



# UNC-CH Institute for the Environment 2009-10 Capstone Team Project – *Integrating the Environment into K-12 ART Curriculum*

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ART PROJECTS

### **Tempura-rainbow reveal**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/elem/elem24.html>

Using the size paper of your choice, have the kids cover it in BRIGHT crayon colors. Press HARD and leave no white showing from the paper.

Collect the papers, with the children's' names written on the back, and paint them black using black tempera paint mixed with a few drops of liquid soap. (The soap makes the black tempera adhere to the crayon-covered paper). Using an inexpensive foam brush, paint all the crayon covered papers and let dry over night.

The next day, have the students use a sharpened dowel rod (about 6 inches long) or even a tooth pick, to scratch the paint off and create a scene found in nature.

### **City/Nature-scape**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/elem/elem14.html>

Discuss and show examples of the early 20th century Ashcan Artists of New York City and how they painted their environment as it was, with wash hanging on lines between buildings, fences, broken windows, the elevated trains and of course, trash cans. Then have students select 2 large sheets of paper, a pair of scissors and either cray-pas or colored chalk, and a piece of paper towel or scrap paper. One sheet of paper is cut in one continuous line, from one side of the paper to the other in the shape of a city skyline consisting of a variety of buildings of different heights. The student selects one of the cut skyline "stencils" and applies the coloring material on the edge. This stencil is placed on the background paper and the color is pushed up off the stencil and onto the background paper. More than one level of stencil color may be applied to simulate overlapped buildings. The student then places details of what he/she may find in the city, such as people, street lights, vehicles, signs stores, airplanes, etc.

Next, have students make renderings of *scenes from nature*. Using the same steps, have them draw a natural scene themselves. Afterwards, allow the students to compare their two drawings and explain whether they would prefer to live in the city or natural scene, and why.

Material: Scissors, Cray-pas or colored chalk, Paper towel or scrap paper

## Natural Stained Glass

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/elem/Joanna-glass.htm>

After looking at natural scenes for 15 minutes (mountains, beaches, animals, birds, etc.) have the kids draw a picture of nature that incorporates both a subject and a background. Afterwards, give the kids a sheet of clear overhead sheets (You can also use laminating film, overhead sheets, or acetate.) Then, have the children place the clear-lay over their practice drawing and use a sharpie to trace their drawing onto the clear-lay. When finished, it is IMPORTANT THAT THEY TURN THE OVERHEAD SHEET OVER. This is essential so that the black outline does not come off or get mixed with the color markers.

After they turn the outline over, let the children use colored sharpies to color in their project. This way, they can get right up to the black line and it won't smudge. When finished, I have the kids make a frame using 8 strips of black paper (4 on the front and 4 on the back). Some kids want holes punched in their work so they can hang it in their window.

Lastly, discuss stained glass and how it can be added to a window for a decoration. Talk about where you might find stained glass (at home, church, stores, etc). Also, have the children write a short paragraph on what it must be like to be an animal or bird today in a world dominated by machines and humans.

It is important to have all *materials*: Black sharpies, Colored sharpies, Overhead sheets (Clear-lay, or acetate), Practice drawing paper, Various Audubon posters, calendars, postcards, Artist information.

## Star Drawing

Draw a star and explain what it looks like, compare common representations of 5 and 6 point stars. Compare night sky paintings by van Gogh, Munch, Matisse and Miro. Study real stars in photos from observatories and satellites. Have students create a painting of the night sky with tempura paint upon white paper, incorporating ideas from the art & science studied. Have the kids then write a paragraph about their painting, and how air pollution can affect their ability to see the stars at night.

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Lotte-night.htm>

## Nature Puzzle

Before this activity begins, purchase blank puzzles and outline the pieces with black sharpie. Then, have the children use bright colored markers to draw within the spaces, wherever they wish: a plant, a bird, an animal, a cloud, the sun, a star, their name, something that lives in the ocean, a leaf, a flower, and two objects from nature that they choose. Allow the students time to look at each others' finished puzzles and find all of the required objects. Then have the children write a paragraph about how the items in their drawings could be impacted by pollution caused by cars and factories.

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0742403920?ie=UTF8&tag=incredibleart-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0742403920>

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL ART PROJECTS**

### **Tree Drawings**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Carolyn-trees.htm>

### **Habitat Clay Boxes**

Have students research biomes, (found on <http://www.mbgnet.net/>) and decide which of the 12 habitats appeals to them most. Then follow the directions on <http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Kara-box.htm> to build a clay box, requiring them to use the characteristics of their chosen biome as their design and decorative theme. Following the construction of these boxes, ask each student to write a synopsis about how pollution and human activity could change their biome in the next 50 years.

### **Animal Headdress**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Lotte-Headdress.htm>

Ask students to write two different scenarios, from the perspective of the animal they highlighted in their headdress. Each student should describe both the neighborhood they live in, and the animal's natural habitat. They should then discuss the main differences between the two habitats and what the effects of moving the animal to their neighborhood would be upon the animal.

### **Latin American Bark Drawings**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/Grace-Amate.htm>

Have students write about the social and environmental benefits of living in a culture that is more closely connected to nature and that exists in a less developed manner. Discuss the potential negative impacts of being distanced from nature by technology.

### **Stick Horse Sculptures**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Sue-horses.htm>

Have students do some research to write a short synopsis on the role of trees in regulating and preserving the environment; particularly their importance in mitigating air pollution.

## **HIGH SCHOOL ART PROJECTS**

### **Chalk Drawings**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/Michelle-chalk.htm>

Ask students to do their drawings near the loading zone at school and incorporate anti-pollution and anti-idling messages and imagery into their drawings (to increase other students' and teachers' awareness). Require them to describe the thought behind the manner in which they incorporated their idea, as well as the importance of reducing pollution, to them.

### **Photography**

<http://digital-photography-school.com/11-surefire-tips-for-improving-your-landscape-photography>

Have the students use the 11 steps listed above to create an exceptional landscape photograph. Students should integrate into their synopsis a qualitative review of the air quality present when they took their pictures. Have them postulate the effect that both good and poor air quality would have upon their image, and the factors that cause both. Then have them discuss ways that they could minimize air pollution around their school, in order to improve their health, the environment, and the quality of their art.

### **Print-making**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/printmaking.htm>

Ask the students to discuss the reasoning and importance of using a landscape as the subject of this project. Then have them discuss the impact that our current consumption and production-driven culture could have upon this scene, and the social and environmental implications that it could have if left unchecked. What actions do your students feel that they could individually take to preserve the environment?

### **Surrealist Pen and Ink**

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/SurrealPenHS.html>

Using the technical directions given in the website above, have your students create a surrealist collage from magazines, newspapers, and perhaps images they have found and printed in the computer lab. Have them create a pen and ink drawing from a surrealist image that incorporates nature (weather, landscapes, animals, etc). Then have them provide a synopsis on why nature is such a prevalent theme in the surrealist movement. Next, have them extend this thinking by having them suggest a few ways that school and community members could improve the environment around the school.

## **Weather Self- Portrait**

[http://www.ket.org/painting/selfportrait\\_middle.htm](http://www.ket.org/painting/selfportrait_middle.htm)

Have your students first write out a list of traits that describe them, as listed in the website above. However, have them relate these traits to things found in nature- weather, animals, plants, etc. Then, have them brainstorm ways to incorporate these images into their self portrait (rainbows as eyebrows, long hair as rain, the bows of a student's lips as waves, or a planet as pupils). Rather than having students collect images of these objects, cut them to size, and glue them upon their portrait as listed above, have the students actually draw them into their portrait as they use pencil to draw their face from the mirror. Then have them use their medium of choice- pastel, tempura paint, pencil, water color, etc. to provide shading and bring their portrait to life. Following completion, have your students write a synopsis on how the natural elements relate to them. Have them more fully develop this thought by researching the ways in which these natural elements are being endangered or changed by humans, and possible ways to preserve them.