Wonder Journal – Assignment #2 – Question Marathon

Introduction

In this assignment, you will work on developing your curiosity and question-asking ability. Our focus will be on quantity – by asking lots of questions, you may stumble upon a good one that is worthy of additional study. Equally important, you may find that asking tons of questions puts you into a more curious frame of mind.

Details

Read your previous entry before you go into the field so you can spot recent changes at your site. Remember to allot sufficient time – at least 45 minutes to an hour – to observe and take notes, and to create a final journal entry as soon as you get home. Follow the structure below:

Basics

- *Heading*: date on left; page #s on right (pick up where you left off…the first page of this new entry will likely be p. 3 or p. 4); entry # and location on center of first page
- *Text*: Written in black ink, handwriting legible, errors neatly corrected
- *Format*: Only one side of each page used
- *Length*: Three to four pages of material, single spaced
- *Submission:* Pages submitted in supplied folder, clipped into the rings (in order).

Content[1]

- *Part 1*: Note the day, date, and time of your observation, and include a short description of the weather.
- *Part 2:* Before you go to your site, take a look at your previous entry. When you visit, take notes on any recent changes or intriguing new finds. As long as you spend at least 10 minutes taking copious notes in the field and write a robust, rich paragraph or two, the focus is up to you.
- *Part 3:* Identify at least one tree or shrub at your site that you didn't (or weren't able to) name in your previous entry. You may want to bring your Forest Trees of Maine guide. Include both the common and scientific name, and describe the characteristics that helped you identify this species. Challenge yourself!
- *Part 4A:* Pick **ONE** aspect of your site to ask a ton of questions about. Most anything is fair game: birds, mammals, tracks, rotting logs, wacky trees, unusual patterns in the forest, etc. The only stipulations are that 1) what you choose is not human-made, and 2) it is clear that you spent time observing at your site (i.e. not a leaf or rock that you brought home to study). **In a short paragraph, describe what you chose and why**.
- *Part 4B - Sketch:* Create a sketch of the thing(s) you chose. The sketch needn't be artistically perfect, but it should show evidence of careful attention and effort. We recommend sketching on unlined printer paper in the field, then cutting this sketch out and stapling, gluing, or taping it into your journal entry.
- *Part 4C - Question list*: Create a numbered list of **at least 25 questions** about what you observed. Your brain may rebel about halfway through, but keep going – the more interesting questions will come after you've exhausted all the obvious ones. **Ask a variety of question types: a mix of how, why, where, when, and what questions.**
- *Part 5:* Pick at least one question to research -- choose a "why" or "how" question, not a "what species is this" question. Use any resources you want to find out the answer, and include your findings in a short paragraph after your question list. In parentheses or a footnote**, cite your source.**
- *Closing*: This should conclude your entry, and should note something that you'd like to follow up on during future visits.

[1] While the content of this entry is very prescribed, you are welcome to add extra paragraphs, sketches, samples, etc, based on what you find interesting at your site.