

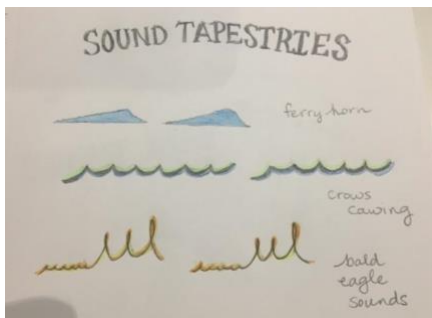
Exploring Identity Through Connection to Place

Activity Ideas

1. Have students bring in or digitally access a picture of a favourite place. One at a time, have students share their picture. For each student, have the rest of the class ask a question and or give an inference about the picture presented.
*****This could be a great "getting to know you" activity early in the year.**

2. Find a space outside, large enough for each student in your class to find a separate "spot". This could be on the school grounds or at a nearby park or outdoor space. Have students use that same space over multiple days to try the following outdoor experiential journaling activities: (many of these ideas are from *Drawing Care: The Illustrated Journal's Path to Place* by L.K. Baldwin and *The Power of Place: Authentic Learning Through Place-Based Education* by T. Vander Ark, E. Liebtob, & N. McClennen). You may want students to make or bring some sort of "situpon" so they can sit comfortably on the ground without getting wet. The following is a link with instructions for making one that makes for a fun art project that can also be done outside. I would also cover this situpon with a plastic garbage bag as it is so wet in BC!
<https://www.instructables.com/id/Newspaper-Sit-upon/>
 - a. **Photos:** Have students take a variety of pictures of their place. Have them experiment with different angles and perspectives. Try photos close up and from a distance, play with the light and tell them to try to be present in the moment. You may want to watch a short online video about taking good photographs prior to going outside. Have students choose their favourite photo to either share with the class or to write about in their journals.
 - b. **Senses Web:** Have students sit in their spot and use words, drawings or a combination of the two to create a web recording their sensory experience of their place.
 - c. **Sound Tapestries:** Have students sit quietly in their place, close their eyes, and listen for several minutes. The point of this activity is to have students experience a place through their ears. Have them note one sound and imagine the shape and colour of that sound. Have them record that shape and colour

in their journals. Repeat the drawing two times and do this for a variety of sounds. See the examples below:



d. **Colour Swatches:** Draw six to eight square boxes on the page. Have students focus on the colours in their place. If possible, use water colour paints to mix shades that represent a variety of colours that they see and fill each box with a different shade. Add a legend to the boxes and identify what each colour represents and why they chose them. Pencil crayons or pastels are also workable options.

e. **Poetry in Place:** As a class brainstorm a list of verbs ending in "ing". Have students each draw a vertical line on a journal page and write 10 verbs of their choice vertically on the right hand side of the line. Have students sit in their place and find 10 things they see, feel or hear that would work with the verbs they have chosen. Arrange the words in a creative way to make a poem. See the example below:

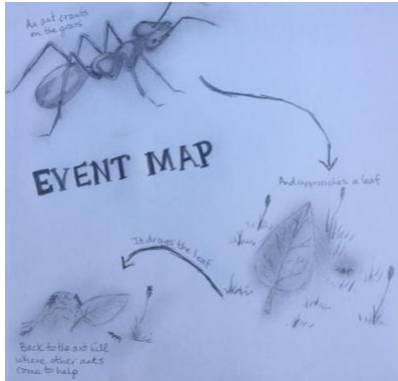
*Dandelions blowing
Crows chatting
Willow tree comforting
Clouds changing
Students reciting
Forest beckoning
Soccer field enticing
Breeze silencing
Leaves dancing
Ants racing*

- f. **Contour Drawings:** Have students choose one object in their place and arrange their journals in a way that they are able to draw but NOT look at what they are drawing. Students should imagine their hand and eye are working as one and slowly draw the outline of the object as their eye moves around it. Students may use one continuous line or a series of smaller lines. The idea of this activity is not to create an actual representation but to “get to know” the object better. When finished, have students shade or colour in their drawings and/or add descriptive words around the outside.



- g. **Phenology:** Phenology is observing the reactions of plants and animals to seasonal changes. Have students make a daily, weekly or monthly record of observations of the natural world in their place. This could include written observations and/or labelled sketches of changes they see, such as plants budding, leaves changing colour or variations in bird and insect behaviour.
- h. **Movement in Nature:** Have students sit in their place for a few minutes and notice everything they can see that moves. Have them represent the essence of each movement in their journals with a single line.
- i. **Event Map:** Have students sit in their place and observe any “events” or interactions they see in their environment. It could be the movement of a

bird, ants dragging leaves, or even clouds floating past. Using a wandering line, students draw a series of sketches and/or words to show the sequence of events. See the example below:



- j. **Letter Styles:** Have students experiment with different types of lettering of fancy letters for their labelling. For example, they may use all capitals, bubble letters, block letters or calligraphy. This can be an easy way to make a journal page look more appealing, especially for those who are not confident in their sketching abilities!

3. **Question Wall:** Create a space, either on a wall or bulletin board where students can add questions, inferences, or observations about their spaces to discuss as a class or reflect upon later.