



Ideation in Nature

Tips for teachers and tutors

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Content

- Tips for ideation based on earlier nature walks
- General ideation methods to try out during the next nature walks





TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

1) When you are outdoors in nature with students, what is in front of you is always the biggest priority. This means that you can best concentrate on the immediacy of the moment. So forget about streaming your lesson simultaneously on your phone or other mobile device.

If there is a need for streaming, then have another person to do that.



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

2) Create a normal lesson structure beforehand. However, take into account that reading anything directly from a screen or paper can be difficult – both for you and the students.

3) Go to the place or places where you want to teach in advance, see what is there and think what things could resonate with your lecture topic.

How can you make the things you and the students see, touch, hear and smell (and taste) an integral part of your lecture?



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

4) Give the students space and time to **interact** with nature in a way that connects to the topic of study. If it is fine art, for example, they could be making perishable installations out of sticks and leaves. If it is games design, let them create a game from the things at hand. In visual design, the students could use different methods of sketching details of the landscape. In typography, they could draw letters in the sand or snow.

After the interactive task, analyse each student's or student team's work together with the group. Discuss the relevance and context just as you would with a digital work.



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

5) In addition to a practical task, give the students also some more theoretical assignments, either as individual work or where they have to discuss in small groups. As there is usually space enough, it is easy for the small teams to disperse and find a quiet nook to discuss.

6) Space your lecture parts into 5-10 –minute sessions. This is usually the time that students can concentrate on a lecture outdoors, as the weather might not be ideal, or the things around them demand attention, or there may be disturbances such as noise from traffic, wind etc.



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

7) If the weather is cold or harsh otherwise, it is a good idea to take a thermos of coffee and tea and paper cups with you, if you can afford it. A small break with warm drinks (and maybe cookies or cake) will brighten up everybody's mood.

8) If you have students from very different backgrounds and cultures, some of them may not know how to dress properly for the weather conditions. Tell students beforehand what kind of clothing is most practical. (Yes, you are not their parent, but as their supervisor, you are responsible for the group's wellbeing while you are outdoors with them.)



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

9) Natural environments tend to involve physical risks. It is tempting – and often even recommendable – to give the group of students a few (mild) physical challenges, such as crossing a ditch or climbing on a high rocky hill.

However, always point out that there is an easier way to go for students who have physical difficulties. Don't make the physical challenge a question of pride or competition. (You can for instance tell that smart people find a way to go around the hindrance...)



TIPS BASED ON EARLIER NATURE WALKS

10) Be ready to adapt to the weather conditions at hand! If it is too cold or wet for writing things down or handling a mobile device, think of other ways for the students to complete the assignment – or change the assignment accordingly.

11) Continuing the assignments you started and discussions you had outdoors when returning in the classroom: Ask the students what they thought was relevant in their outdoors experience. Remind them of what they perceived with their different senses, including the senses of touch and smell. (Smells in particular can act as direct triggers to a person's memories...)



GENERAL METHODS TO TRY OUT DURING THE NEXT NATURE WALKS

HMW
Crazy 8's

Focus on questions first, ask: "How might we..." (HMW)

- Instead of focusing the ideas right away, you can ask the questions first
- Connect "How might we..." phrase with your thoughts
- For example: "How might we digitalize the diversity of nature?"
- Use HMW's as inspiration for ideation and sketching
- What you need:
 - Post-its and pen
- <https://conference-pages-dot-designsprintkit.appspot.com/methods/understand/hmw-directions/>
- <https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methodology/phase1-understand/hmw-sharing-and-affinity-mapping>
- <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-might-we-questions/>



Crazy 8's: Fast sketching

- **Sketch** eight ideas in eight minutes
- Create one idea in one minute
- Take time!
- What you need:
 - Paper and pen
 - Timer

Read more:

- <https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methodology/phase3-sketch/crazy-8s>





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