

Sol de la Quadra-Salcedo

Art & Inquiry: Museum Teaching Strategies For Your Classroom. MoMA

14 de febrero de 2021

Be Nature

we only protect what we love & we love what we know

Know to Respect and Protect

- **Subject area and target grade level range:**

Environmental Science: Primary (6-12)

- **Artwork selection:**



“I decided to start anew,” Georgia O’Keeffe wrote to a friend in 1915, “to strip away what I had been taught—to accept as true my own thinking.”

Georgia O’Keeffe. Abstraction Blue

1927 MoMA, Floor 5, 509 the David Geffen Wing

- **Connection to curriculum:**

The field of environmental science can be divided into three main objectives, which are to learn how the natural world works (Know), understand how humans interact with the environment (Respect), and also determine how we can Protect the environment.

- **Goals:**

1. The first activity focused on the study of the relationships of the natural world and the relationships between organisms and their environments.

2. The second activity through empathy we will study the thoughts and feelings of other living organisms in a situation from their point of view, rather than yours. We will identify the three components of empathy: *cognitive, emotional and compassionate*. Knowing ourselves from the outside to protect ourselves from the inside

- **Artwork** and the author in relation to the assignment. Three bullet points of information about the artwork that support your lesson goals.

1. **NATURE:** Georgia O’Keeffe is a strong example of an artist that gets their inspiration from nature, as she was remarkably devoted to it and turned all her subjects into natural forms and images. *Surrounding worlds. Umwelt*.

2. **MACRO:** O’Keeffe was highly inspired by Paul Strand, a photographer who cropped his photos, to attempt to adapt the scene and change the meaning. Even though Strand’s images become abstract through cropping, they are always going to be realistic because they are photographs. Although O’Keeffe uses paint rather than photography, she recreates the same idea with close-up sections of flowers, and although they are abstract we still know they are flowers because of how smooth the brushstrokes are and how well blended the colours are. There is a combination of abstract and realism because as she said, “Nothing is less real than realism”. She also does this by magnifying and simplifying the forms.

3. **EMOTION:** O’Keeffe was the pioneer of American Modernism and the first to accomplish this technique called “Straight photography” (inspired by Paul Strand) in paint. Her work was direct, with a really focused subject and element

and was detailed. She worked with emotion and wanted the viewer to feel and experience a new encounter with nature. This was mainly due to her process of examining the plant and “looking very carefully at the details.” and the colours. Her attention was called to “the outline and color of any growing thing with the idea of drawing or painting it.”

We must take a step further and observe it all as a whole. O’Keeffe did this by turning a macro image of a flower into a whole universe “When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it, it’s your world for the moment. I want to give that world to someone else.”

- **Open-ended questions**

1. How would you see if you were a...?
2. How would you feel if you were a...?
3. What part of your house would it be...?

Develop an activity for this artwork and include the following:

- **Activity Description:**

- **Phase I: Cognitive, Learn to look with different eyes**

1. Take the time to observe the painting with music of a field of flowers in spring full of life, insects, birds, all around the world and a flower
2. Choose an animal that lives, walks, feeds, inhabits a flower
3. Draw in your notebook the animal in the flower
4. Take a photo of flowers if you have a camera or smartphone

- **Phase II: Emotional, Learn to feel with other emotions**

1. Write in your notebook what you feel on the trip through the flower. To truly connect with your animal, you must share its feelings. This is where emotional empathy comes in.
2. Identify and List emotions
3. So, you have successfully understood what your animal feels and have put yourself in a similar emotional space
4. Guessing Emotions, Ask individual students to choose an emotion from the list we linked to above. Instruct them not to tell their classmates which emotion they’ve chosen. Have students, one by one, model the body language that reflects that emotion

- **Phase III: Compassionate, Learn to protect we are all One**

1. Relate that new territory with some area of your house
2. Draw the part of your house that you feel like in the flower
3. Share with other classmates the characteristics of the chosen animals
4. Why do you like space?
5. How would you protect it?

- **Materials:** What materials will your students need in order to complete the activity?

Notebook and pencil

Speaker with sounds field spring

Video How Bees Can See the Invisible

Other artists who can help visualize and experience other scales and frames

Karl Blossfeldt *Adiantum pedatum* 1898-1926

Paul Strand. *Abstraction, Porch Shadows, Connecticut*, 1916

- **Reflexion:**

We start by opening our eyes and be surprised to have another look, to appreciate that incredible variety of worlds that are constantly offered to us to discover them.

Nature's beauty is a gift that cultivates appreciation and gratitude. When kids are involved in an inquiry environment where they actually get to do the thinking and the talking in how living beings perceive their environment, they are entering the exciting world of biosemiotics. Biosemiotics (from the Greek βίος bios, "life" and σημειωτικός sēmeiōtikos, "observant of signs") is a field of semiotics and biology that studies the prelinguistic meaning-making, or production and interpretation of signs and codes[1] in the biological realm. Photos drawings games will be necessary to understand the activity.

Empathy does not occur naturally in many people. Our fast-paced society does not often encourage us to take a moment to connect with Nature. So it is a conscious choice that we have to make, but the more we practice empathy, the more intuitive it becomes. Compassionate: It is the balance between Cognitive and Emotional Empathy that enables us to act without being overcome with feeling or jumping straight into a problem solving process. "With this kind of empathy we not only understand a person's predicament and feel with them, but are spontaneously moved to help, if needed."