




# FAMILY HIKING GUIDE

*A simple guide for reading, hiking, and wondering together.*

 WORKS WITH ALL READ & HIKE IDAHO TRAILS



## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

A flexible process for any trail, any season, and any adventure together.

1



### READ

Read a picture book, chapter excerpt, poem, field guide page, or book before you go.

2



### HIKE

Choose a short trail or familiar route and explore together at a relaxed pace.

3



### PAUSE

Stop for a spell: notice, wonder, sketch, reflect, or record what you see.

4



### CONNECT

Talk, share, and listen. Celebrate what you noticed and what you learned.



## BEST FOR

- ✓ Families of all shapes and sizes
- ✓ Classrooms and homeschool groups
- ✓ Mixed-age groups and multi-generational adventures



## THIS GUIDE INCLUDES



Before You Go Checklist



Reading Together on the Trail



Age-Level Hiking Roles



Safety & Leave No Trace



After-the-Hike Reflection



**READ. HIKE. CONNECT.**  
*Stories in books. Adventures outside.*

Find more trail guides and book ideas at  
[readandhikeidaho.org](http://readandhikeidaho.org)

## Before You Go Checklist

Pack, plan, and prepare before heading outside.







### Pack

-  Water for everyone
-  Snacks or lunch
-  Layers or weather protection
-  Sun protection
-  Comfortable shoes
-  Small first-aid kit
-  Map or downloaded trail info
-  Book, poem, or printed booklet



### Plan

-  Journal page and pencil
-  Bug kit
-  Headlamp or shady rest spot
-  Bathroom plan
-  Trailhead time
-  Weather check
-  Trail condition check
-  Family contact plan



### Choose your hiking promise

- We will stay together.
- We will enjoy the weather.
- We will leave nature where it belongs.
- We will notice something new.





## Reading Together on the Trail

Pause, notice, and talk together before, during, and after your hike.

### Before

- What do you predict we will see?
- What words from the book might show up on our hike?
- What should we listen for today?

### During

- Find a place that feels like the book.
- Pause and notice one new thing.
- Take turns asking I wonder... questions.

### After

- What did the trail help you understand?
- Which book character would enjoy this hike?
- What do we want to read next?



**Tip:** Let children choose where to pause and rest. Choice builds ownership and makes the trail feel like part of the story.



## Age-Level Hiking Roles

### Ages 0–3

Point, name, listen, carry a small nature word like water, tree, rock, leaf.

### Ages 4–7

Lead a color hunt, draw one detail, retell one part of the hike.

### Ages 8–12

Track the route, write field notes, compare two details to the book.

### Teens

Photograph patterns, research stewardship ideas, help younger hikers ask deeper questions.

### Adults

Model curiosity, set safety boundaries, and make space for slow looking and conversation.



**Mixed-age tip:** Pair an older child with a younger child for one shared noticing task, such as finding three textures or listening for two kinds of water sounds.





## Safety & Leave No Trace

### Trail safety reminders

- Check weather and seasonal trail conditions before leaving.
- Tell someone where you will go and when you plan to return.
- Choose child-sized routes, snacks, and rest breaks.
- Bring children near water, rocky spots, and road crossings.
- Turn around when you are going over hiking bodies or out of service.

### Leave No Trace for families

- Pack in, pack it out.
- Leave rocks, flowers, sticks, and pinecones for others to enjoy.
- Watch wildlife quietly from a distance.
- Use durable surfaces and stay on the trail.
- Be kind to other hikers, bikes, horses, and trail users.

## After the Hike

What did we notice that we might have missed if we hurried? \_\_\_\_\_

What part of the trail felt most connected to our book? \_\_\_\_\_

What should we do differently next time? \_\_\_\_\_

What is one way we can care for this place? \_\_\_\_\_

### Next Read & Hike Idea

Choose your next trail, pack a book from the list guide booklet, and have another family, classroom, or reading group join you.

Next trail: \_\_\_\_\_

Book to bring: \_\_\_\_\_

Date idea: \_\_\_\_\_

