

Jane Goodall and Nature Journaling

Reinforce your child's observation skills with this hands-on activity, Jane Goodall and Nature Journaling, inspired by the pioneering scientist Jane Goodall. By incorporating natural materials and the powers of observation, your child will become a backyard naturalist while building early literacy concepts. Encourage your child to carry their nature journal with them on hikes, neighborhood walks, or even in the backyard, and provide open-ended time to sit and make observations. You might be surprised about what you and your child can observe when watching something as simple as a tree in your yard!

What You Need:

- Blank paper (10–12 pieces)
- Blank cardstock (1 piece) or thin cardboard
- Large rubber band
- Stick (should be the same length as paper folded in half)
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Pencil
- Crayons
- Copy of book [Me...Jane by Patrick McDonnell](#) (optional)
- Copy of the [Jane Goodall Biography](#) worksheet (optional)



What You Do:

1. Use the book or biography worksheet to introduce Jane Goodall to your child. Explain that Jane Goodall is a scientist who studies chimpanzees. She has used her observation skills to make many important discoveries about the life and habits of chimpanzees through many years of research.
2. Explain that today your child will be making a nature observation journal to learn about animals and insects, just like Jane Goodall. Define **observation** as watching something or someone carefully in order to learn more about them.
3. Help your child to lay out the papers (both cardstock and regular paper) in a neat pile and fold them in half the short way, like a hamburger. Then have them cut along the fold (grown-ups can do this for younger children).
4. Using the hole punch, make a hole at the top and bottom of the papers along the left edge. Have your child separate the papers if the stack is too thick for the hole punch.
5. Place the cardstock on the top and bottom of the stack to make a front and back cover. Make sure that the holes are lined up as closely as possible (if there are any overlaps or edges you can trim them later).
6. Help your child to use the rubber band and loop one end over the stick and then through the top hole of the observation journal. Next, stretch the rubber band along the back of the edge and through the other hole, looping it onto the other side of your stick.
7. The nature journal is ready to be decorated! Invite your child to decorate the cover using crayons, markers, or natural items.
8. Take the journal and crayons or pencils outside to a comfortable spot. Encourage your child to find something to observe (such as a tree, bush, or garden) and draw or write their observations.
9. Continue to revisit the same spot to make additional observations. Ask your child open-ended questions to support their developing observation skills. Example questions include: What do you see? What do you wonder?
10. For more inspiration about Jane Goodall, visit her website [Jane Goodall](#).