

Quarter-Long Observation Assignment: Journal and Multimodal Presentation**Introduction:**

Henry David Thoreau once said, “We must look for a long time before we can see.” During this quarter as we study the observations nature writers have made about our earth and their experiences, students will have a small chance to conduct their own observation projects to answer the question: *How can we describe our connections to and observations of the natural world?*

Assignments:

There are two parts to this quarter-long assignment.

1) Journal Entries:

Beginning with our class visit to the Forge Garden, students will practice observing a natural place of their choosing either on SCU’s campus or in the surrounding neighborhood in their journals. These observations should be recorded weekly starting in **Week 3 and ending in Week 9** (for a minimum of 7 entries) and at different days / times (morning, afternoon, evening). In these short entries, students will be asked to spend **at least** 15 minutes observing this location before writing / sketching / listing the weekly entry, carefully noting their physical surroundings and any changes – whether in the location itself or even in the observer’s thoughts / feelings about this place. (For example: Are there times when the location is filled with wildlife (what species / how many)? When is it quiet? Are students out enjoying the space?) **Please note:** Students **are required** to take photos – **short videos are also a good idea** – of their observations each week to assist in their final presentation and reflection.

2) Presentation of Findings:

During week ten, students will share the results of their observation project in a short (7 minute max.) multimodal presentation (you could create a website, a video, etc.) to the class. In this presentation, students will explain why they selected their location, offer at least two specific highlights of their observation work, analyze / assess their findings, and enhance their explanations through the use of multimedia tools. (For example: How did their observations change, for example, once they became more familiar with this location? How have their feelings changed about long-term observations? How does this knowledge of a place change them as researchers / SCU students?) Students will imitate the style of a relevant author from the course in a paragraph - or poem! - (min 6 sentences) that sums up their reflections on this natural place and explain why they chose this connection. To earn extra credit, students will be evaluated by their classmates – the highest averaged class score = extra credit.

Evaluation: (10% of grade)

- Student journal entries will be uploaded to Camino and graded for completion (including photos and variety of date / time of observation) and depth of observation. They are worth 2% of the assignment’s total score.
- The presentation (8%) assignment will be evaluated based on how students effectively and creatively present their information in an organized and grammatically correct manner along with their **depth / specificity** of analysis. A portion of the presentation grade will evaluate the creativity and relevance of the visual aid along with the imitation of the author. (While I do not expect students to memorize their speeches, students who are presenting live should not be overly reliant upon any notecards.) **Students will include a printed copy of the author imitation.**

Deadlines:

Presentations to take place during Week 10 will be assigned via lottery later in the quarter.

Samples / tips for the presentations will be discussed later in the quarter.

Observation Presentation Rubric

Student Name: _____ Location of Observation: _____

Criteria	SUPERB	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	NOT ACCEPTABLE
PERFORMANCE: -- Fulfills 7 minute maximum time limit without stretching for details				
-- Maintains eye contact (includes little to no reliance on notecards, appropriate posture / gestures / facial expressions)				
-- Appropriate Volume, Rate, Inflection of Speech				
--Avoids use of “like,” “um,” “sorta,” “you know,” or other fillers				
CONTENT: -- Reflection Elements: -- Offers thoughts on the location and observation -- Offers thoughts on the observation process -- Offers thoughts on their improved observation skills A sense of change whether physical / emotional / spiritual is evident (in student, in location, and / or in the process) throughout the reflection				
-- Highlights of at least two weeks observing at this location -- Student has clearly observed this location carefully				
-- Imitation and connection to a writer / environmental figure studied in class clearly reflects a thoughtful evaluation of the observation location				
MULTIMODAL ELEMENTS: -- Photos enhance the presentation – images are referenced in a natural way / creative presentation of visuals				
--Organization, Structure, and Style Considerations -- Follows Conventions of Grammar -- Form of Presentation clearly enhances (not detracts) from the information conveyed to the audience				

Comments:

Presentation Grade: _____

Journal Score: _____