

LESSON PLAN



LAND-ESCAPES

DESCRIPTION

This landscape lesson will borrow inspiration from the spaces around us to create an over-sized, collaborative mural that expresses our own personal styles.

STUDENT AGE/GRADE LEVEL

Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3

OBJECTIVE

Upon completing the lesson, students will be able to identify how different environments can be shown in artworks, explain how artists can use personal style to express themselves, and create a classroom mural that incorporates different styles and environmental influences.

RELATED ARTISTS

William Sommer, Richard Estes, Matthew Kolodziej



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RELATED WORKS



William Sommer

***Bordner Mural*, 1936-1937.**

Oil on fiberboard. 55 in. x 47 in.
(139.7 cm x 119.38 cm). Gift of
Robert Bordner. 1973.17

NOTES: A collaboration between Sommer and his son Edwin, this painting was commissioned by Ruth Bordner as a birthday present for her husband Robert, a newspaper writer and close friend of the Sommers. The image probably represents the rural property that the Bordners owned in nearby Peninsula, Ohio. Sommer received several commissions during his career, including some for federal government art projects during the Great Depression. When working on commissions, he tended to paint in a more refined style, with quieter colors and defined shapes.

DISCUSSION PROMPT: What does it mean to collaborate? What are some of the good things about working together? What are some of the challenges that we face when we collaborate? How do you show personal style when you work with others? Think of a few times in history where people had to collaborate to achieve something and describe what they did.

WRITING PROMPT: Using a partner, write a poem about working together. You should write a line, then they should, then you should. Keep alternating until it's complete!

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Richard Estes

Food City, 1967

Oil, acrylic, and graphite on fiberboard.
48 in. x 68 in. (121.92 cm x 172.72 cm).
Purchased, by exchange, with funds raised by the Masked Ball. 1955-1963 .1981.13

NOTES: Richard Estes is a leader among the group of painters referred to as "photorealists" because their images are based on photographs, not reality itself. The overabundance of objects seen here—vehicles in the street reflected in the window, rows of food products, and garish price banners—reflect both the tedium and energy of urban and retail spaces.

From a distance, Estes' painting looks remarkably true-to-life, but on closer inspection, one discovers how artificially constructed the image really is. As the artist pointed out, this is a combination of realism and abstraction, because multiple, disconnected forms are "floating around on a flat surface." One also discovers how the artist built up different layers of pigment to convey the depth of space and reflective surfaces one sees when looking through a shop window.

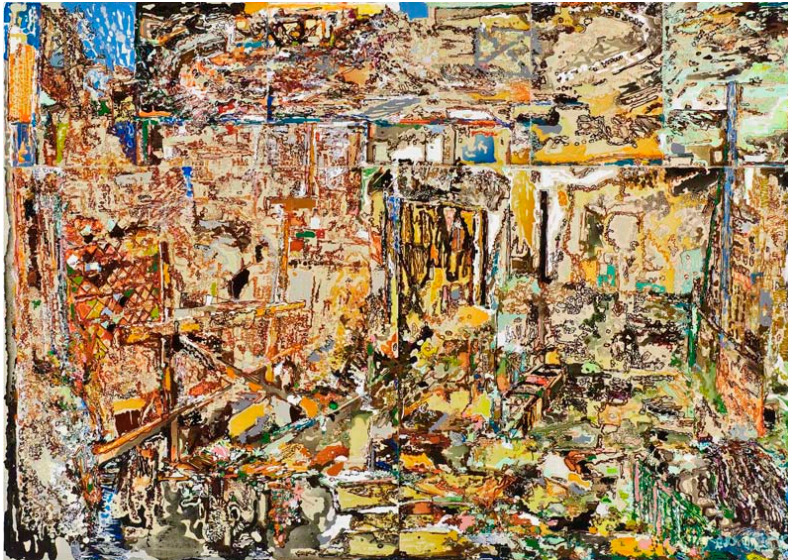
DISCUSSION PROMPT: Often, we pass by the same things every day without really looking at them. What kind of things do we miss out on? Look at this painting of a grocery store window. What other spaces and things do you see? How does the artist see the "art" in the image and how is something as simple as a window considered a landscape?

WRITING PROMPT: Create an advertisement describing an ordinary object in an extraordinary way. Talk about what it looks like, and what you can do with it. Don't tell the reader what you are describing until the very end!



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Matthew Kolodziej

***Good Neighbors*, 2009**

Acrylic and ink on canvas. 102 in. x 144 in. (259.08 cm x 365.76 cm).
Museum Acquisition Fund.
2009.28

NOTES: At a distance, 'Good Neighbors' appears abstract; closer inspection reveals representational elements. The painting originated with photographs Kolodziej took of construction sites. He digitally combined some of these photographs into a photo-collage, which he then translated, or compressed, into a linear drawing using a computer program. Projecting the resulting "map" onto canvas, he traced its lines with markers, all the while adjusting and refining the composition. Kolodziej then squeezed lines and layers of acrylic paint onto the canvas using tubes designed for cake icing instead of brushes. To create pools of color, he placed the canvas flat on the floor and poured on liquid paint. Kolodziej's use of multiple canvases to comprise one painting echoes his layered process, resulting in a network of line, color and texture that is inherently dynamic.

DISCUSSION PROMPT: Why do you think the artist titled this 'Good Neighbors'? While people are not normally shown in landscapes, and there are none shown in this one, what effects do people have on the land?

WRITING PROMPT: Write a poem for the title 'Good Neighbor'. What does it mean to be one? Who are you a neighbor to? Think beyond the person next door-consider the environment you share!

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MATERIALS

- Large paper to cover wall for mural
- Acrylic or Poster Paint, Watercolor Paint, Paint Shirts
- Watercolor Paper, Colored Paper, Tissue Paper, and/or Bristol Paper
- Pencils, Markers, Colored Pencils, Crayons, Oil Pastels, etc.
- Paint Brushes, Sponges, Palettes, Water, Scissors, Glue Sticks, and Bottles of Glue

PROCEDURE

DISCUSSION: Using a variety of sources, find images of landscapes from pop culture, historical photographs, or art history. Have students place the images on a map. Where might these landscapes be from? Students will respond to the artworks of William Sommer, Richard Estes, and Matthew Kolodziej with the suggested discussion questions or creative writing prompts. As a class, brainstorm and list what type of landscapes students see in their daily lives.

STUDIO: Have students vote on a landscape they would like to make from the list they have created and then brainstorm what they see in the selected landscape. Students will work as a team to add to a sketch and layout for the mural. Additional ideas can be gathered by visiting local landscapes or community areas and taking photographs. After the sketch has been completed, give students large sheets of colored paper and instruct them to draw the basic outline of their item for the mural. Encourage students to draw in their own style, to relate to the theme of collaboration and the personal style of the artists. Students will experiment with mixed media techniques including oil pastel resist, marker stippling and layered stamps. As the students complete their images, have them cut out the shapes to glue onto the background. When finished, after the students have all signed it, hang the mural somewhere in the school or community for all to see.

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EXAMPLE TECHNIQUES



ODE VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

	Perceiving/Knowing	Producing/Performing	Responding/Reflecting
Grade 1	4PE, 6PE	1PR, 4PR	3RE, 4RE
Grade 2	2PE, 7PE	3PR, 5PR	4RE, 5RE
Grade 3	3PE, 5PE	5PR, 6PR	1RE, 4RE

For more teacher resources or to schedule a tour:

www.AkronArtMuseum.org/educators/

For more information on artworks in the museum's collection:

www.AkronArtMuseum.org/collection/