



Art | Education

GET TO KNOW

CONNECT • CREATE • CELEBRATE

GRAB N' GO ACTIVITY: Nature & Van Gogh

OVERVIEW:

Students should be able to develop critical and creative thinking skills, learn how to look closely and respond to questions making comparisons between art and nature.

FEATURED ARTWORKS:

- Sunflowers series by Vincent Van Gogh
- Starry Night by Vincent van Gogh
- The Olive Trees
- Wheatfield with Crows
- Poppies

MATERIALS & RESOURCES :

- <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starryindex.html>
- <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starrynightlyrics.html> ----Utube clip 'A Study of Nature in the Artwork of Vincent Van Gogh'
- Computer & Overhead projector
- Photographs of various trees
- <http://interactives.mped.org/previewmg.aspx?id=579&title=>
- Crayons
- Sketchbook/Nature Journal
- Watercolor
- Wallpaper/fabric scraps
- Glue stick
- Cardstock

Submit your work to the Get to Know Contest for a chance to win wild prizes & go to

GETTOKNOW.CA

to find more free resources and activities

SOURCED & ADAPTED FROM: Deborah Chavez, Ph.D. Modified from lesson plan included in the report Planning for Youth Days-Planting the SEED to Get Youth Outdoors in Nature by Deborah Chavez, Ph.D and John D. Fehr. US Forest Service National Technology & Development Program. Pages 8-9. March 2009

Ages: 4 - 10

Time: 4-6 Class Periods Total

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Instruct students that they will be taking a nature walk but rather than collecting things in nature, they will sketch things they see on their walk. Ask them to listen carefully for sounds that they hear and pay close attention to colors and textures.

- a. As you walk, stop periodically and point out certain aspects of nature.
- b. The teacher should model for students by taking a sketchbook and journaling as well. Allow students to see what and how you are journaling/sketching.
- c. Encourage students to make notes by their sketches as to colors, textures, etc...
- d. Each stop, collect items to take back to the room for students to use for crayon rubbings.

Step 2. After returning to the classroom, divide students into small groups to share with their classmates their journals.

- a. Pass out colored pencils to each table and encourage students to add colors to their sketches.
- b. If desired, write questions on the whiteboard for students to answer in their groups.
- c. Allow students 15- 20 minutes to share



Step 3. Who is Vincent Van Gogh.

- If students have, activate their prior knowledge by allowing them to share what they know and writing some of the facts on the whiteboard.
- Give further background on Van Gogh, sharing as much or as little information, depending on maturity level of students. See website (<http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starryindex.html>)
- Share video clip of Starry Night on overhead projector. Again, sharing as much or as little information as desired. <http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starrynightlyrics.html>
- Share other pieces of artwork on the overhead. Using the website http://interactives.mped.org/preview_mg.aspx?id=579&title=Either while showing the artwork or print questions and use as a guide while showing the pictures.

Step 4. Discuss with students how many artists are/ were inspired by the beauty of nature

- Pass out paper and have students to create their own drawings inspired by their sketches from their nature walk as well as the artwork of Van Gogh—Ask them to think of what time of day it will be in their picture.
- Allow students to add colour to their sketches by using crayons.
- Discuss with students the crayon resist technique.
- Pass out watercolours and have students, remembering the time of day they want to depict, pick one colour and colour over their entire piece of artwork to create a crayon resist. As students are painting encourage them to pay attention to how the crayon resists the paint.
- As students are cleaning up, replay the video clip of Starry Night.

Step 5. Sunflower Collage Art

- Ask students to share some of the textures they felt and saw on their nature walk.
- Show the artwork of Van Gogh and ask students to point out textures that they see in the artwork.
- Pass out cardstock and place fabric/wallpaper scraps on each table.
- On overhead, display Van Gogh's Sunflowers or have a large size actual print.
- Discuss with students what a collage is and encourage them to create their own collage art inspired by Sunflowers.
- Depending on the age of the students, you may want to demonstrate how to cut out petals, etc..
- Encourage students to pay close attention to the texture or appearance of texture in their artwork.
- Allow students to share their artwork in their small groups or with the class as a whole.

Step 6. Crayon Rubbings

- Pass out paper, pencils, and crayons.
- Display on overhead or obtain a print of Cypress Trees or other artwork by Van Gogh.
- Encourage students to create a sketch of a landscape depicting a particular season.
- After sketching the landscape explain to students how to create crayon rubbings.
- Take another walk outside with crayons and allow students to add color to their sketches with crayon rubbings.

Step 7. Nature Journaling Part 2

- After the above projects are completed and students have been exposed to the artwork and information about Vincent Van Gogh, take them with their sketchbooks back outside on another nature walk to journal.
- Encourage them to think of what they have learned and to be more observant of the shapes, colors, and textures in nature.



GET TO KNOW
CONNECT • CREATE • CELEBRATE

GRAB N' GO ACTIVITY:
Nature & Van Gogh

MORE FOLLOW UP IDEAS:

- After completing this unit study, take time weekly, for students to go outside and nature journal.
- Research nature journaling online or at the bookstore: there are actual nature journals that can be purchased to guide students through a more in depth nature journal process/experiment.
- Older students can bring cameras on their nature walk to take photos to use later in class as inspiration for painting.
- Oil Pastel lessons can be taught and students can create oil pastel work inspired by their nature journals.
- Field Guides can also be used when or after nature journaling—these can often be found at the library.
- Use your imagination and develop further lesson plans from this unit study.

