

Digital Journaling in the Outdoor Classroom

Keywords: [Outdoor Classroom](#), [Nature Investigation](#), [Plant Science Up Close](#), [Detectives in the Garden](#)

Subject(s): [Art](#), [Video](#), [Writing](#), [Earth Science](#), [Information Skills](#), [Biology](#), [Home Economics](#), [Photography](#), [Social Studies](#), [Science](#)

Grades P-K through 8

NETS-S Standard:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Communication and Collaboration
- Research and Information Fluency
- Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making
- Digital Citizenship
- Technology Operations and Concepts

Given cameras, notebooks and tablets, the student grade k-4 will observe the emerging plants, seedlings fruits, vegetables and animals in the classroom outside the school's windows.

We will use our current always changing, ever expanding school garden space.

The data is collected in a fun way, as the children peer closely, often crawling along as explorers close to the ground and unearthing the very soil to see worms, roots and surprises in the gardens.

The children can work at all levels of ability, each finding an outdoor 'favorite', such as the smell of peppermint, the color of a flower, the movement of a beetle or the look of water with the sun shining on it. The visually impaired can enjoy watering, scents and sounds as the senses are fully engaged with life in the garden.

With the help of cameras, the students can bring this information back into the school, replaying and discussing their garden

discoveries, This will lead another group outside with interest and excitement because they 'previewed' the possibilities of discovery.

In the last ten minutes, the class will review what we found, show highlight on camera to each other. We will make a list of what we still want to explore, what our favorite is for next class and teach the art of 'journaling' through a series of observations of all our garden factors including temperature, soil conditions, light, moisture. This procedure can be repeated over and over with new observations each week, often with tremendous differences in what we see in the gardens through the entire year. We can ask students to ask about gardens from their own parents and grandparents, offering an intergenerational and intercultural learning module. Discussion and planning could then begin for interviewing and digital journaling of preparation of the garden foods for community.

Cross-Curriculum Ideas

The outdoor classroom has so many curriculum ideas. We could easily incorporate music, math, history, more and more science, plus community service time.

Follow-Up

We have a website to record and promote all adventures in outdoor gardens. It is surprisingly read all over the world but not just students, but teachers, community activists, moms, fishermen, gardeners and so many more.

Materials:

[Flip Video, Portable](#), [Wacom Tablets](#), [Printers](#), [Camera Bags](#), [Flash/USB Drives](#), [Memory Cards](#), [Elementary](#), [Middle](#)