# Communication for Teen Leaders

**Activity:** **Journal Writing**
**Audience:** 5th-8th grade
**Time Required:** 30-45 minutes
**Location:** Any quiet place away from distractions

**Objectives:** Participants will –
reflect upon their experiences by writing in journals
learn the importance of journal writing
**Life Skills**: Communication, positive self-esteem

**Materials:** Notebooks/Journals, pencils and/or pens
(Stickers, markers, crayons if students will be decorating their journals)

**Overview:** *Journals are diaries in which participants will reflect on activities. Our journals will contain personal thoughts and will be read only if the writer gives permission. In this program, we use journals to help the participants think about their lives, about what they are learning at camp, and about their future.*

(You may want to begin by asking the campers whether any of them keeps a diary. If someone does, ask what she/he writes in that diary. You need to help them understand that you are not asking for the specific information, but the type of things they write, such as: what they did that day, where they went, how they felt about a particular thing, etc. If no one keeps a diary, brainstorm what participants think they would write in a diary.)

**Do the Activity:** Have students decorate their journals, using the stickers, markers, crayons, and pens to reflect something about themselves (this may be omitted for our session at camp, depending on the time allotted). Tell participants that when they write in their journals, they may want to answer some of the following questions:

What did I learn from the activity?
What did I like about the activity?
What did I dislike about the activity?
How will this activity help me?

Suggested journal questions could appear at the end of each activity, but campers should feel free to write whatever they want. Tell participants that while they are free to write about any topic they choose, they should try to be completely honest when they write in their journals. Ask each participant to

write an introduction to her/his journal. In this introduction, campers should tell their journals something about themselves, including their hobbies and their interest.

**Reflect and Apply:** Discuss the following

What do you think you will enjoy most about your journals?
What do you think will be the hardest thing about writing in your journal?
Do you know of any famous people who kept journals? If so, who?

**Source:** R.I.S.E. Curriculum