

Extension Activities after Gallery Visit

Visual Arts/Media Literacy

A. Plant Collage

Materials:

- pencil, pen
- plant specimen or reference photo
- ink
- printer paper and inkjet or laser printer
- canvas board, illustration board, foam core or cardboard
- water-based paint
- white glue (thinned) or acrylic medium

“Adopt” a plant you find growing in the schoolyard or your lawn.

- What is the common name of the plant? What is its Latin name? To what family does it belong?
- What is its habitat?



Lesson

1. Find an example of the plant that is full grown. Collect a specimen of this plant. (In winter, research the plant and find a photograph to use as a reference.)
2. Use ink and contour lines to make a botanical drawing of your plant. Be sure to include the roots, stem, leaves, and flowers. Set this aside. You will use it later.
3. If you have a plant specimen, use heavy books and newspapers to press your plant. Leave it under the books for a week.
4. Research your plant. From where does it come? Is it used for any purpose, like medicine or food? Does it cause any problems? Is it native or non-native? Is it invasive?
5. Select several key words or phrases (enough to fill one 8/12 X 11" sheet of paper) from your research. Print them out in reverse in large, interesting fonts.
6. Use a pen to transfer the text in an interesting arrangement onto a stiff surface, like canvas board, illustration board, foam core, or cardboard.
7. Trace your botanical drawing onto the surface, using graphite and a pen to transfer the image. Don't be afraid to overlap it with the text. (Use a soft pencil to scribble graphite onto the back of your drawing, then tape the original drawing, face up, to the stiff surface. Trace the original drawing with pen. A copy will transfer to your surface.)

8. Use paint to unify the text into a painting in which you express your feelings about your plant using colour and gesture.
9. Use thinned glue or acrylic medium to incorporate your pressed plant into your artwork by attaching it to the surface of your dried painting. Think carefully about where to put the plant. Do not center it. Instead, decide where its placement in relation to the text and other design elements would create balance and harmony in the painting.
10. Glaze over the entire painting with the thinned glue or acrylic medium to finish the surface and to further unify the elements.

Post-Activity Writing Exercise

Artist's Statement: Use the attached worksheet to write about your artwork.

B. Lovely Lumens



Lumen photography, an art form in which photographs are made without the use of a camera, is one of the oldest forms of photography. Objects (usually plants) are placed onto photosensitive paper, under glass, and the light of the sun is used to expose the print.

The National Gallery of Canada developed some art lesson plans that relate to early photography for grades 1-12. These lessons are well laid out with tabs that outline different aspects of each activity, including a rubric for evaluation.

http://cybermuseum.gallery.ca/cybermuseum/teachers/plans/intro_e.jsp?lessonid=183

To read an explanation for how Mary Abma uses Lumen Prints in her exhibition, check out the following links:

<http://www.maryabma.com/Lumens.html>

<http://www.maryabma.com/CultivationConquest.html>