

SITES FOR ESCAPE

AN INTEGRATED MIDDLE SCHOOL VISUAL ART ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

Passing Through: The Allure of the White Mountains

The White Mountains have fascinated and attracted individuals since explorers first saw the mountain peaks while sailing off the coast of New England. Since that time the area has attracted many individuals who came to explore the area, do scientific research, paint the landscape, and make a living. The group that did the most to spread the word about the White Mountains and its unique landscape were the visitors who came to the region for leisure. More sophisticated roads, rail lines, and commercial modes of travel were developed and established. Growing tourism was also supported by the growth in lodging for the travelers. The urban, wealthy travelers were joined by the growing middle class who, by the mid-1850s, were able to afford travel and vacation time to the White Mountains. Middle class tourists came at a time when the railroad made travel was easier; their journey to and time in the area shortened as they traveled a well-trod path. The accommodations they stayed in were far more sophisticated and comfortable than the rustic accommodations of the early travelers. What was once an unknown region became a beloved region because of shared stories and the tourist industry. The White Mountains still attract many to hike, make art, climb and experience what the early visitors discovered.

The activity and essential questions have been designed to meet a range of ages and abilities. They are foundations that may be modified and changed to meet the needs of educators in their classroom and community.

The following website contains information and resources for this activity:
**[plymouth.edu/museum-of-the-white-mountains/exhibitions/
passing-through-the-allure-of-the-white-mountains](http://plymouth.edu/museum-of-the-white-mountains/exhibitions/passing-through-the-allure-of-the-white-mountains)**

Additional images, artifacts and primary documents about the history of the White Mountains:
plymouth.edu/museum-of-the-white-mountains

Essential Questions

- Why is it important to have a location for reflection, peace and quiet?
- What role does nature play in personal well-being?
- What impact do people have on the peace and quiet found in nature?

Media and Materials: Mixed Media Collage

- Paper
- Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Water Containers
- Paint Trays
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Tape

** Materials and resources may be modified to meet the needs of students and teachers.*

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Investigate and explore the aesthetic qualities of the White Mountains that attracted tourists and understand the role those aesthetic qualities and landscape played in their lives.
- Explore and identify personal sites for escape from their daily life and developed areas and make connections to the motivation of tourists to go to the White Mountains for reflection, peace, quiet and escape.
- Investigate and explore their personal site for escape and identify the physical and aesthetic qualities that make it a location for reflection, peace and quiet.
- Investigate, explore, and understand the role their site for escape plays in their lives and express that importance, its aesthetic and physical qualities and value in a narrative mixed media collage.

Description of the Lesson

During the nineteenth century, the White Mountains became a location for people to escape their lives in often noisy and crowded urban areas. The early travelers to the region did not have an easy journey, but as modes of transportation and roads developed more visitors arrived, a tourist industry developed. The White Mountains gave the tourists an escape to nature and put distance between them and the negative aspects of a nineteenth-century urban environment.

This lesson is an exploration and investigation of the role the White Mountains played in giving the upper and middle class an accessible location for escape, the impact increased tourism and industry had on the landscape, and the original reasons for escaping to the White Mountains. The students will explore, investigate and discuss the history of the White Mountains and the impact tourists and industry have had on it. They will make comparisons and connections to locations they personally value as sites for escape, like the early tourists of the White Mountains, and explore and investigate the negative and positive impact visitors and tourists could have on that location. Through their investigation and exploration, the students will identify aesthetic qualities of their personal location that contribute to it as a desired site for reflection, peace, quiet, and escape. The students will visually express this understanding in a mixed media collage that communicates the aesthetic and emotional qualities of their personal site and the role and importance it plays in their life.

Anticipated Length of the Lesson

Estimated class length: 45 minutes

Estimated length of lesson: 4 to 5 days

** Class time may vary from school to school. The sequence may be modified to fit to a school's instructional schedule.*

Sequence of Daily Lessons

The following is an outline of the possible sequence of procedures for the activity. This foundation may be modified as needed by the instructor.

DAY 1: The teacher will introduce the students to the history of the White Mountains, its early tourism and industry and the impact each has had on the region utilizing the exhibition "Passing Through: The Allure of the White Mountains" and its accompanying catalogue, exhibit materials and website. In class, the teacher and students will investigate, explore and discuss the reasons why nineteenth-century travelers came to the White Mountains and what it provided for tourists that their homes could not. In this discussion students will make connections and comparisons to personal sites they identify as their locations for reflection, peace, quiet and escape. They will investigate and discuss the aesthetic qualities that separate the location from undesirable locations and how that location may change if it were visited by large numbers of tourists. Following the discussion, the teacher will demonstrate the materials and process for creating a mixed media collage for the students, discuss ideas for their artwork, the use of imagery and composition to create their personal narratives and give the directions and motivation for the activity. After the demonstration the students will work independently until the end of the class. At the end of the class the teacher will conduct a closure for the day's lesson with the students reflecting the history of the White Mountains and the students' use of imagery, material/media and composition in their mixed media collage to create their personal narratives.

DAY 2-3: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the goals of the activity. The students will work independently until the end of the class. At the end of the class the teacher will conduct a closure for the day's lesson with the students reflecting the history of the White Mountains and the students' use of imagery, material/media and composition in their mixed media collage to create their personal narratives.

DAY 4: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the goals of the activity. The students will finalize their mixed media collages before the end of the class period. At the end of the class the teacher will lead the class in a critique of their completed mixed media collages. The critique will focus on the students' use of visual imagery, composition, elements and principles of art and design to create their mixed media collage that expresses the aesthetic and emotional qualities of their personal site and the role and importance it plays in their life and the meaning and understanding they have gained from the activity and their investigation of the history of the White Mountains.

** Modifications in sequence, estimated length, materials, media and process can be made for this lesson.*

Art History Component

Teacher selected images from the Passing Through: The Allure of the White Mountains exhibition.

*Additional materials and resources may be researched and added by the teacher.

Suggested collage artists

- Romare Bearden

* Additional materials, selected collage images and resources may be researched and added by the teacher. Mixed media collage demonstration resources may be found on the internet at sites such as YouTube and TeacherTube.

Assessment Plan

Teachers may assess students formally and informally and design those assessment strategies using this lesson as a foundation and tailor them to their needs based upon their classroom profiles.

* Recommended assessment should be guided by the essential questions. Did the students explore, engage with, address and interpret the essential questions during the activity and in the artwork?

Vocabulary

Tourism

Narrative

Location

Escape

Visual Narrative

Reflection

Urban

Standards

Visual Arts Standards

Standard 1. Apply appropriate media, techniques, and processes.

Standard 2. Identify and apply the elements of visual art and principles of design.

Standard 3. Choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Standard 4. Understand the arts in relation to history and culture.

Standard 5. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate their own and others' artwork.

Standard 6. Make connections among the visual arts, other disciplines, and daily life.

New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks

SS - 3.II.6.2

Identify and discuss the human geographic features of neighborhoods and places including population density, economic activities, forms of shelter, and modes of transportation and communication.

SS - 3.II.6.4

Discuss the attachments people have for a particular place and region as well as their sense of belonging in certain places and regions.

SS - 3.I4.6.1

Identify and discuss ways people depend upon, use, and alter the physical environment.

SS - 4.I6.6.6

Demonstrate an understanding that people, artifacts, and documents represent links to the past and that they are sources of data from which historical accounts are constructed.

SS - 4.I6.6.10

Discuss the importance of individuals and groups that have made a difference in history, and the significance of character and actions for both good and ill.

SS - 4.I6.10.4

Examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; analyze change over time; and make logical inferences concerning cause and effect.

SS - 4.I6.10.6

Develop and implement research strategies to investigate a given historical topic.

SS - 4.I6.10.11

Use knowledge of the past and the processes of historical analysis to carry out historical research; make comparisons; develop and defend generalizations; draw and support conclusions; construct historical explanations, narratives, and accounts; solve problems; and make informed decisions.

SC - 4.3.10.1

Investigate how human activities, such as reducing the amount of forest cover and increasing the amount and variety of chemicals released into the atmosphere have changed the Earth's land, ocean, and atmosphere.