

## Handmade paper and Visual Poetry on the Land

Legend:                      Mind                      Body                      Emotion                      Spirit                      Indigenous  
Knowledge

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| <b>Subject:</b><br>English<br>Visual Art  | <b>Grade:</b><br>7-12 | <b>Time Needed:</b><br>2 days  |
| <b>Resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Persistence of Songs</i> and <i>Of Course the Sky Does not Close</i> by Daniel David Moses (Kingston-based author)</li> <li>Examples of Visual Poetry</li> <li>Youtube video and infographic step-by-step tutorial for how to make paper</li> </ul> |                       | <b>Tools:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scissors</li> <li>Blender</li> <li>Sponge</li> <li>shallow tray</li> <li>dish towels</li> <li>picture frame</li> <li>window screening or needle point canvas</li> </ul> <b>Materials:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>natural coloring, e.g. tea or coffee</li> <li>natural scent, e.g. essential oil or dried herbs</li> <li>scrap paper</li> <li>leaves or bark (or similar)</li> <li>seeds</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Success Criteria</b> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am successful when I collaborate with others respectfully, allowing everyone an opportunity to speak and contribute</li> <li>I am successful when I interact with the setting – the land – to generate ideas for my work</li> <li>I am successful when I can express how taking the time to create my own materials from the land and recycled objects contributes to the creative process, the environment, and the meaning behind my work</li> <li>I am successful when I</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Goal</b> |
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| <p>The goal of this lesson is to improve students’ relations with themselves, one another, and the environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">They’ll develop relationships with their own creativity by making paper and visual poetry on this paper</span></li> <li><span style="color: blue;">They’ll develop a better understanding of their relationship with the environment</span></li> </ul> |
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- They'll develop relationships with one another by cooperating, sharing materials and discussing the meaningfulness of the activity
- They'll develop relationships with the land as it participates in and provides the foundation for the activity
- They will be outside gathering materials and creating in nature

## Lesson

### Introduction

- Watch this video of the process of creating paper:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR\\_218EtLJU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR_218EtLJU)
- Read poetry by Indigenous author Daniel David Moses specifically on the topic of nature and land
- Look over examples of visual poetry for ideas and inspiration

### Instruction

- Brainstorm with students what we can add into our paper making process to make each piece individual to the student. For example, adding shredded newspaper, flower pedals, leaves, thin pieces of bark, seeds so the paper can be planted, essential oils for smell...etc.
- Discuss the concept of our society being desensitized from the creation process of the materials and resources that we use. For example, meat and dairy products at the grocery store (factory farming), paper (deforestation), processed foods and even fruits and vegetables (agro chemicals in growing bananas), electronics, toys, shoes and clothing (child and unethical labour)
- Consider how creating our own resources to the best of our ability can be more ecofriendly and rewarding to ourselves and our environment.
- Describe the schedule of the two lessons that will coincide together: go out and use found materials and recycled paper. The Visual Art portion of the lesson will be making paper and designing the visual aspect of your poem. The English written part of the lesson will be crafting nature poetry inspired by Indigenous author Daniel David Moses.
- Each student will create individualized sheets of paper. Construct visual poetry which will either be digitally printed or drawn onto the paper.
- Having explained the above, prepare to go outdoors to begin gathering materials and brainstorming ideas for poetry.
- Give the class many different examples of how to write poetry. (ex: black out poetry, writing down many words of things you see then picking several at random and trying to construct a sentence from it, write anything you can think of without stopping for two minutes...etc.) This lesson will have followed previous lessons on creating poetry so that students have a good fundamental understanding of the creation process. State that the goal is to generate ideas and themes that meaningfully interact with the land,

demonstrating how the land can and has provided story and mystery for thousands of years.

### Activity

- Before beginning the activity, inform the students that the goal of the activity is to work together respectfully. Remind them to interact with their environment actively and respectfully as it is fundamental to the activity.
- As much as accessibility allows, select several natural locations (ex. A field, under an old oak tree, by boulders, etc.).
- Send a smaller group of students to a different starting location and have them cycle through locations
- Students are encouraged to interact with the geography.
- At the end of the activity, thank and give tobacco to the land that has provided this experience.
- Students are encouraged to add many individualized aspects into their paper: staining it with coffee or tea, adding dried flowers, herbs, or essential oil, or even adding seeds so that their paper can be planted!
- After creating the paper as the paper takes an hour or so to dry, students can find a place to sit outside and begin working on their visual poetry. They are asked to start with a rough copy first, then once their draft is okayed by the teacher they can print or draw the poem onto their paper the following day.

### Consolidation

- At the end of the activity, talk about the process, what was difficult/easy for students, form a circle and discuss as a class **how the activity felt, whether the process of creating art on your own paper felt more rewarding and personalized, how the specific items gathered from the land informed the narrative of the visual poetry that couldn't have happened without them, how the creation process was influenced by the students' interaction with the geography, etc.**
- Discuss how unique features of the land afforded thematic ideas, how it affected the student's art. Ask students to relate their experience to **how the land provides for the development of community during this activity as it has and does for local nations.**
- End the discussion by addressing that, unless we change our methods, our grandchildren won't have the same opportunity that we do to derive joy and expression in collaboration with the land: that we are not providing for seven generations after us with our current habits and societal model.
- Discuss the importance and reward of being able to possess the skills to reuse materials we already own or what may otherwise go to waste to create our own products. How this can eliminate the need to consume new products

- Ask students to compose a short self-reflection explaining how the land-based settings influenced their experience.

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**Accommodations/Modifications**

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- Select locations accessible for any students in the class that have mobility issues
- Provide each group with auditory aid devices if any students have hearing exceptionalities
- both voice and visual delivery of content
- physical or online worksheets provided
- clear outline of timelines and due dates
- fine motor physical aids
- Students who need extra time for any component of the class will be given the option based on work ethic and IEPs.