?

Observations: Note 2-3 observations in detail (e.g., plants, wildlife, buildings, etc.).

Additional Notes and Questions: