

Mosaic Metaphor

Alabama geologic & geographic formations and creating mini pebble mosaics

Lesson Designer: Enid Probst

Grade Level: 4th through 5th grade

Enduring Understanding:

Artists experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media and art-making approaches.

Essential Question:

How can art, through the use of materials and techniques, demonstrate a scientific concept such as the web-of-life?

Arts Discipline Standards: Visual Arts

Alabama Anchor Standard Creating 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Alabama Anchor Standard Responding 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Alabama Anchor Standard Connecting 11: Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical context.

Non-Arts Discipline Standards: Math, Science

Math M.3.9.1: Define geometric patterns

Math M.4.5: Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule

SCI. Earth Systems 4.12: Construct explanations by citing evidence found in patterns of rock formations in rock layers that Earth changes over time.

Requirements: Materials and Supplies:

1. A collection of light and dark materials such as common pebbles and small stones
2. Polyvinyl acetate glue such as Weldbond; Elmer's Tacky Glue or Aleene's Tacky Glue will also work
3. 4 x 4 inch substrate such as a ceramic tile or ½ inch Styrofoam or ¼ inch wood, for each student. The wood should be sealed with a 50/50 mix of glue and water; the Styrofoam thin plastic wrap should be removed.
4. Markers
5. Black acrylic paint and paintbrush (both are optional)



Requirements: Prerequisite Knowledge – Arts:

Art Vocabulary: relief, symmetrical & asymmetrical balance, texture, pattern, unity, composition, negative and positive space, mosaic.

Understanding of line, shape, volume, contour drawing, and ground.

Requirements: Prerequisite Knowledge – Non-Arts:

Non-arts vocabulary addressed: Alabama geological formations, river ecology and watershed, flora & fauna, river pollution

Procedures: Introductory Activity:

Discuss the dependency of life forms on the sun, water and each other (web of life). Through the use of art, they will demonstrate how things working together provide a picture of completeness as opposed to just one thing alone.

Procedures: Sequence of Activities:

1. On the diagonal of the 4 x 4 inch substrate – create a contour drawing of a fish or leaf.
2. Separate the pebbles and small stones into light and dark piles
3. Decide on either the light or dark materials for the design. Glue one or 2 pieces down and ask students if 2 pieces complete the whole drawing.
4. Putting the pieces as close as possible and within the contour, continue filling in the drawing using either all light or all dark materials. Adhere the material by putting a dab of glue on the pebble.
5. Fill in the ground with the opposite color. If the ground is dark, paint the surface with black paint and let dry before adhering the stones. Place the pieces close together and try not to let the pieces hang over the edge of the substrate.

Culminating Activity: Performance Task:

Students successfully placed the pieces to make a pattern of a fish or leaf shape, and stayed within the contour.

Culminating Activity: Evaluation:

Questions to discuss:

1. What would it look like if only a few dark pieces and a few light pieces were on the substrate?
Could they distinguish a form?
2. How do the pieces support each other?
3. Each piece has a relationship with the one next to it. How does this close relationship mimic the natural world?



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