



Open-Sky
School

Category
ART THERAPY



Activity

Draw a Tree

MATERIALS

- Colored pencil crayons
- Drawing tablets OR Drawing sheets and clipboards
- Weather-appropriate clothing
- Blankets, if needed

DURATION

2 SESSIONS, 45 MINUTES EACH

Activity Summary

The goal of this activity is to encourage students to become aware of changes in nature. Students are invited to look at a tree or the growth of one of its leaves, to see the changes that take place in the spring. Additionally, the activity invites students to practice mindfulness through an introduction to meditation centered around their breathing. This will allow students to use their mindful observations of the trees in a creative and artistic context. This activity takes place individually in a quiet space in nature.

Preparation

- Choose a time to carry out this activity when students can easily observe trees' transformations, for example, in April and May.
- Choose a quiet space in nature.



Steps

Invite students to think about the questions you will ask them, but to answer them quietly to themselves.

Read the instructions aloud, leaving time between each step so that students have time to think about the questions you will ask.

A. First visit – meditation

Once in nature, instruct students to do the following:

1. Choose a tree that you are comfortable sitting next to, at a far enough distance to draw. You can be several people around the same tree, but keep a comfortable distance between each other.
2. Close your eyes.
3. If you do not feel comfortable closing your eyes you can look at the ground in front of you.
4. Take a few deep breaths.
5. Pay attention to your breathing.

Questions

(Respond silently)

1. Do you feel your lungs inflating as you inhale and deflating as you exhale?
2. Can you change the pattern of your breathing? For example, can you breathe more slowly?

B. First visit – drawing

Distribute drawing materials while students are focusing on their breathing.

Say:

1. Open your eyes and look at the tree in front of you.
2. Observe the color and shape of its leaves, the texture of its bark.
3. Draw the tree as you see it.
4. We will come back to draw the same tree in a few weeks.
5. Focus on the tree and your drawing. If you notice that you are lost in thought, simply try to bring your attention back to the tree and your drawing. You have 30 minutes to draw. If you haven't finished by then, that's okay, you can continue during a free period or at another time.
6. Remember where you are sitting now because you will be sitting in the same spot on our next visit.

1. Do you see the roots of the tree?
2. Is the trunk wide or narrow, straight or curved, short or long?
3. What do you see on the branches of the tree?
4. Do you think the tree will look the same on our next visit? (you can tell students the planned date of your second visit).

C. Second visit – drawing

Return to the space in nature with your students, and ask them to sit in the same spot as they did during the first visit.

Repeat the meditation session with your class, following the instructions from part A.

Distribute drawing materials while students are focusing on their breathing.

Say:

1. Open your eyes and look at the tree in front of you.
2. This activity is the same as the one we carried out here last time (you can remind students of the date of the first visit).
3. Observe the color and shape of the leaves on the tree, the texture of its bark.
4. Draw the tree as you see it, paying careful attention to any smaller details.
5. If you notice that you are lost in thought, simply try to bring your attention back to the tree and your drawing. You have 30 minutes to draw. If you haven't finished by then, that's okay, you can continue during a free period or at another time.

Questions

(Respond silently)

1. Has the tree changed?
2. What's different? The leaves, the branches?
3. Do you see things on the tree that you didn't notice during our first visit?

RETURN TO GROUP

Once you come together as a group, students can answer your questions orally.

1. Did you like this activity?
2. What emotions did you feel while drawing? What were you thinking about?
3. Was it difficult to concentrate? What distracted you?
4. What has changed the most in your drawing, comparing it to the first one?

REINVESTMENT:

Do the same drawing activity in nature preceded by a period of mindfulness, but of other natural phenomena: spring flowers, rocks, tree bark, branches, herbs. etc.