



Worthington Field Studies, Inc.

Thomas Worthington High School
300 West Granville Road
Worthington, Ohio 43085-2501



SUMMER 2011 – DESERT SOUTHWEST - THE TRIP JOURNAL

What is it? Your trip journal is a **Log**. It contains information about your educational progress on the trip. It is also a **Record** of things (**daily and one-time events**) that happened on the trip, and a record of your actions and reactions. Finally your journal is also a kind of semi-public **Diary**, a personal written description of your own activities, feelings and observations.

Why? It is difficult for the mind to hold everything, especially when it is being exposed to new, unexpected, astonishing, or rapidly paced experiences. Think about it. Can you remember everything that you saw, felt, and knew yesterday? Now what about last week? Month? Year?

New experiences are going to be piled on top of each other, day after day, and often times before you are ready for them (you will still be enjoying and contemplating the immediate past experience). This makes it important that you keep a **daily, written** record of these experiences.

Weeks, months, or even years later when you look through your journal, you will be amazed at the many details of the trip, many of which you had forgotten!

Lastly, the trip journal is one of the **MAJOR** contributors in our evaluation of your educational success on the trip. As much as a third of your graded effort is determined by the journal.

EXAMPLES OF THINGS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR JOURNAL

Questions – Questions about what you are seeing and experiencing. For example, “Why is the vegetation different on the west facing slopes than down in the valley where we were hiking today?” Finding the answers to these types of questions can bring together many different areas of knowledge and experience.

Facts – From your field notebook, reference books, field guides, evening lectures, guest speakers and park rangers.

Observations – Look around you; discover change, examine the vistas. “How has the climate / land / culture changed from earlier in the day?”

Sketches – Views of what you see, large or small. Also include diagrams from trail signs, cultural features, geologic formations and biological interactions.

Maps – Include sections of a map you may have or a map you have made to identify where you are or where you are going.



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Feelings – For example, a description of your feelings upon reaching the Hole-in-the-Wall at the end of backpacking the Ozette Coastline or the top of Hallett's Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park. Or, your reaction to your first time on dish crew!

Stuff – Artifacts or specimens you think are or might be interesting enough to keep. You may need a special container for this. Make sure you have **labels** telling when and where collected.
Know the collecting rules of each area before collecting!

Organization of Your Journal

The top of each Journal Page **must** be organized using one of the following conventions:

Day of Trip Day & Date	From _____ To _____
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OR

Day of Trip Day & Date	At _____ Name of Activity
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EXAMPLE:

Day 2 Tuesday June 21, 2011	From Mammoth Cave NP To Hot Springs NP
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OR

Day 5 Friday June 24, 2011	At Carlsbad Caverns NP Visiting Caverns
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