

**WRITING**

# Touch Grass

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**TYPE**

INFORMATIONAL  
PERSUASIVE  
STEM

**GENRE**

GRADE 11

Touching grass can mean a few different things, but I mean it in the literal sense. Make your life come to a screeching halt, walk to your favorite park, crouch down, and stare at the grass.

Count how many bugs you see.

How many blades of grass are there? (I once got to 473, but I bet you can go higher.)

Are there any fungi? (They have some of the most diverse colors in the natural world and can be very different from one another, but with a book about fungi and mushrooms—which you can find at your local library—you can begin to identify them)

Is there anything you can't identify? Write it down or draw it in a notebook.

Now, touch everything. Feel the plethora of grass intertwined, let the ants crawl on your hands. If you're scared of centipedes or spiders, maybe try getting to

know one first. The last time I had a chat with a spider, they told me about the last close call they had with a newspaper, and how their friend, a western conifer seed bug, had died from violence in their community (an old lady's fly swatter).

Get a pinch of dirt between your index finger and thumb, and grind it around. Ponder upon what compounds and molecules are in your hands. Are you near a road, where all the odd chemicals from vehicles have seeped into the earth, or are you near a photosynthesizing plant with nodules in its root system that house nitrogen-fixing bacteria? What do all these distinct things provide to their community?

To conclude, lie down and listen to what is happening underground. If you look around for tiny holes, you might find a chipmunk home to eavesdrop on.