



Be a Reader and Writer

Writing – Reading – Literature

- Think like a writer.
- Make a list of words about spring. Use books or the Internet to find words others use to tell about warm weather or the seasons.
Weather – warm, breeze, clouds, frost, rain, rainbows, sunlight
Animals – Emerging insects such as butterflies and bees, baby animals of many kinds, migrating birds.
Plants – Buds, blossoms, leaves, growth and change
Land and water – Spring runoff, mud, slush, erosion, hills and valleys
Events – Easter, Earth Day, Arbor Day
- What special words would weather forecasters use to tell about what you feel and see on the trail?
- Be a poet. Write how you think or feel about spring or about the plants and animals you see at this time of year. Write different kinds of poetry. Read poems others have written about spring. Use the list of spring words you compiled.
- Be a photo journalist. Plan which pictures you want to take to help your writing tell a story.

- Be a script writer. Take photographs or videos and write script to go with them.
- Be a reporter, a letter writer or add to a diary. Keep a journal. Write about your experiences on the trails in spring. Write labels and captions for photos you take. Will the writing help you remember what you did or saw if you read it many years later?
- Use your senses of touch and smell. What words describe what you feel or smell?
- Put on a pair of glasses that have only the frames. Look at the ordinary in an extraordinary way.
- Use a magnifying glass to observe things such as plants or small creatures close-up.
- Observe the same place at different times of day or over several days. Write about changes you see in light and shadows, growth, effects of weather or creatures.
- Make a list of animals you see on a spring day. Describe the trail from their point of view.
- Write about the people who helped to make Arbor Day and Earth Day important. Write your own list of ways you could make a difference in your home, school, or community.

Reading

- Learning to read through the use of trade books has become a way of wisely using learning time and resources.
- Before you walk a trail think about what you might see or want to know. Do some background reading to get ready for your walk.
- As you walk the trail, think of stories or books you have read that remind you of what you see or experience.
- After a walk, look for new reading materials that give you more information about what you saw. Find books or stories written by others who had experiences like yours. Find folk or fanciful tales that have been used to “explain” events in nature.
- What local writers have described spring weather or spring activities in Taylor County? Read their materials and then write your own.
- Use a list of artifacts (tools, ox yokes, maple syrup equipment, etc.) that are named in the “Little House Books” by Wilder. Which ones were used at

locations along the trail? Read the stories in the books to learn how Laura described them.

- Take field guides along on the trail. Find books at a library and read about the things that are happening in springtime. Find those events or objects in your own neighborhood.
- Use a search engine to read about specific topics you see on the trail or in your yard.
- Read books such as *Walden* or *Sand Country Almanac*. The authors wrote about places where they lived or walked. What in their writings might also be true of a trail you are walking or a place near your school or home?
- Read *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv. What does that best selling author say about the importance of actually being out in nature rather than just seeing it on electronic media?

Written by Dr. Loretta Kuse and Dr. Hildegard Kuse