

Lesson Plan: Felted Landscapes
Grade level: Grades K-12
Duration: 1-1.5 hour(s)



Media Type: wool fleece
Subject Integration: science
National Standards for Visual Arts: (see bottom of page)
Objectives:

Students will create their own felted landscape after viewing the work of artists Charles Demuth, Mark Rothko, Claude Monet and Rainy Lake artist Cherie Serrano.

Assessment:

(website for help with writing rubrics)

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>

Rubric:

4-Standards are exceeded

3-Standards are met

2-Standards may be met at a very low quality or with some exceptions

1-Standards are not met or work is not attempted or very poorly done

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Vocabulary:

sheep

wool

fleece

felting

color

line

shape

texture

shrinking process

fibers

agitation

dying to give fleece color

Materials and Procedure:

raw wool fleece, dyed in several colors

plastic Zip-lock sandwich bags

large bucket for warm, soapy water

dish soap, pure like Dove or Seventh Generation
Sharpie marker for labeling bags--student names

Before the students come to class, teacher must fill plastic bags with several colors of raw fleece. Each child will receive his/her own baggy full of fleece.

Day 1: Introduce students to abstract landscape images by Charles Demuth, Mark Rothko and Claude Monet. Discuss. Ask students to point out things they notice about these works of art. Teacher gives some background knowledge about each artist. Show PlayList video about Rainy Lake, MN artist, Cherie Serrano. <http://www.wdse.org/shows/playlist/watch/landscape-painter-cherie-serrano> (3:12)

Discuss colors, shapes and lines. Show students pieces of raw wool, and discuss where wool fleece comes from. Discuss color of raw wool. *Note discussion questions below. Allow each student to choose his/her own plastic bag full of raw wool fleece. The bag should be full, but not bulging. Have each student write his/her name on the bag with a Sharpie marker. Fill each student's bag with one cup of warm, soapy water. Seal each bag so that it is tightly closed. Explain to students how to agitate their soapy bag of raw fleece. Pretend to gently play the piano or give gentle karate chops to one side of the bag, and then the other. Continue to agitate until the wool inside of the bag has become one solid piece of wool (maybe 20 minutes)? The fleece inside of the bag will feel less like cotton and more like a firm piece of solid fabric. Felting is a very forgiving process. If students aren't able to finish the agitation process by the end of the hour, simply leave the baggies full of water in tact until the next meeting time. Pick up where they left off at next class time.

Day 2: Finish agitation process. Check fleece to see if it has shrunk into one solid piece of wool. If so, rinse all soap from wool piece. Have students take out as much moisture as possible with paper towel. Felted landscape is finished! Have a class critique and talk about the process of felting and share student work with peers. Discuss how each finished piece looks like a sunrise, sunset, mountain scene, lake, river, etc.

Discussion Questions:

What do you see? What was the artist trying to show you? What does the word abstract mean? What colors and lines do you see? Where does wool come from? Does it hurt sheep to shave their wool? (No, it is just like a haircut!) How did this wool become purple or red? Do we have purple and red sheep roaming the countryside? What happens when we get wool wet? What does the word shrink mean? (Questions would be adjusted depending on grade level) After student work is completed: How does your finished piece of felt resemble an abstract landscape?

What do you like about Rothko's/Monet's/Demuth's artwork? What did you learn by watching the video about Duluth artist Cherie Serrano?

Resources:

Books:

Mark Rothko by Jacob Baal-Teshuva

Mark Rothko, 1903-1970: Pictures as Drama by Jacob Baal-Teshuva

Monet: His Life and Work in 500 Images by Susie Hodge

Monet's Impressions by The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Charles Demuth by Barbara Haskell

Websites:

<http://www.markrothko.org/>

<http://www.nga.gov/feature/rothko/>

<http://www.claudemonetgallery.org/>

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cmon/hd_cmon.htm

National Standards for Visual Arts:

Content Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes *Achievement Standard:*

Students know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes

Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories

Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

Content Standard #2: Using knowledge of structures and functions

Achievement Standard:

Students know the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas

Students describe how different expressive features and organizational principles cause different responses

Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Achievement Standard:

Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art

Students select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning

Content Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

Achievement Standard:

Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

Content Standard #5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Achievement Standard:

Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art
Students describe how people's experiences influence the development of specific artworks
Students understand there are different responses to specific artworks

Content Standard #6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Achievement Standard:

Students understand and use similarities and differences between characteristics of the visual arts and other arts disciplines
Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum.