

Color of Home-Experimenting with ink

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Estimated Completion Time: 5 class periods

Grade Level: 5th Grade

**Lesson Overview:**

In this lesson, students will focus on the theme of environmental change, with a focus on place and materials. Using observation, students will read an article about the local environment and consider how environmental impacts their community. Students will examine the work of Heather Bird Harris and John Sabraw, focusing on observation and the use of natural materials. Students will create their own inks using environmental resources and experiment with both controlled and abstract ink techniques. They will use their observations and ideas to create an artwork on paper that communicates change in a place that is meaningful to them.

**Enduring Ideas/Essential Questions:**

How can artists show a place others may never experience?

How does observation help us notice change in our environment?

How can materials from our environment influence the meaning of artwork?

What is the difference between showing a place and expressing how it feels?

**ND State Standards-Art**

VA:Cr1.5.a Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.

VA:Cr2.5.a Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques.

VA:Cr3.5.a Reflect, revise, and refine works of art.

VA:Re7.5.a Analyze how visual imagery conveys meaning.

VA:Cn10.5.a Create art that reflects community and environment.

**ND State Standards-Science**

PS1.A: Structure and Properties of Matter

PS1.B: Chemical Reactions

LS2.A: Cycles of Matter and Energy Transfer in Ecosystems

ESS2.A: Earth Materials and Systems

ESS3.C: Human Impacts on Earth Systems

### **ND State Standards-Social Studies**

G.3\_5.4 Explain how North Dakota regions have been influenced by physical and human characteristics

### **ND State Standards-ELA**

5.F.12 Read accurately and automatically a variety of fifth-grade texts with expression, phrasing, purpose and understanding.

5.R.2 Make inferences drawn from the text during and after reading a variety of genres, literary and informational texts.

### **Studio Habits of Mind Focus:**

Observe

Develop Craft

Envision

### **Lesson Objectives**

In this lesson, the students will:

- 1.) examine the work of Heather Bird Harris and John Sabraw, focusing on observation and material use.
- 2.) identify key ideas about their region through reading and discussion.
- 3.) create and test natural inks using environmental materials.
- 4.) experiment with abstract ink techniques on paper.
- 5.) create an artwork that communicates environmental awareness using observation and material choice.

## **Tools and Materials**

Example Article: <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/runaway-devils-lake>

Use Gemini to create readings that are correct Lexile level

Natural ink materials (soil, rocks, plants, water, etc.)

Coffee Filters

Cups, strainers, spoons

Brushes, sticks, alternative tools

Watercolor or mixed media paper

Paper towels

Pencils

## **Demonstration/Lecture**

Today, we will explore how artists observe and represent places that are meaningful to them. Some artists travel to places many people will never visit and create artwork so others can understand those places.

Let's begin by meeting the artists Heather Bird Harris and John Sabraw. (Have prints of artist work or a slideshow of work.)

Soundscape by Harris-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldi5c2FzVFc>

Ted Talk by Sabraw-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Qz1HVcRu7g>

Next, we will read an article about our local environment. As you read, think about what is happening to our area and what details stand out to you. (Article referenced is very specific-find an article that relates to local environment)

As you read, think about these questions-

- What changes are happening in Devils Lake?
- What details can you picture in your mind?
- What would someone not understand about this place if they had never been here?

## **Procedure**

## Day 1

Students will read the article and complete one set of questions based on the teacher's chosen subject area.

### Science Option:

- Why is Devils Lake's water level rising?
- Where does the water in the lake come from?
- Why doesn't the lake drain easily?
- What are two effects of rising water?
- How do weather patterns affect the lake?

### Social Studies Option:

- How has the rising lake affected people in the community?
- What challenges do people face because of the flooding?
- Who is impacted by these changes?
- Why is this issue important for the future of the area?
- What decisions might leaders need to make?

### English Option:

- What is the main idea of the article?
- What are two important details that support this idea?
- What problem is described in the article?
- What evidence explains the problem?
- What part helped you picture what is happening?

## Day 2

Students will be introduced to Heather Bird Harris and her process of creating ink from natural materials.

Students will participate in an observation walk to find materials. Safety precautions will be discussed.

### Day 3

Students will create 2–3 inks using the provided materials. Students will test their inks by experimenting with light and dark values, layering, and how the ink spreads on paper. Students should label their test sheets.

### Day 4

Students will continue experimenting with their inks, exploring both controlled brushwork and abstract ink movement.

Students will begin planning their artwork, deciding what idea they want to communicate and how their materials will support that idea.

### Day 5

Students will begin their final artwork using handmade inks. Students should consider their composition.

### Day 6

Students will complete their artwork and decide on final compositions.

### Day 7

Students will create a gallery walk to observe the artwork of peers.

## **Distribution and Clean-Up**

Materials will be arranged in a central location. Students will retrieve materials needed for ink-making and return all tools when finished. Tables and work areas will be cleaned at the end of each class period.

## **Closure**

### Day 1

Today, you explored how artists observe places and began thinking about changes happening in your environment. What stood out to you most from the article or video?

### Day 2

You experimented with natural materials to create ink. What did you notice about how your materials behaved?

### Day 3

You explored different techniques with ink. How did experimenting change your ideas?

Day 4

You began your final artwork. How are your materials helping communicate your idea?

Day 5

You completed your artwork and reflection. How does your work help someone understand this place?

Artists or Works of Art Studied

Heather Bird Harris

John Sabraw

References