



**GRAND
CANYON**
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

SKETCH HIKE

Looking for something different to do, on your own or with friends or family?
Try heading out on a **Sketch Hike** at Grand Canyon National Park
or in your own neighborhood!

Enhance your drawing skills or pick up new ones. Learn to notice the magical details surrounding us everywhere. With pencil and paper, there is no limit to what we can see, feel, and express.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Plenty of water and salty snacks
- A sunhat; loose, lightweight clothing; comfortable walking shoes, and sunscreen.
- A lightweight backpacking stool, pencils, drawing paper, pencil sharpener, and a bag to contain and pack out any pencil shavings.

EXERCISE 1: PRACTICE PAYING ATTENTION

Slow down, look, and listen.

- Pick out a particular shape, species, color, sound, or smell; let it grab your attention and keep it in your mind's eye. As you walk, count how many times it appears.
- Look for contrasts between things: something hard next to what appears soft. Look for stark shadows that separate things or bring them together in some way.
- What doesn't belong? What seems out of place? An oddly-shaped rock – a unique flower or tree – a piece of trash?
- Look down, then look up, look up far. What's out there? Is there a plane with a contrail, satellites, or stars? What's at your feet? What's inside the crack in that rock or strip of pavement?
- What do you hear when you're walking? A bird song, idle car engine, crunching gravel, whistling wind, or someone else's conversation?
- Try making a window frame with your hands. Use it to survey the scene around you, then stop. What do you see?
- Imagine the environment from another's perspective. How would the world appear if you were an ant searching for food, a raven flying through space, or a Grand Canyon mule hauling someone's supplies on your back?



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with Heather L. Johnson

EXERCISE 2: PICK A SUBJECT TO DRAW

Something you notice that's grabbed your attention. It could be a rock or a tree or a creature that makes that rock or tree their home. It could be something unexpected, like a mask or pair of sunglasses someone left behind. *How does it make you feel? Hold onto that feeling. Look at the subject again, for a good long while.*

- Notice its shape and surface texture. Round, flat or irregular? Is it bumpy, smooth, or rough?
- How does it reflect the light? Is it dull and opaque or bright and shiny?
- Is it hard and resistant, or do you risk crushing it with your hand or foot?
- Is it dense and heavy or light enough to see through?
- How large is it? How does it compare to your own size?
- Is it alive? Does it move? What kind of sound does it make? What does it smell like?

EXERCISE 3: TIME TO DRAW

Get comfy. Pull out that pack stool and take a load off. Position yourself close to your subject and pick out a pencil. *Then remember how your subject makes you feel.*

- First, draw it with closed eyes. Let your hand move around the paper, tracing the picture of the subject as it sits in your memory. Spend some time doing this, then open your eyes.
- Try drawing it with eyes trained on the subject, without looking at the paper at all. Let your hand do all the work as you focus on all its details and qualities. No, your drawing may not look exactly like what you see. But that doesn't matter. What counts is whether the lines you made reflect in some way how the subject feels to you.
- After you've practiced this a few times, try drawing it once again. This time, look at the paper if you want. But try to spend more time looking at the subject than the paper.
- You now have the most awesome souvenir of the adventure you made, just from paying attention. *Entirely unique. Entirely yours.*

REMEMBER:

The objective is to get to know the subject, not to try to copy what you're looking at. Get messy! Get real! The best drawings aren't exact reproductions of what you see – the best drawings are reflections of the world that come from *you*.



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