

Hikes for All Seasons

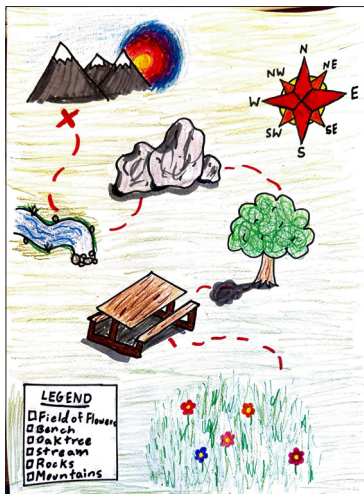
Seasons



CONNECT with nature by walking outdoors and comparing what you observe in various seasons. Engage all your senses as you look for changes in foliage, wildlife, or animal tracks and listen for sounds. The essence of a hike is to put one foot in front of the other (as you are able, or move your wheelchair through the space), intentionally moving forward outdoors. Hikers often have a particular destination in mind, whether that is to revisit a favorite stream or lake, or to explore a new area. Sketching a hike map can help set the plan.



CREATE a hike map. You might plan a short walk through a neighborhood park or a longer hike that takes you and your hiking partners around a lake or to visit a waterfall. Your map might plan an imagined hike based on interesting places nearby or far away that you've researched or read about. Your map should show the trail and the terrain. It could include suggestions about where you can stop to observe a vista or a field that is filled with wildflowers in the summer and snow patches in the winter. Sketch visual cues and explain them in the legend (a key that indicates what each symbol represents such as roads, foot paths, parking lots, streams, lakes, waterfalls, picnic benches, a cave, the park office, etc.). Include a scale to indicate distance and a compass that notes which way is north, south, east, and west. Add a creative title for your map, such as "Non-Rainy Day Hike" or "New Vistas for Free" and clever names for the trails, perhaps "Toe Stubber Pass" or "Hide and Seek Cave."



Riley W.



PRESENT your map and discuss your plans with family and friends. Who will join you on this journey? It is safest to hike with others, especially if you are going to a remote destination. Consider your presentation a pitch that will entice others to participate. Invite them to edit the plan so all participants' ideas are honored.



RESPOND to the experience after you have returned. Reflect on how your body and mind feel after spending time outdoors and focusing on nature. What observations were memorable? When do you plan on returning to explore how plant and animal life vary based on the season? How would changes in weather impact what you bring on the hike, such as more water or additional clothing?