

A FREE GIFT FROM HER ORDINARY BASKET

August Nature Study Plan

Rainy-Season Wonders — a gentle Charlotte Mason plan for Filipino families

August in the Philippines belongs to the rain. The *habagat* blows in from the southwest, the afternoons turn grey and generous, and the whole garden seems to exhale. It is not the easiest month to be outdoors — but it may be one of the most alive.

This is a gentle, four-week plan for noticing what the rainy season brings. You do not need a big garden, a science background, or perfect weather. You need a little curiosity, a notebook, and a willingness to get a bit wet.

Use it loosely. Choose one focus each week. Take one short walk, look at one thing closely, write or paint one small entry. That is enough.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

THE WALK	One simple intention for going outside.
LOOK CLOSELY	One natural object to observe with care (an object lesson).
THE NOTEBOOK	One small entry to draw, paint, or write.
A STORY	A living book or bit of nature lore to read together.
RAINY DAY	A gentle option for when a storm keeps you indoors.

WEEK ONE

Rain & Sky

The weather itself — clouds, rain, puddles, and the flowers that wait for water.

THE WALK	After a downpour, step out to see what the water left behind — puddles, dripping leaves, a washed-clean sky. Ask: <i>What is different now that it has rained?</i>
LOOK CLOSELY	A single raindrop-covered leaf, or a rain lily if you have one (they open a day or two after rain). Notice how the water beads, where it sits, where it runs off.
THE NOTEBOOK	Draw or paint one leaf with water on it. Write one line: <i>“It rained today, and I saw...”</i>
A STORY	Read a short passage or picture book about clouds or the water cycle. Talk about where rain comes from and where it goes.
RAINY DAY	Watch the rain from a window. Time how long one drop takes to slide down the glass. Is the rain soft or heavy? Try to draw its sound.

WEEK TWO

Little Rainy-Day Creatures

The small life that appears with the rain — snails, frogs, worms, and mushrooms.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| THE WALK | “Let’s look for creatures that only come out when it’s wet.” Check under leaves and pots for snails, listen at dusk for frogs, look in damp soil for worms and mushrooms. |
| LOOK CLOSELY | A garden snail — its spiral shell, its slow foot, the shining trail it leaves. Or a mushroom — cap, stem, and gills. (Look and wonder; never taste wild mushrooms.) |
| THE NOTEBOOK | Draw the snail’s spiral or the mushroom’s cap. Write: “ <i>After the rain, we found...</i> ” |
| A STORY | A living story about a snail, a frog’s life cycle, or how mushrooms quietly grow overnight. |
| RAINY DAY | Frogs call loudest after rain. Open a window at dusk and simply listen. How many different voices can you count? |

WEEK THREE

Flowers & Their Visitors

The blooms that carry on through the wet months — gumamela, santan, sampaguita — and the insects that visit them.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| THE WALK | “Let’s see who is visiting the flowers today.” Watch a gumamela or santan quietly for a few minutes. Bees? Butterflies? Ants? A cotton stainer? |
| LOOK CLOSELY | One gumamela flower — its five petals, the long column of stamens, the dusting of pollen, the way its colour deepens from base to tip. |
| THE NOTEBOOK | Paint one flower. Note one visitor you saw and what it was doing. |
| A STORY | Read about pollination, or the story of the sampaguita — our national flower, sweetest in the rainy months. |
| RAINY DAY | Bring one cut flower indoors and gently take it apart — petals, stamen, pistil. Lay the pieces on white paper and count them. |

WEEK FOUR

Rice & Fruit Season

The bigger rhythms of August — the green rice fields and the fruits coming into season.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| THE WALK | If you pass a rice field, notice its colour and height — in August the wet-season crop is often young and tender green. No field nearby? Visit a market or a roadside fruit stand instead. |
| LOOK CLOSELY | A fruit in season — lanzones, rambutan, or mangosteen. Study the skin, open it, count the segments, find the seed. Then taste it slowly. |
| THE NOTEBOOK | Draw the fruit whole and opened. Write: <i>“This is in season now. It tastes...”</i> |
| A STORY | Read about how rice grows from seed to harvest, or where lanzones come from and when they ripen. |
| RAINY DAY | Save the seeds from the fruit you ate. Draw them. Try sprouting one on damp cotton on the windowsill and watch through the week. |

A gentle reminder

You will not do all of this — and that is completely fine. A single wet-season walk, one snail met and named, one small painting of a rain-soaked leaf: that is real nature study.

The rain is not an obstacle to noticing. In August, the rain *is* the thing to notice.

Bring your basket. Look closely. Come back next week.

— *Mai, Her Ordinary Basket*

AUGUST AT A GLANCE

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Watched the rain from a window | ☐ Painted one leaf with water |
| ☐ Found a snail | ☐ Passed a green rice field |
| ☐ Heard a frog at dusk | ☐ Tasted a fruit in season |
| ☐ Saw a mushroom after rain | ☐ Saved and drew a seed |
| ☐ Watched a flower’s visitor | ☐ Wrote one notebook line |