



Old Materials, New Maps

Description: Students will view [Kimberly Ritchie's installation](#) in *New: The Annual PSU Art Faculty Exhibition – 2020* to gain an understanding of one way that materials can be repurposed into something new; in this case, an art installation! Students will be asked to think of materials that they can repurpose into maps. They will create new maps—constructed out of repurposed materials—that represent real or imagined places.

Materials: computer, projector, scissors, glue/tape/staples, recycled materials available to your classroom community (some examples are cardboard, plastic bottles/containers, fabric scraps, paper scraps, bottlecaps, tin foil, small wood scraps, old ink pads, magazines, discarded bulletin board materials)

Preparation:

Collect available recycled materials (perhaps as a class; each student could be responsible for thinking of and bringing in specific materials from the recycling bin at home).

Decide whether you would like students to create maps that represent real places or imaginary places. Perhaps your class has been learning about the Colonial Times and you would like students to demonstrate their knowledge about typical colonial settlements, what types of areas and structures exist there, and where those areas and structures might be located in the settlement.

Depending upon the age of your class, a few mathematics topics that may connect well are measuring with rulers, ratios and scaling, and spatial reasoning.

Display all materials without suggesting uses for them; let the students figure out that part. Also provide scissors, glue, tape, staples, and any other materials necessary for construction. Markers, crayons, colored pencils, and paint could be helpful and fun additions to the materials available to students, but are not necessary, especially if the collected recycled materials are already colorful.

Procedure:

Part 1: Project Ritchie's installation for the whole class to see. Ask the class questions such as:

- Describe what you see in this artwork.
- What could it be made out of?
- What do you think the artist is thinking about?



Kimberly Ritchie Vatn, *Accordion Book*
Installation, *Altered Maps, Icelandic Rocks*, 2019

Use the students' observations to guide the discussion toward the point that Ritchie's piece is comprised of altered maps of Iceland. It is an installation, which is a 3-dimensional experience, inspired by Ritchie's time spent traveling in Iceland.

Part 2: Present the collected materials to the class and explain that they are going to have the opportunity to make their own maps. Specify whether they should be creating maps of imaginary places or maps based on real or historical places. Include instructions pertaining to connections made to math topics.

Part 3: Set students free to explore, select, and transform materials into their own maps! Perhaps they will choose to connect their maps to follow a journey between worlds or form a country.