

INTO THE WILD – ARCTIC DIORAMAS

Developed by:

Laura Wright – 2016 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

Discipline / Subject:

Art

Topic:

Research and Clay Art Technique

Grade Level:

4th grade – but can be adapted for all grades

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:

1. The teacher can use several resources to research the wildlife of Alaska for this project:
2. <http://iditarod.com>
3. http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/arctic_animal.php
4. http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/photos/arctic-animals/#/atlantic-puffin_453_600x450.jpg
5. <http://www.polarbearsinternational.org/for-students/polar-bears-for-kids>
6. <http://erikbrooks.blogspot.com>
7. http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0761456856/ref=as_li_ss_tl?keywords=polar%20opposites&qid=1455985976&ref=sr_1_1&sr=8-1&linkCode=sl1&tag=erikbrookschi-20&linkId=726478b06f051dc0b3a478f2ed29d9a2

Lesson Summary:

Students will research the Arctic and Alaska and understand the unique wildlife and landscape that mushers can see and experience on the trail.

They will create clay diorama landscape of an Alaska scene in art class that represents their research.

Standards Addressed:

National Endowment for the Arts:

Find your state in the link below to see your state standards for art instruction:

<https://www.arts.gov/grants/apply-grant/grants-organizations/art-works/arts-education/state-standards-arts-education>

Texas State Standards:

(b) Knowledge and skills

- (1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating artworks.
- (2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artworks using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem solving skills. The student is expected to:

- (A) Integrate ideas drawn from life experiences to create original works of art;
- (B) Create compositions using the elements of art and principles of design; and
- (C) Produce drawings; paintings; prints; sculpture, including modeled forms; and other art forms such as ceramics, fiber art, constructions, mixed media, installation art, digital art and media, and photographic imagery using a variety of materials.

Alaska State Standards:

A. A student should be able to create and perform in the arts.

A student who meets the content standard should:

- 2) Refine artistic skills and develop self-discipline through rehearsal, practice, and revision;
- 3) Appropriately use new and traditional materials, tools, techniques, and processes in the arts;
- 4) Demonstrate the creativity and imagination necessary for innovative thinking and problem solving;
- 5) Collaborate with others to create and perform works of art;
- 6) Integrate two or more art forms to create a work of art

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the wildlife and landscape of Alaska, and what a musher and dog team experience and see on the trail.
2. Students will use art techniques in clay to create dioramas.

Assessment:

1. Teacher will assess that students have chosen appropriate Alaska or Arctic animals for their dioramas.
2. Teachers should assess that students followed directions with the art techniques required for this diorama

Procedural Activities

1. Students will spend some time researching Arctic and Alaska animals and geography using websites and books from the library.
2. They will choose one or two animals to include in their Alaska dioramas.
3. The teacher will cut a clay slab $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch thick.
4. Using a clay knife, students will trim the top to look like mountains or other landforms. They can keep it straight for a sky background with the northern lights or stars.
5. Remove the extra clay.
6. Save the extra bits of clay.
7. Bend the back of the clay scene up $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way, so it is sitting up in an "L" shape.
8. With the remaining clay bits, students will mold and shape them to be one or two Alaska animals or trees, or checkpoint cabins, etc.
9. Then with art tools, they can add texture, such a paw prints, or waves in a stream, etc.
10. When they are completed, the teacher will fire them in the kiln.
11. Then the students will paint them.
12. The last step is to glaze them and let them dry.
13. Put them on display in a gallery.
14. Students can extend this activity with a writing component.

Materials Students Need:

1. Arctic animal books such as *Polar Opposites*, by Erik Brooks
http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0761456856/ref=as_li_ss_tl?keywords=polar%20opposites&qid=1455985976&ref=sr_1_1&sr=8-1&linkCode=s11&tag=erikbrookschi-20&linkId=726478b06f051dc0b3a478f2ed29d9a2
2. Computer or tablet to research websites about Arctic animals
3. Clay, a large work surface, an art knife and other tools to cut the clay and create texture
4. Paint for the dioramas with brushes
5. A glaze for the final touch with brushes

Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:

1. The teacher can use several resources to research the wildlife of Alaska for this project:
2. <http://iditarod.com>
3. http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/arctic_animal.php
4. http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/photos/arctic-animals/#/atlantic-puffin_453_600x450.jpg
5. <http://www.polarbearsinternational.org/for-students/polar-bears-for-kids>
6. <http://erikbrooks.blogspot.com>

Other Information:

This project can be modified to add a writing component to the finished project. Students can write a narrative story, share a written piece of research, or write a poem about their diorama scenes.

Modifications for Special Learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:**Modified:**

The teacher can pre-cut the clay slab for the students, so they are ready to shape. The teacher can also have balls of clay ready for students to shape into animals or other landforms.

Enrichment:

Students can share their dioramas in a gallery for the school, and they can explain their research and decisions to others acting as docents.