

PERSPECTIVES AND PUBLIC ART

SEVEN MAGIC MOUNTAINS UGO RONDINONE



This lesson plan will reference the large-scale public artwork, *Seven Magic Mountains* by Ugo Rondinone, though the objectives and process can be applied when looking at any large-scale public artwork.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to observe and record artwork in the field utilizing perspective, macro and micro views. Students will be able to use their recorded drawings and observations to interpret the message and meaning in site-specific art installations. Students will use evidence from their observations to support their opinions about artistic meaning and intention.

VOCABULARY

Elements of Art: line, shape, form, space, value, color and texture

Perspective: the angle or direction that a person uses to look at an object

Macro View: large scale/big picture view

Micro View: close-up or very narrow view

MATERIALS

Notebook or field guide

Colored pencils

Map

Hand lens, magnifying glass or viewfinder

TIME/LOCATION

Day trip to observe and explore the *Seven Magic Mountains* installation in the Nevada desert (south of Jean Dry Lake). Follow-up and extension activities can be conducted in the classroom. Educators and students are invited to engage with the artwork through the website www.sevenmagicmountains.com if a site-visit is not possible.

LESSON

Engagement: Visit the *Seven Magic Mountains* installation. Allow students to explore the space on their own. Have them record their initial observations and responses to the art (using the elements of art to guide the process). It can be helpful to encourage students to conduct this activity silently and independently, allowing them to formulate their own thoughts and ideas. Allow ample time to absorb, process and record their ideas in their notebook/field guide.

Exploration: Students should create several sketches of the artwork from a variety of perspectives. Discuss perspective with the students and encourage them to find different angles and distances from which to observe, evaluate, sketch and record what they see. Students can also explore macro and micro perspectives of the installation and record those observations.

DRAWING FROM THE MACRO PERSPECTIVE:

1. Begin by drawing a horizon line.
2. Sketch out the main shapes.
3. Refine the shapes and background with the details you notice. Focus on those aspects that interest you the most.
4. Add color to complete the sketch.

DRAWING FROM THE MICRO PERSPECTIVE:

1. From your Macro sketch, determine an area that you would like to observe further.
2. Find a location or item in that area and use a hand lens, magnifying glass or viewfinder to study the area in detail.
3. Allow the lens or viewfinder to act as a frame, draw what you see within the frame. Pay close attention to small details like texture and shape. Look for the most interesting part within the shapes and texture and draw it as accurately as possible.
4. Write notes about your observations as well and add them to your drawing.

Explanation: Have students share and discuss their observations and drawings of Seven Magic Mountains. Encourage students to explain what they see based on direct observations of the art work, using the elements of art to describe their observations. Discuss how changing perspective (angle, distance, macro and micro view) effected their observations.

Elaboration: Challenge students to find meaning in their observations. Ask and discuss the following questions:

- What was the intention or goal of the artist in creating this work?
- What observations would support your ideas?
- What does this art work say about our community, our culture or our society?
- Would it matter if we changed the color of the rocks, the size of the towers or the location of the installation? How would these changes to the art change the meaning or intention?

Evaluation: Have students respond to and record their answers to the following prompt:

Using your observations to support your opinions, explain how Seven Magic Mountains impacts your views of society. How does this artwork help us understand different people, places or culture?

Note: Expectations for written responses should be adjusted to meet the needs of your specific learning community and ideally would be submitted with student sketches of the artwork to show the full spectrum of student learning.

Extension: Have students research and explore other land based, public art works around Jean Dry Lake and/or within their own communities. Students can record sketches of the artworks they discover from different perspectives, map the location of these various works, research and discuss the ways in which these different works impact our views of society or help us understand different times, people, places and cultures. Have students discuss and present their research and observations to the class.

Suggested topics for student research:

- Southern Nevada Petroglyphs and Rock Art
- Jean Tinguely
- Michael Heizer
- History of Land Art in the Jean Dry Lake

STANDARDS

National Core Arts Standards

VISUAL ARTS: CREATING 2.3 (VA: CR2.3)

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

Essential Question(s): How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

VISUAL ARTS: CONNECTING 11.1 (VA: CN11.1)

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.

Essential Question(s): How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How is art used to impact the views of a society? How does art preserve aspects of life?

Common Core ELA Standards

Reading Standards for Informational Text (6-12): Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

Writing Standards (6-12): Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Helpful Links, Resources and Background Information

sevenmagicmountains.com

<http://www.forsythlv.com/>

<http://www.moca.org/visit/double-negative>

TOOLS

Print your own view finder.

