

# General Instructions for Using this Ebook

This Ebook outlines ten nature study challenges as well as art appreciation and music appreciation for families who are interested in starting or continuing a regular plan in their homeschooling. Please feel free to complete the challenges in any order that makes sense for your family.

## **Nature Study using the *Handbook of Nature Study***

The ten challenges included in this ebook are written in the format of the popular Outdoor Hour Challenges that I write for my blog. Gathering them all together into an easy to use format will make it even simpler and more convenient to include nature study each week following a suggested topic.

Each challenge has three parts: inside preparation work, outdoor time, and then a follow up activity. You can complete all or part of each challenge as you go along. Each challenge is written so you can adapt it to your own backyard or local area. Use the ideas as a way to get started with simple weekly nature study using the *Handbook of Nature Study*.

## **Art Appreciation**

Each month I suggest a piece of artwork to study with your family. You can view the print on your computer, print out the page from the ebook, or you can follow the provided link to see the artwork in a larger format. Plans for viewing, studying, and then completing a follow up piece of artwork are included with each painting.

## **Music Appreciation**

To enhance your spring nature study, this ebook includes a suggested piece of music for your family to listen to each month. The plans for each composer include links to biographies, links to listen to the music online, suggestions for CDs to purchase, and plans for completing your music appreciation studies.

## **Monthly Goals and Calendar**

Sometimes we need to plan a little ahead in order to make the most of our study. Each month has a page with goals and a calendar for you to use in scheduling all your planned activities. Each Friday there will be one of the monthly challenges up on my blog and you can plan on following along with those plans if that helps you stay motivated. You will need to plan for an hour or so each week for art and music appreciation in addition to the Friday nature study. Please feel free to adjust the schedule to meet your weekly needs and interests.



## April Goals:

1. Spring Tree Observations
2. Spring Weather Observations
3. Spring Bird Study
4. Spring Wildflower Study: Dandelions
5. Spring Cattail Observations

Listen to: Franz Schubert: Piano Sonata

View *Eugene Manet and his Daughter in the Garden at Bougival* by Berthe Morisot



# Spring Series #2

## Spring Weather Observations

### Inside Preparation Work:

Read pages 851-854 in the *Handbook of Nature Study*. This section is not exactly about weather, but it ties in nicely with some springtime observations of the sun and its path. You might like to construct the Shadow Stick (page 852 #13) and make observations over the next few weeks and months with your children. At the very least, look up your sunrise and sunset times to calculate how much daylight you have now that it is spring in your area.

### Outdoor Hour Time:

Your Outdoor Hour time this week can be spent making observations about the weather. Enjoy whatever spring weather you are currently experiencing and spend 15 minutes outside looking at the sky, clouds, wind in the trees, dew on the grass, mud puddles after a rain, or whatever else you can experience in your part of the world.

### Suggested Observations

- Have your children describe any clouds they see in the sky.
- Notice how hard the wind is blowing by how things are moving: leaves rustling, trees bending, etc.
- Notice the wind's direction. Where is it coming from?
- Describe the temperature of the air and/or look it up on a thermometer.
- Notice any precipitation that you may have this week: sprinkles, rain, mist, sleet, snow, fog, hail.

If you made a Shadow Stick, make sure you spend one day marking the board every half hour from 9 AM to 3 PM. This experiment will need to be repeated again in June, September, and December if possible. (see page 852 #13)



### Follow-Up Activity:

Be sure to complete your [Seasonal Weather notebook page](#) from the Spring Series notebook pages. If you completed previous weather notebook pages, pull those out and compare the scenes you recorded in Autumn and/or Winter. Note that your days should be getting longer and any other differences you can find between the observations made in the past and now.

### Extra Information on Clouds

If you observed any clouds, you might like to download this lesson plan and cloud identifier activity for your children.

CloudKey.pdf: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/reproducibles/profbooks/cloudkey.pdf>

### Weather Videos on YouTube:

Water Cycle: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YswL4dIDQuk>

Our World: What is Weather? (NASA) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtgFHHm1xU>





# Spring Weather Observations

Date	Location:	Time:	Cloud Type:
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Temperature	
Wind (Speed and Direction)	
Precipitation	
Time of sunrise/Time of sunset	
Total hours of daylight	

Sketch the spring scene in your neighborhood. Don't forget to include any clouds you observed.