***Exploring Natural History in Word & Field Hughes/Landel***

**Old Growth Forest  Reflection Activity**

**Overview**: We’ve just spent the morning identifying trees and understory plants and collecting data for your Team Forest Report. Now, we’d like to give you an opportunity to experience the Old Growth forest differently, through a reflection activity: Old Growth Forest Freewrite. Be sure to bring your raincoat to sit on—the moss will be wet—and your field notebook and pen or pencil.

**Goals:**

1. To give you the opportunity to experience the old growth forest through several senses: seeing, listening, smelling, touching.
2. To give you the chance to experience directly the difference between the younger age forest stands and old growth forest.
3. To give you the opportunity to see the forest that’s been written about by natural history writers like John Muir and William Dietrich.
4. To reflect on the different stances represented in the course readings and clarify your own stance on preservation of old growth forest.

**Here’s what we’d like you to do:**

1. Find a quiet place to sit alone, preferably where you can’t see or hear another student. (Remember to turn off your cell phone).
2. Sit quietly for 10 minutes, just listening to the sounds, smelling the air and observing the life of the old growth forest happening around you.
3. After sitting and observing, record what you see for 5 minutes
4. Then, write about the feelings that are evoked by sitting quietly among these ancient trees. This writing can take any form. Feel free to write a poem, to write in the style of John Muir, or to use this as an opportunity to reflect on your stance about preserving Old growth forest. You might also consider how this activity differs from our morning activities in the forest.
5. Please write for 15 minutes. You’ll hear Holly ringing a bell to call us back together when the time is up. You’ll have a chance to share what you wrote after dinner tonight around the campfire.

You’ll be turning in your Old Growth Freewrite to us in your Field Notebook next week, then will post your freewrite in the Discussion Board so your classmates can read and respond to it, too. Like other journal responses, this assignment will be assessed more holistically; we won’t be grading on spelling/grammar, but on the depth of your engagement, your creativity and your insights.

*We hope you enjoy your time alone with the ancient forest!*

*Hans & Holly*