

Textured Landscape Art

An art project to teach students about texture, involving tactile items like cotton balls and corrugated cardboard. . .



Related Subjects: Visual and Performing Arts, English-Language Arts

Grades: Elementary (adaptable to middle and high school grades)

Medium: Multi Media Collage

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Time Required: Two 30 minute or one 60 minute session

Summary

In this one or two part lesson, students will learn about and build their own landscape art works using tactile recyclables and other unconventional art materials. Through an introductory story, students will begin thinking about the natural world, how they see it and how it might feel. Then, they will have a chance to use their own imaginations and creativity to assemble their own landscape worlds using a variety of textural materials.

Objectives

Students will be able to. . .

- understand that literature can give artists ideas for art making and teach them more about the subject of their art, and that books are a form of art.
- recognize landscape art and natural elements present within this category of art (land, sky, ocean, etc.).
- demonstrate creative use of materials and working with unconventional materials.
- define texture and recognize it in both its forms – visual and tactile.
- evaluate their own works and the works of others with guided questions from their instructor.

Pre-Lesson Information

Beginning with a Story

Beginning your art lesson with a story can be a successful means of introducing a new subject to your students as well as a way of getting them motivated about the art that they are about to make. When selecting a story to accompany your lesson, consider the age of your students and the theme behind your art making. *Book recommendations for this lesson are on page seven of this lesson plan.*

While reading to your students:

- ◆ **Interact with the book and your students** – ask questions of your students while reading and/or have students locate objects on the pages
- ◆ **Elaborate on the text** – when necessary, explain what is happening in the story to help students better understand the events
- ◆ **Help students make connections** between the story and their own experiences
- ◆ **Make your own connections** – while reading, make connections between elements of the story and the art that your students are about to make

Art Terms

Collage – from the French *coller*, to glue. A work made by gluing materials such as paper scraps, photographs, and cloth on to a flat surface

Landscape/Seascape/Skyscape/Cityscape – a work of art in which the features of the land/sea/sky/city are the predominant subject

Organic Shapes – shapes or forms that are irregular; suggestive of shapes or forms found in nature

Texture – the quality of a surface, usually characterized by its roughness or smoothness. Texture can refer to both the visual and tactile quality of a surface.

Materials Needed

10x13” White Tag Board or Heavy Construction Paper

Scrap Pieces of Construction Paper (assorted colors)

Glue (Glue stick and White School Glue)

Scissors

Oil Pastels

Newspaper

Assorted Texture Materials:

(Cotton Balls, Corrugated Cardboard, Aluminum Foil, Raffia, Yarn or String, Fabric Scraps, Sandpaper, Spanish Moss, Feathers, Twigs, Flowers, Paper Bags, etc.)

Preparation

1. Create an example of the project before the lesson. Even if you choose not to share the work with students, a lot can be learned if you create an example.
2. If teaching this lesson to more than one group of students, think about displaying unique student examples from the first group for students from later groups.
3. Display photographs of the outdoors, nature-related storybooks, and/or landscape art examples for students to look at and be inspired by.
4. Cover all tables/desks with newspaper – this will ease the clean up process.
5. Gather all materials from the materials list, including your own assortment of texture materials.
6. Distribute materials onto the tables or desks.

Procedure

Motivation

Begin the lesson by introducing students to the idea of landscape. This can be done by: Reading through reading a nature-related storybook (such as, *A Tree is Nice* by Janice May Udry), looking at visuals of the land or landscape art, and/or exploring the outdoors through a group nature walk. Help your students to explore and understand texture during this time by incorporating textured objects into the motivation - encourage students to touch the natural objects as they encounter them on their walk or have objects on hand for sharing with them while in the classroom (e.g. tree bark, cotton balls, leaves)

Art Making Step-by-Step

Note: It's essential to first demonstrate to students the steps that they will be taking to create their works of art. If you have the time, create a step-by-step display. Most importantly, be sure to explain each step as you model it for the class. Use this time to review concepts and to get the students pleased about the project.

Step 1:

Begin by laying down flat color areas such as the sky and ground using oil pastels (or substitute with whatever coloring materials you may have). Have students use more than one color and, if possible, practice blending colors together. Encourage students to consider these questions while working:

- ◆ What colors are found in the sky?
- ◆ What time of day will it be in your landscape?
- ◆ What will the weather be like in your landscape?

Step 2

After applying flat colors, begin adding textured materials to the pieces. By tearing or cutting paper, students can create shapes and natural objects for their landscapes. Encourage creative uses for the other materials as well. Pull and stretch cotton balls to create clouds, or smooth out a long strip of aluminum foil for a lake or stream. Other examples include a bird from a feather, using a twig as the trunk of a tree, or a flower to represent the sun. Promote individual direction with this step and you will be surprised at how creative the students can be!

Step 3

Observe young artists in action:

As students are working, walk around and observe the art that they are making. Ask students to describe their choices to you. In doing this, you will help your students to evaluate their work and their aesthetic decisions while making their own art. This exercise directly connects with the component: Aesthetic Valuing, as described in the California Visual and Performing Arts frameworks. Begin by asking questions such as:

- ◆ What makes your work of art a landscape?
- ◆ How did you use texture in your art work?
- ◆ What element are you most proud of in your work?

Model respectful responses to art work by complimenting your students' art work and their artistic choices. This will encourage students to share their work with each other, as well as provide them with ideas for what to say. For example:

- ◆ I love this area in your work!
- ◆ What wonderful choices of color!
- ◆ What a great idea! I never thought of using a feather in this way.

Step 4

Discussion

(Many of these ideas on discussing work with children are taken directly from the text, Children and Painting by Cathy Weisman Topal – see book list on page seven of this lesson plan)

Looking at one's work and the work of classmates is an important part of the experience of art making, and the artistic process is nurtured by respectful and encouraging conversation between participants. If time permits, display the finished works and talk about them. Also consider taking a break mid way through the project in order to show a few student examples to the group. Choose works that display the lesson objectives. This will help remind the other students of the project goals while they are working.

Discussion Guidelines

- I. **Limit the time.** No more than ten minutes for young children – twenty to thirty minutes for older children. Because it may be difficult to talk about everyone’s work in such a short period of time, choose only a few works to discuss this time. However, try to remember to include everyone’s art in an evaluation at one time or another.

- II. **Model talking about art for your students.** For example, you might say:
 - I was impressed with the color choices in this work. Does anyone else see a work with an exciting use of colors?
 - The imaginary landscapes in this work are fascinating. Did anyone else create one?
 - The objects in this work make me think of the desert. Do you see other works that remind you of a place?

- III. **Ask questions that call for specific responses.** For example, you might say:
 - What objects do we see in Jonathan’s work that we also saw in our story?
 - Where might we find a landscape like the one found in Javier’s work?
 - What materials did Taylor use to give her sky texture?

- IV. **Focus on one or two new skills or concepts.** For example, you might say:
 - Who can point out a work of art where the artist used more than one texture?
 - Who can find a work of art where the artist found a clever way to make a natural object?
 - What makes the shapes in this work of art organic shapes rather than geometric shapes?

- V. **Stress the positive** – focus on student successes. To help ensure your student’s success with this and future projects, while students are still working on making their textured landscapes, be sure to travel around the room and redirect any students who may be forgetting to include necessary elements from the objectives list or who may be traveling too far outside the goals of the assignment. Be sure to redirect in a gentle way, or individually, so that the student is not embarrassed in front of their peers.

Possible Adaptations

This lesson can be easily adapted to suit the needs of most learners with disabilities. For students with visual impairments, tactile activities are essential to learning and present throughout this lesson. For students with tactile sensitivity, limit their exposure to more irritating items (such as cotton balls and sand paper). For students with limited motor skills, try using larger paper and materials. Also consider group work, where students share the responsibility of choosing items, cutting, and gluing.

Visual Arts Standards Addressed in this Lesson:

Kindergarten

- 1.2 Name art materials introduced in a lesson
- 1.3 Identify the elements of art (line, color, shape, form, texture)
- 2.3 Make a collage with torn paper shapes/forms
- 4.1 Discuss their own works of art, using appropriate art vocabulary
- 4.3 Discuss how and why they made a specific work of art
- 4.4 Give reasons why they like a particular work of art they made, using art vocabulary

Grade One

- 1.2 Distinguish among various media when looking at works of art
- 1.3 Identify the elements of art in objects in nature, the environment, and in a work of art
- 2.1 Use texture in two-dimensional work
- 2.7 Use visual and actual texture in original works of art
- 2.8 Create artwork based on observations of actual objects and everyday scenes
- 3.2 Identify and describe various subject matter in art (eg. landscapes)

Grade Two

- 1.3 Identify the elements of art in objects in nature, the environment, and in a work of art
- 2.1 Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of basic art-making processes, such as collage
- 2.2 Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of art media, such as oil pastels
- 4.1 Compare ideas expressed in their art with ideas expressed in the work of others
- 4.3 Use the vocabulary of art to talk about what they wanted to do in their own works
- 4.4 Use the vocabulary of art to describe the successful use of an element of art in a work

Recommended Children's Books: Landscape Art

Can you Find it Outside?: Search and Discover for Young Art Lovers/ Jessica Schulte, Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2005

Children and Painting/ Cathy Weisman Topal, Davis Publications Inc, 1992

The Cloud Book/ Tomie de Paola, Holiday House, 1984

Hello Ocean/ Pam Munoz Ryan, Charlesbridge Publishing, 2001

In My World/ Lois Ehlert, Voyager Books, 2006

The Little House/ Virginia Lee Burton, Houghton Mifflin, 1978

The Little Island/ Golden MacDonald, Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 2003

Little Cloud/ Eric Carle, Putnam Juvenile, 2001

One Fine Day/ Nonny Hogrogian, Aladdin Books, 2005

Owl Moon/ Jane Yolen, Philomel, 1987

A Picnic with Monet/ Julie Merberg and Suzanne Bober, Chronicle Books, 2003

Planting a Rainbow/ Lois Ehlert, Voyager Books, 1992

Rain/ Manya Stojic, Crown Books for Young Readers, 2000

The Snowy Day/ Ezra Jack Keats, New York: Viking Press, 1962

A Tree is Nice/ Janice May Udry and Marc Simont, HarperTrophy, 1987

Where Once There Was Wood/ Denise Fleming, Henry Holt and Co, 2000