

Shoes and the Backyard Landscape

3rd/4th Grade Art Lesson

Jennifer Ogden, 2008



Indian People Wear Shoes and Socks
Lithograph/paper pulp 1997 42"X29"

Description:

Students will create a still life /shoe landscape inspired by, INDIAN PEOPLE WEAR SHOES and SOCKS by Juane Quick-to-See Smith. This is a relatively structured lesson, and may be modified to suit the needs of the young artist or instructor. (See alternate suggestions).

Duration:

Three-to-four, one-hour sessions.

Materials:

Pencil, paper, Sharpie marker, color pencil.

Goals and Learning Objectives:

Students will study INDIAN PEOPLE WEAR SHOES and SOCKS by Juane Quick-to-See Smith.

Students will hypothesize possible meanings they find from the combination of symbols found in the artwork.

Students will read the story TWO PAIRS of SHOES, by Esther Sanderson, illustrated by David Beyer. (1990 Pemmican Publications Inc.).

Students will draw a shoe from observation, then use it as a space upon which to draw a picture of their own back yard.

Teacher Resources:

www.missoulaartmuseum.org

(Click on “experience”, then “search the collection”, search for INDIAN PEOPLE WEAR SHOES and SOCKS by Juane Quick-to-See Smith. Click on descriptive list, as well as image.

<http://www.oyate.org/aboutus.html>

This is an informative web resource for educators providing a voice for Native perspectives, including reviews of literature about American Indian subjects. Click on “catalog” for brief overviews of children’s literature ranked by age level.

Vocabulary:

Symbol- Something used for or representing something else. An emblem, token or sign.

Shape- A form or object defined by its contour or outline.

Landscape- An outdoor picture that may include geographical features, plants, animals and people, as well as homes, roads, vehicles, etc. Landscapes can visually describe past or present, time of day, season, climate and habitat. Other words for landscape include, mountainscape, riverscape, cityscape, and ocean scape, even moonscape.

Horizon Line- A horizontal line dividing sky from land in a picture.

Background- The area of land closest to the horizon line in a landscape. Objects in the background appear to be small, just as objects far away from us appear to be small.

Middle ground- The area of land in between the background and foreground. Objects in the middle ground appear to be medium sized.

Foreground- The area of land below the middle ground and at the bottom of a landscape picture. Objects in the foreground appear large or close up to the viewer.

Learning Sparks:

Have students study, INDIAN PEOPLE WEAR SHOES and SOCKS by Juane Quick-to-See Smith, reading the image for meaning and utilizing the clues or ideas given within the composition, such as symbolism, and the title of the work itself.

Read TWO PAIRS of SHOES, by Esther Sanderson. Discuss what ideas the art print and the story have in common. How do each pair of shoes symbolize something special to Maggie? Do you think that there are other little girls like Maggie who have their grandmothers to teach them the old ways and their mothers to help them navigate new ways? For an American Indian child, a pair of moccasins may indeed be a hand made heirloom from a cherished family member to be used for special occasions. Just looking at a pair of moccasins can sometimes reveal tribal affiliation, age and activity.

Our shoes are more than a fashion statement. They reflect much about who we are. Sporting activities call for special footwear such as soccer cleats. Time of year, such as winter call for snow boots, and special occasions such as parties and dances make great occasions for bringing out our prettiest shoes. They take us on most of our journeys through life, intimate companions, no matter what other people come along with us. A used, loved pair of shoes which take pride of place in our lives can often create a portrait, which is in a way an extension of us.

Steps and Procedures:

Instructions For Students:

Take off your shoe, set it in front of you at any angle and draw it life sized or larger on your paper. This will be a line drawing. The inside space will be used for your landscape, so leave it open, avoiding shading. Start at any point on the shoe, pretending that your eye and the pencil point are traveling slowly at the same rate. Pay close attention to wrinkles in the shoe made by you wearing them around. Include stitching and logos. Enjoy drawing the loopy laces or shapely straps and buckles just as you find them. Really observe what is unique about your shoe, and try to translate it onto the paper. Use the Sharpie marker to outline your drawing.

More Learning Sparks:

Now you are ready for the next part. You have probably worn out a lot of shoe leather in your own backyard. Why not include that place, or any other place where your shoes feel at home? Think of how well you know your own back yard. You are going to use the shoe shape as a space to draw your back yard and the things in it. Decide where you think your horizon line should go. If you like lots of sky, put the horizon line lower down on your picture. If you like lots of ground or land space, raise the horizon line higher up.

Bigger objects are the things close up, such as a pet, garden flowers or lawn chair. They can be placed at the bottom of the land space. Medium sized objects, people or activities such as a baseball game go in the middle ground. They will appear a bit farther away. The smallest objects, such as a fence, shrub or bird will appear at the top of the land space. They will look like they are the farthest away, providing the viewer with the illusion of deep space. Any object you find in your back yard can be in the foreground middle ground or background, but for the illusion of depth to be effective, try to adhere to the size and placement rules.

Since much of what we draw is a reflection of our personalities, do not feel as if an accurate portrait of the backyard is the goal. Adding things you like is just as good, if not better. Using the backyard is simply a way to narrow our focus so as not to become overwhelmed.

More Steps:

When you have laid out your composition, go ahead and add color using the color pencils. A nice tip about using color pencils is that they can be pressed firmly against the paper for strong color and lightly for fragile color. Break up similar parts of your picture with different textures or line patterns using your color pencils. See if you can take the pencil colors further and mix new shades. Warm colors appear to pop forward in a picture and cool colors appear to recede back in a picture. As you work, remember to get up and look at your picture from a distance to see if it reads well. Bold, sharp color is most often seen on things that are up close. Fragile, pale colors go nicely in the background space to help strengthen the work you've done to give the viewer the illusion of depth.

Assessment:

Students should be able to identify through verbal expression the dual significance of contemporary and traditional objects for people who have a place in both worlds.

Students should try to draw from observation, which helps to train the brain to draw both real and imagined things with further accuracy. Visual checks and a show of appreciation for emerging ideas are helpful to foster a positive learning environment.

Have students discuss their work, while encouraging the use of landscape vocabulary as they converse.