

Inspired by nature

Take your young people on a hike to create an artistic project that reflects the feelings brought about by their surroundings



Adventurer and Scout Ambassador Megan Hine

Megan tells us how climbing mountains can build resilience: 'A mountain is shaped, just like us, by the hardships it experiences on a daily basis. But, unlike us, the mountain can't ask for help. Every single one of us goes through ups and downs in life, but when the downs outweigh the ups it's time to ask for help.' Watch the full video at scouts.org.uk/meganhinefacebook.



Nature Photographer of the Year
An annual competition

Untitled landscapes
Abstract paintings by Etel Adnan

A Light Exists in Spring
A poem by Emily Dickinson

What a Wonderful World
A song by Louis Armstrong

Nature Cure
A memoir by Richard Mabey about the healing power of nature

Suitable for all

You will need

- notebooks
- pens and pencils
- crayons and colouring pencils
- phone with sound recording abilities (optional)
- camera phone (optional)

Instructions

1 Discuss with your young people that artists, writers, poets and others have been inspired by nature for centuries. Let them know that they will be going on a hike to a natural location or green space where they will be challenged to create their own poem,

piece of descriptive writing, drawing, abstract painting, recording or short film inspired by the natural world around them. It could be something else – ask them if they can think of other ways of expressing how they feel about nature.

2 Have a discussion about the best place to go in order to find inspiration – do they have any ideas of natural spaces you could hike to?

3 Halfway through the hike, everyone can settle down and work on their project. If the weather isn't very good, they can create the artwork

back in the meeting place. If it's too tricky to transport painting equipment and other art supplies, suggest that they make a sketch to paint later, or take pictures that they can use to create a drawing or painting.

4 When creating their artwork, remind everyone to really take in their surroundings. Use the tips on this page for a mindful hike and to help young people use their senses to create their art. Paying close attention to all our surroundings and being in the moment can also be really good for our mental health and wellbeing.

Safety first

Hiking and walking

Terrain zero is recommended for this activity. Follow the guidance at scouts.org.uk/terrainzero or from the adventure page at scouts.org.uk/a-z.

Outdoor activities

You must have permission to use the location. Always check the weather forecast and inform parents and carers of any change in location.

All activities must be safely managed. Do a risk assessment (scouts.org.uk/riskassessmentsmadeeasy) and take appropriate steps to reduce risk. Always get approval for the activity and have suitable supervision (see scouts.org.uk/adult ratios) and an Intouch process (scouts.org.uk/intouch).

Time needed 90 minutes

This activity can count towards young people's Hikes Away badge and would also be great to do on an overnight camp for the Nights Away badge.

Badges



GO Outdoors partners the Hikes Away and Nights Away Staged Activity Badges

Partner



Outcomes

The young people will go on a hike and spend time outdoors, improving wellbeing and valuing the outdoors. They will channel their feelings and observations into drawing, painting, writing, poetry or other artistic outlet.

More information

For badge resources, activities and event opportunities visit: scouts.org.uk/supporters/go-outdoors.

Find your inner artist with a mindful hike

Breathe:

Concentrating on breathing can make us feel calmer and help us to smell our surroundings.

Listen:

Can you hear birdsong, and if so what does it sound like? Can you hear traffic? Does that affect the way you feel? What else can you hear?

Touch:

Put your hands on the trees, pick up a pebble, and run your hands through the grass to get in touch with nature.

Look:

Sit or stand quietly and see what you can see. Are the leaves moving in the trees? Are there any animals moving around? What colours can you see?

