

Healing Nature



Step outside. Look around. Researchers say noticing nature can give your well-being a boost.

LEXILE: 1000L

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: People, Places, and Environments

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.7, SI.2

ENGAGE THE READER

To start the lesson, ask students to think about the last time they were in nature. This could mean going for a hike, walking through a park, or sitting in a yard. Ask them to write down what they did and what they enjoyed about it. Call on volunteers to talk about it. Did anyone use the time outdoors to appreciate nature? Explain that this activity can be beneficial to mental health. Ask students to rate how effective they think this activity can be on a scale from 1 to 10. Tally the classes responses and save the results for a later date.

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- What inspired Miles Richardson to research nature connectedness?
- How does the article suggest connecting with nature in the most beneficial way?
- Can you relate to the article? What experiences have you had with nature?

EXTEND LEARNING

Work as a class to list nearby green spaces. Based on the article, which of these might be most beneficial? Point out the article's sidebar, "Help Nature Thrive." Explain that a sidebar is a short, related article that appears beside a main article. Ask students what the purpose of this sidebar is. As a class, add to the list of opportunities such as volunteering in a park or starting a garden. Challenge students to participate in nature journaling a few times a week, for a few weeks. They may describe what they see, sketch their surroundings, or write poems.

After a few weeks, host a discussion about students' nature journals. Group students and have them discuss the following: Have you enjoyed nature journaling? How has it changed your relationship with nature, if at all? Is this something you might continue? Repoll the class, asking them to rate how effective the activity was. Compare the results with those from the earlier poll.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

Make a copy of the Google Form quiz for "Healing Nature" [here](#).

1. D (RI.3) **2. A** (RI.4) **3. B** (RI.1) **4. C** (RI.9) **5. D** (RI.5)
6. B (RI.7) **7.** Answers will vary. (W.1)