



Mini Exhibitions

Students will create their own miniature exhibitions over several class periods. The parts of this project include finding two meaningful photographs, constructing a small model of a repurposed place, drawing a plan for a creative new place, and producing four pieces of writing to accompany each artistic component of the exhibition. Length and content of writings will be similar to those that Sanders included in her exhibit. Sanders categorized her work into four parts: protected, natural, repurposed, and creative. Students will create and write for each category.

Students name their own exhibitions. They could, but don't need to, choose a theme for the project. For example, an exhibition themed "Redwood Forest" might include redwood trees, banana slugs, which live in the forest, and a plan for a new kind of tourist cabin in the area. Other themes could include pink, Kentucky, winter, and so on.

To present the miniature exhibitions, students' work can be organized in several different ways. Each student can keep his or her exhibit components separate from other students', or all works could be combined. A larger exhibit containing the entire class's work could be organized by student, by theme, or by category (protected, natural, repurposed, and creative). The teacher and class may decide to take photos of students' works and make a digital exhibit, or perhaps the photos and writings could be printed out and made a part of a physical exhibit. These decisions depend on factors such as who the audience is, how they are going to view the exhibit(s), available technology, and available physical space.

Protected

Description: Each student finds a photograph of a national park, which is a protected place. Highlighting what is meaningful about that particular place, students then write a paragraph or two based on specific questions about the national park.

Materials: computers with access to the internet, word processing software or paper and writing utensil

Procedure:

Part 1: Students use the internet to find a photo of any national park. To ensure that students are only using photos with appropriate copyright permissions, they can follow these steps to filter search results:

Enter a search term on Google Images. Under the search bar, click “Settings,” then “Advanced Search.” Scroll to the bottom of the page. Click the dropdown menu next to “Usage Rights” and select “Creative Commons licenses.” Then, repeat the image search.

While searching for a photo, students should be thinking of the following questions:

- What does the photo show? What does it tell about the national park?
- Does the photo show something specific that is protected?
- Will this photo give you enough information and content to write about?

Part 2: Based on the photo chosen in Part 1, students write or type 1-2 paragraphs about the following:

- Why did this place come to be protected?
- How did this place become protected? What steps had to be taken?
- What about this place is being protected?
- Why should (or shouldn't) this place continue to be protected?

Natural

Description: Each student finds a photograph of one type of animal. Students then write a paragraph or two about the animal based on one or more given prompts.

Materials: computers with access to the internet, word processing software or paper and writing utensil

Procedure:

Part 1: Students use the internet to find a photo of one type of animal. To ensure that students are only using photos with appropriate copyright permissions, they can follow these steps to filter search results:

Enter a search term on Google Images. Under the search bar, click “Settings,” then “Advanced Search.” Scroll to the bottom of the page. Click the dropdown menu next to “Usage Rights” and select “Creative Commons licenses.” Then, repeat the image search.

While searching for a photo, students should be thinking of the following questions:

- What is special or unique about this animal? Does the photo showcase these characteristics?
- If this animal is important to a culture, religion, or region, does the photo convey this?
- Does the photo highlight any specific evolutionary characteristics of the animal?

Part 2: Based on the photo chosen in Part 1, students write or type 1-2 paragraphs about one of the following prompts:

- Are there any very interesting or little-known facts about this creature? What is the purpose, origin, or importance of said fact?
- Does this animal have a special meaning in any particular culture, religion, or region? How did this special meaning come to be and what is its importance in today’s world?
- Research the origins and evolution of this animal. What kind of creature did it start out as and when? How did it evolve over time? Are there any known reasons for the evolutionary changes?

Repurposed

Description: Each student uses repurposed materials to create a small model of an original and innovative place. Students then write a paragraph or two about how the place was made and what its purpose is.

Materials: repurposed materials, glue/tape/stapler, word processing software or paper and writing utensil

Preparation: As a class, collect materials that can be repurposed. There are so many materials that can be used for this activity. Some suggestions are recycled materials (bottles, cans, paper, cardboard, tin foil) and nature materials (sticks, leaves, pine needles, acorns). Students and teachers can bring items from home, collect them from around the school, and go outside to gather nature materials.

Procedure:

Part 1: Using the collected repurposed materials, students construct models of an original and innovative place. While planning and building, students should be thinking about the following:

- What can this place be used for?
- Who or what is it for?
- It might not be possible to construct all parts of the space with the given materials, so use your imagination to think of what else you would add if you were building a life-size place. Would there be walls inside? Furniture? Keep these ideas in mind for the next activity, "Creative".
- What is original and innovative about this place?

Part 2: Students write or type 1-2 paragraphs about the following:

- What materials did you use? Why did you choose to use them? What made them useful?
- What is this place and what purpose(s) does it serve?
- What is original and innovative about this place?

Creative

Description: Each student creates a digital or paper floorplan of the new place constructed during the “Repurposed” activity. Students then write a paragraph or two about why they designed the place the way they did and what purpose(s) the place serves.

Materials: computers with access to the internet or graph paper with ruler and writing utensil, word processing software (optional) or paper and writing utensil/coloring supplies

Preparation: Complete the “Repurposed” activity. If using the online floor planner tool, watch [this video](#) to learn about its basic functions.

Procedure:

Part 1: Using either the [online floor planner tool](#) or graph paper, a ruler, and a writing utensil, students create a floorplan of the new places they created during the “Repurposed” activity. As they work, they should be thinking about the following:

- If your place is a building of some sort, how is the inside set up? Where are the walls and doors?
- What details can you add to your place that you couldn’t add during the “Repurposed” activity?
- How do these additions make your place more unique and innovative?

Part 2: Students write or type 1-2 paragraphs about the following:

- What did you add to your place?
- What is the purpose of the additions you made?
- How do the additions you made make your place more unique and innovative?