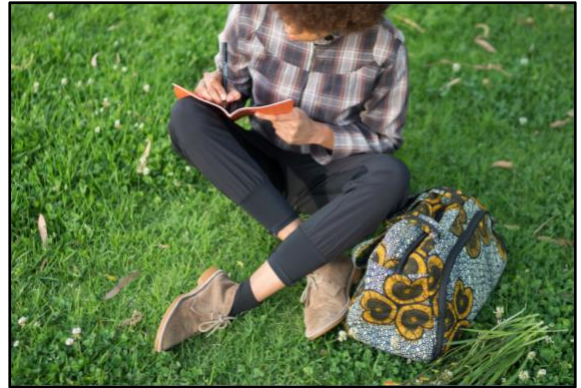# The ART of OBSERVATION

GEARING UP TO BE A SCIENTIST

As we delve deeper into experiments in this series, it is important to have the right tools for the job! As a scientist, one of the most important tools is your science notebook or journal. This is the place where you record observations, collect data, draw pictures and make notes on hypotheses and experiments.

Sometimes I have 3 or 4 different scientific journals for recording different kinds of data. I have 1 for monitoring birds and another for recording the plants in my garden and how they are doing each week.
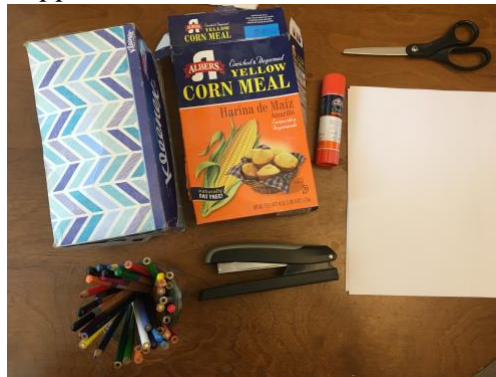

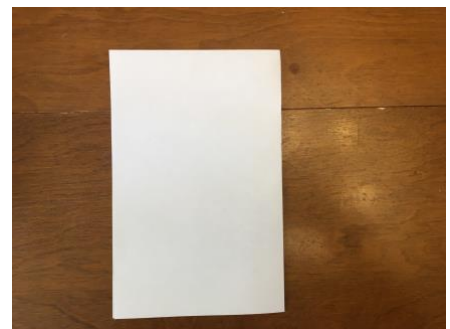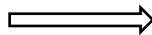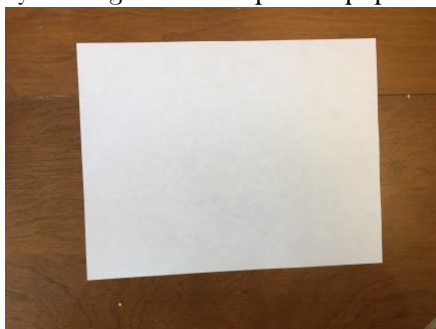## CRAFT: Creating your own observation journal

You will need:

- A thin cardboard box (like a cereal box or an old tissue box)
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Plain printer-size paper (any light color)
- Stapler
- Colored pencils or crayons

Instructions:

1. Ask an adult for help gathering the supplies!

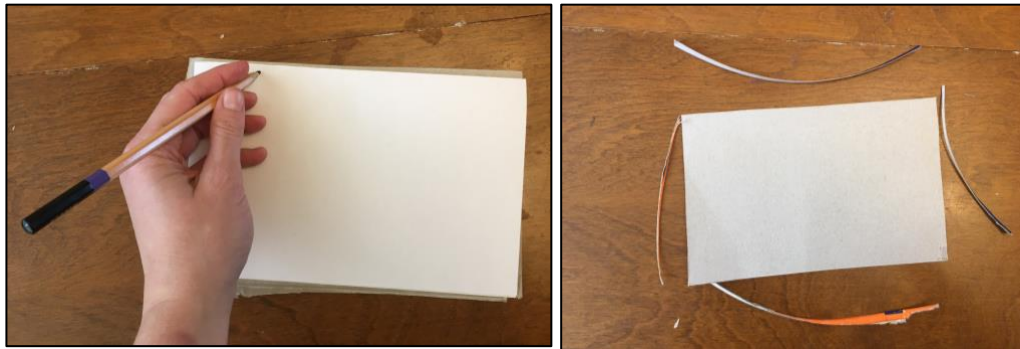2. Start by folding 1 sheet of printer paper in ½ hamburger-style.

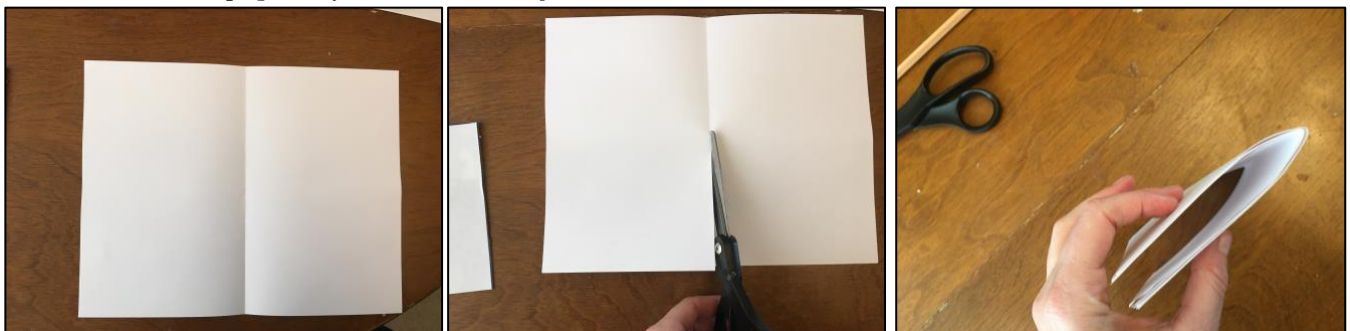3. Cut off the sides of your cardboard box and leave the largest piece out and turned over.

4. Next trace your ½ sheet of paper onto the underside of your cardboard box and cut it out.

5. Cut your piece of paper down the crease and glue (or tape) one half onto the colored-side of the box. You can skip this step if you like the design on the inside of your journal. But I chose to cover it so I could write things on the inside covers.
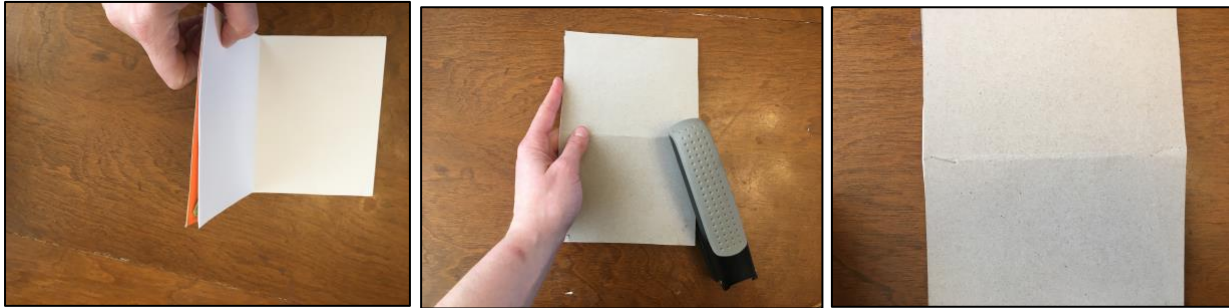

6. Next fold 4-5 pieces of plain paper in ½. Cut down the seam, stack them and then fold in ½ again. These are the pages of your observation journal!
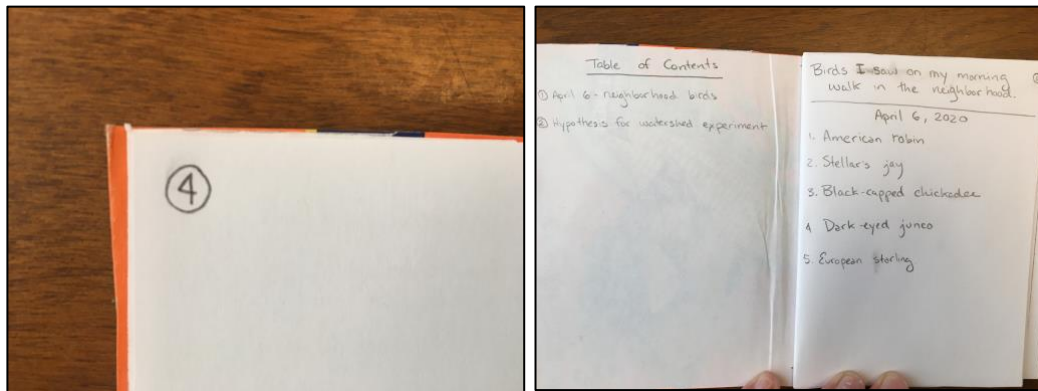
7. Finally, place your folded sheets inside your cardboard cover, fold them all in ½ and put in 2 staples! The plain side of the cardboard will be on the outside, and you'll have a 10-20 page booklet!

8. Now you're ready to decorate your journal! Don't forget to put the year on it!

9. Don't forget to number your pages and put a Table of Contents on the first page! A good scientific practice is to always put a title and the date on each of your observation pages, just like I did when I recorded the birds on my morning walk yesterday. I then added the page number and the title to my table of contents!

So now what do we do with our journal?

Great question! This journal will be a great place for you to record observations you make throughout this Home Explorer series.

- ☐ It can be a place to record what you see out your window, or how you notice the trees and flowers changing as the weather gets warmer!

- ☐ You can record and draw the way that clouds look before or after it rains.

- ☐ You can also record the daily outside temperature.

As a young scientist, this is an amazing time to learn the art of observation. Of noticing things that have always been around you, but you've been too busy to stop and look at! We will be learning important data-collection skills so that you can start gathering real data that will be used by scientists around the world!!

CHALLENGE!

Choose 1 thing that you can record every day in your journal. Dedicate 1 page to recording the date and the observation. Make it part of your routine in the morning like when you brush your teeth or get dressed. Maybe choose one place to walk to every day and record how the flowers are coming on a particular tree!

Thanks for conducting science with me for this Home Explorer activity from Umpqua Watersheds Education Program. Join me for new activities posted every week!

- Ms. Robyn