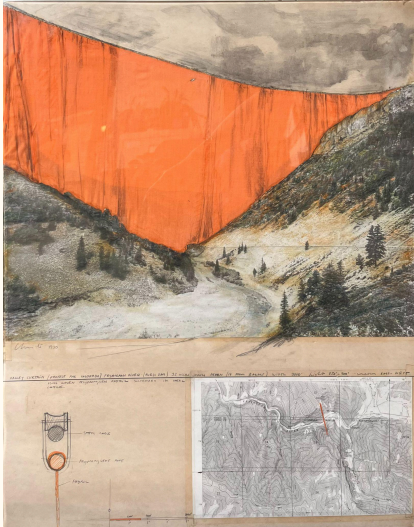


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Lesson Plan: Imagining Landscape Interventions



Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Valley Curtain*, 1970. Mixed media. Collection of Barbara Babcock Millhouse.



Sample imagined landscape intervention with the Reynolda Conservatory.

Students use a mixed media representation of Christo's *Valley Curtain*, 1970 as a starting point for exploring landscape interventions. Using photographs of your school landscape (photographed by teacher and shared in advance), students will envision an intervention in the landscape. Using permanent markers and a transparency sheet, students will draw their intervention over a photograph of the landscape.

Essential Questions

- What stories are embedded within a landscape?

Consider:

- How can a landscape intervention highlight environmental issues or enhance the viewer's experience?

Grade Level/Course

Grades 3-12

Subject Areas

Visual Art

with potential connections to Social Studies, Science, ELA

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Estimated Time

4 Hours: Planning, Sketching, Execution

Media Type

8.5x11 Printed Landscape Images

Objectives

Visual Arts

- **Visual Arts: Create** - Students will explore the use of materials and techniques to communicate ideas and emotions in artwork related to environmental themes.
- **Visual Arts: Connect** - Investigate the relationship between visual arts and environmental science, focusing on landscape intervention artists.

Elementary and Middle Visual Art Specific Standards

- **Connect: 3-8.CN.1** Relate visual arts ideas and works with personal, societal, cultural, historical, and daily life contexts, including diverse and marginalized groups. **3.CN.2.1** Categorize a variety of artists and art careers. **5.CN.2.2** Give examples of visual artworks or artists that were innovative for their time
- **Create: 3-8.CR.1** - Create original visual arts ideas...and **3-4.CR.1.1** Use imaginative and expressive processes to generate ideas, plan solutions, and develop personal artwork. **3.CR.1.2** Create original art from realistic sources of inspiration. **3+5-6.CR.2.1** Create personal art in the style or based on the ideas of another artist or artwork.
- **Respond: 3-8.RE.1** Analyze visual artworks from a variety of styles, cultures, and genres using content-specific vocabulary.

High School Visual Arts Specific Standards

- **Connect: B+I+AC+AD.CN.1** Relate visual artist ideas and works with personal, societal, cultural, historical, and daily life contexts including diverse and marginalized groups. **AC.CN.1.1** Describe how the visual arts reflect society, culture, and politics. **B.CN.1.2** Apply concepts from other content areas to support the creation and presentation of visual arts.

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- **Create: B+I+AC+AD.CR.1** Create original visual arts ideas and 2-D and 3-D artworks, including drawing, painting, printmaking, fibers, sculpture, ceramics, and digital media, using tools safely and appropriately, independently or collaboratively. **B.CR.1.1** Experiment with ideas, forms, and meaning to create art. **B+AC+AD.CR.2** Adapt original visual arts ideas and works, and those of peers and other artists, independently and collaboratively.
- **Respond: B+I+AC+AD.RE.1** Analyze visual artworks from a variety of styles, cultures, and genres using content-specific vocabulary. **B.RE.1.2** Analyze how visual art and design is used to convey meaning. **AC.RE.1.2** Interpret intent or purpose from visual art, given the historic and cultural context of the visual artist or style. **B+I+AC+AD.RE.2** Evaluate visual artworks using content-specific vocabulary.

Teachers can also incorporate evaluation-based standards under the **Respond** category or **Present** standards through including that in critical discussion of example artworks, having students present their work, and holding a group critique.

Science

- **Earth and Environmental Science: Ecosystems** - Analyze how human activities impact ecosystems, using landscape art as a case study or way to communicate to the public ideas about the environment.

Depending on interventions, the project could incorporate these specific standards:

- **ESS.4.3** Understand changes caused by human impact on the environment
- **ESS.7.1** Understand the atmosphere and how the cycling of water relates to Earth's weather and climate
- **ESS.7.2** Understand the reciprocal relationship between the atmosphere and humans
- **ESS.8.4** Understand the environmental implications associated with the various methods of obtaining, managing, and using energy resources
- **Earth and Environmental Science: Ecosystems** ESS.EES.5 Evaluate how human consumption patterns impact Earth's systems.

Social Studies

Historical Perspectives - Explore historical contexts of environmental movements and how they are reflected in landscape art.

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Geography: Human-Environment Interaction - Discuss the impact of landscape interventions on human-environment interactions throughout history.

Economics: Projects could relate to natural resources related to the local community.

Behavioral Science: Projects could explore the interaction of culture and the landscape.

Depending on interventions and conversation, the project could incorporate these specific standards:

- **Geography Strand: 5.G.1.1** Explain the relationship between location, physical environment, and human activity in the United States
- **Economics Strand: 3.E.1.2** Explain how the natural resources of a region impact the production and consumption of goods in local communities
- **Behavioral Science Strand: 5+8.B.1.1** Explain how traditions, social structure, and artistic expression have influenced cultural development of the United States

English Language Arts

If project includes independent or group research on artists creating interventions, standards in these areas will be incorporated:

ELA: Reading: Informational Text standards - Analyze texts that discuss environmental themes, connecting literature to artistic expression.

ELA: Writing: Informative Texts standards- Compose informative texts about landscape intervention artists and their environmental impact.

ELA: Writing: Research - Conduct research on a specific artist and present findings, integrating visual elements.

Possible Interdisciplinary Connections

- **Civics and Government: Community Engagement**- Examine how landscape intervention projects promote community awareness of environmental issues.
- **Technology: Digital Art and Environmental Awareness** - Create digital artworks that highlight environmental challenges and encourage viewer engagement.

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Background Knowledge

Definition and Purpose: Landscape interventions are intentional modifications to natural landscapes that often incorporate artistic elements. These interventions aim to provoke thought and reflection on humanity's relationship with nature, particularly regarding ecological sustainability and the impacts of human activities on natural systems. By altering the physical terrain, introducing new vegetation, or inserting contrasting materials, these projects create a dialogue between the environment and the viewer.

Historical Context: The concept of landscape interventions has roots in various movements, including land art from the 1960s and 70s, which sought to use the landscape itself as a canvas.

Reynolda's founding president, Barbara Babcock Millhouse, has in her personal collection a mixed-media collage, *Valley Curtain* (1970), by conceptual artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude. They sold sketches like this mixed media collage to help fund the large-scale landscape intervention, *Valley Curtain* (1970-72).

Artists like Robert Smithson and Andy Goldsworthy created land-based art that emphasized the connection between art and the environment. Their works highlight how human perception shapes our understanding of natural spaces.

In recent years, the rise of environmental awareness and sustainability has shifted the focus of landscape interventions towards addressing ecological issues. Projects now often serve as a critique of unsustainable practices and aim to raise public awareness about environmental challenges, such as climate change, habitat destruction, and urbanization.

Key Themes:

1. **Art and Nature:** Landscape interventions blend artistic expression with environmental stewardship, inviting viewers to engage with the landscape in new ways.
2. **Ecological Awareness:** Many interventions serve as a commentary on ecological issues, encouraging reflection on how human actions affect natural systems.
3. **Community Engagement:** These projects can foster community involvement, promoting discussions about local ecosystems and sustainable practices.

Examples of Landscape Interventions:

- **The High Line in New York City:** A repurposed elevated railway transformed into a public park that integrates natural elements within an urban environment.

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- **Storm King Art Center:** A sculpture park that harmonizes art with the landscape, encouraging visitors to consider the relationship between art, nature, and sustainability.

In summary, landscape interventions serve as a powerful tool for education and advocacy, merging artistic practices with ecological awareness to inspire dialogue and promote a deeper understanding of our environment. Teachers can leverage these concepts to engage students in critical thinking about the role of art in addressing environmental issues.

About Reynolda

Completed in 1917, Reynolda House Museum of American Art in Winston-Salem, North Carolina was originally the home of Katharine Smith and R.J. Reynolds, founder of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Promising a healthier lifestyle, the more than 34,000-square-foot historic home was the centerpiece of a 1,067-acre estate and model farm. Over 100 people worked at Reynolda in the early 20th century. The model farm used modern technology to grow crops and raise animals. In the 1960s, Reynolda became a museum of American art and today it connects people to the beauty and complexity of the American story through its history and collections.

The museum holds more than 6,000 historic objects along with its collection of world-renowned American art on view in the historic house and special exhibitions in the Babcock Gallery. Spanning 250 years, the collection is a chronology of American art, and features artists such as Georgia O’Keeffe, Frederic Edwin Church, Alexander Calder, Romare Bearden, Lee Krasner, Stuart Davis, Martin Johnson Heade, Jacob Lawrence, John Singer Sargent, Andy Warhol and Grant Wood. Works rotate throughout the historic house frequently, and the Museum keeps [a listing of current works of American art on view here](#). View [a listing of decorative arts on view here](#).

Vocabulary

This vocabulary list will help students and teachers engage with the concepts of landscape interventions effectively and enhance their discussions around the topic.

Landscape Intervention: Intentional modifications made to natural landscapes, often incorporating artistic elements to provoke thought and reflection.

Ecological Sustainability: The capacity to maintain the health of ecosystems over time, balancing human needs with environmental protection.

Artistic Elements: Components of art, such as color, form, texture, and structure, used to enhance or transform a landscape.

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Terrain: The physical features of a landscape, including its relief, slope, and natural formations.

Vegetation: Plant life or plant communities in a particular area, which can be manipulated in landscape interventions.

Natural Environment: The ecosystems and landscapes that exist without significant human influence, including forests, rivers, mountains, and plains.

Human Impact: The effects of human activities on the environment, including pollution, urbanization, and resource depletion.

Public Engagement: Involvement of the community in discussions and activities related to environmental awareness and landscape changes.

Land Art: A movement in which artists use natural materials and landscapes as their medium, creating works that are integrated into the environment.

Habitat: The natural home or environment of an organism, which can be affected by landscape interventions.

Contrast: The difference between two or more elements, such as natural and artificial materials, used to provoke thought.

Reflection: The process of thinking deeply about a subject, often prompted by artistic or environmental experiences.

Urbanization: The growth and development of urban areas, which can impact natural landscapes and ecosystems.

Biodiversity: The variety of life in a particular habitat or ecosystem, which can be supported or diminished by landscape interventions.

Site-Specific: Art or interventions created for a particular location, taking into account its unique characteristics and context.

Materials

- Printed Landscape Images on 8.5 x 11" paper, Thumbnail sheet per student (of 4 small images of chosen landscape image) on 8.5 x 11" paper, Transparency Film (we used [Grafix Duralar Wet Media film](#)), Permanent Markers (Black & Color), Rubbing Alcohol, Q-tips, and additional drawing supplies for thumbnail sketches

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- Source 1: Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Valley Curtain*, 1970-72.
<https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/valley-curtain/> and Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Wrapped Coast*, 1968-69.
<https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/wrapped-coast/>
- Source 2: Andy Goldsworthy, 1956. Earth Artist.
[Andy Goldsworthy - Earth Artist and his Process - YouTube](#)
- Source 3: David Zinn, 1973. Street Artist.
[Chalk Artist Creatures Charming Creatures On City Sidewalks](#)
- Source 4: Thomas Dambo, 1979. Recycle Artist and Activist
www.thomasdambo.com
[The Six Forgotten Giants - Recycle Sculpture Treasure Hunt](#)

Student Scaffolding (*optional*)

Students should possess a foundational understanding of the following skills: basic drawing techniques, scale, composition, art elements, and design principles.

Lesson Procedures

Preparation Before the Lesson

1. **Gather Materials:**
 - Printed images of various landscapes or areas around the school property (ensure a variety of natural settings). Full size (8.5 x 11)
 - Prepared thumbnail sheets with 4 smaller, identical landscape photographs on each. Students can use this for drafting various ideas.
 - Transparency films (sized to fit over the printed images).
 - Permanent markers (various colors).
 - Optional: additional art supplies (colored pencils, watercolors) for extension activities.
2. **Set Up the Classroom:**
 - Arrange desks or tables for easy access to materials.
 - Provide enough space for students to work comfortably.
3. **Create a Sample:**
 - Prepare a sample of the activity to demonstrate to the class, including an example of a landscape intervention on a transparency.

Lesson Steps

1. **Introduction (15-20 minutes):**

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- Begin with a discussion about landscape interventions. Explain the concept and purpose, using examples to illustrate.
 - Look at and discuss Christo's *Valley Curtain*. Compare his work to at least one other artist from the suggested sources.
 - Show the prepared sample to give students a visual reference.
2. **Distribute Materials (5 minutes):**
- Hand out printed landscape images and transparency films to each student.
 - Provide permanent markers and any additional art supplies.
3. **Explain the Task (5 minutes):**
- Instruct students to place the transparency film over their printed image.
 - Explain that they will create a landscape intervention by drawing on the transparency, focusing on elements that reflect artistic interpretation and ecological themes.
4. **Brainstorming (10 minutes):**
- Allow students time to brainstorm ideas for their interventions. Encourage them to think about how they can alter the landscape to address environmental issues or enhance viewer engagement.
 - Provide thumbnails of the photographs for quick sketches, allowing students to play with different ideas without having to erase.
5. **Drawing Phase (30-40 minutes):**
- Instruct students to begin drawing their interventions on the transparency film using permanent markers.
 - Circulate around the room to provide support and feedback as they work.
6. **Reflection and Sharing (15-20 minutes):**
- Once the drawings are complete, have students share their work with a partner or small group, explaining their interventions and the ideas behind them.
 - Encourage students to discuss how their interventions relate to environmental issues or enhance the original landscape.
7. **Class Discussion (10-15 minutes):**
- Bring the class back together for a group discussion. Ask students to share insights from their partner discussions and highlight common themes or unique ideas.
 - Discuss the importance of landscape interventions in fostering awareness of ecological sustainability.
8. **Wrap-Up and Clean-Up (10 minutes):**
- Allow time for students to clean up their work areas and store their creations safely.
 - Conclude with a brief recap of what they learned about landscape interventions and the impact of art on environmental awareness.

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Assessment and Extension

- Consider assessing students based on their creativity, understanding of landscape interventions, and ability to articulate their ideas.
- As an extension, students could research real-world landscape interventions and present their findings to the class.
- As an extension, students could translate their landscape intervention drawings into a three-dimensional model, allowing them to explore spatial relationships and enhance their understanding of design and ecological impact.

Adaptations

1. Simplified Materials

- **Alternative Drawing Surfaces:** If transparency films are not available, students can use plain paper or cardstock for their drawings. They can still use markers or colored pencils to depict their landscape interventions on a printed photograph.
- **Digital Tools:** For classrooms with access to technology, consider using drawing software or apps (like Canva or Sketchbook) where students can create their interventions digitally.

2. Limited Artistic Skills

- **Templates and Stencils:** Provide templates or stencils of common landscape features (trees, hills, buildings) that students can trace or modify in their drawings. This can help those who feel less confident in their drawing abilities.
- **Guided Drawing Sessions:** Offer step-by-step instructions for drawing specific elements of the landscape intervention. Use a projector or smartboard to guide students through the process.

3. Differentiated Expectations

- **Varied Complexity:** Allow students to choose the complexity of their interventions. Some can create simpler designs while others tackle more intricate concepts based on their comfort level and skills.
- **Focus on Concept:** Emphasize the conceptual aspect of the assignment over artistic skill. Encourage students to express their ideas about ecological issues in whatever way they feel comfortable, whether through sketches, words, or diagrams.

4. Group Collaboration

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- **Pair or Small Group Work:** Have students work in pairs or small groups to create a single landscape intervention. This can allow students with differing skill levels to support each other and combine ideas.
- **Role Assignments:** Assign roles within the group (e.g., sketch artist, presenter, researcher) to ensure all students can contribute according to their strengths.

5. Flexible Timeframes

- **Extended Time:** For students who may need more time due to learning differences or other challenges, provide extended periods to complete their drawings and reflections.
- **Checkpoints:** Implement intermediate checkpoints where students can share drafts or ideas for feedback, reducing pressure and allowing for adjustments along the way.

6. Resource Availability

- **Supplies Donation:** If resources are a barrier, consider a supply donation drive where students can bring in materials for others who may not have access.
- **Community Involvement:** Reach out to local businesses or community centers for art supply donations or to facilitate a materials swap.

7. ELA + Arts Integration

- **Research:** Ask students to research a variety of artists who create landscape interventions (This could also be a precursor to their own projects).
- **Presentation:** Students can present images of an artist's work and briefly discuss the artist's ideas.

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Additional Resources

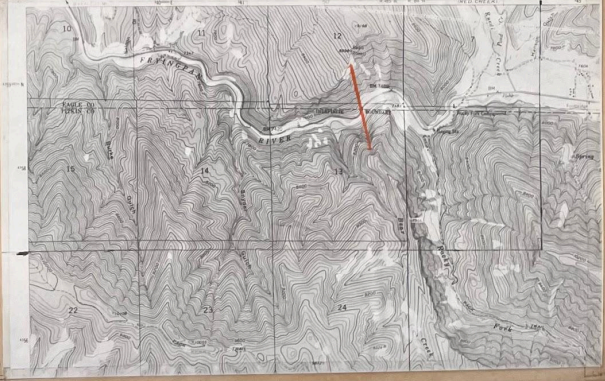
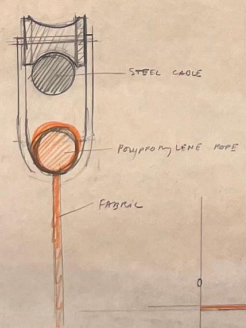
1

Christo and Jeanne Claude, *Valley Curtain*, 1970. Mixed Media. Collection of Barbara Babcock Millhouse.






Christo 1970


VALLEY CURTAIN (PROJECT FOR COLORADO) FREYINGHAM RIVER (RUEDI DAM) 32 MILES FROM ASPEN (19 FROM BASALT) WIDTH 3200' H-ALT 850'-900' - SLOPE EAST - WEST
USING WOVEN POLYPROPYLENE FABRIC SUSPENDED IN STEEL CABLE.



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2	Christo and Jeanne Claude, <i>The Umbrellas</i> , 1984-91. https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/the-umbrellas/
	 An aerial photograph of a park in Madrid, Spain, where hundreds of bright blue umbrellas are planted in the grass, creating a vibrant pattern across the landscape.
3	Christo and Jeanne Claude, <i>Wrapped Coast</i> , 1968-69. https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/wrapped-coast/?view=info
	 A photograph of a rugged coastline where the cliffs and rocks are completely covered in a thick, white plastic sheeting, creating a stark, monochromatic scene.
4	Christo and Jeanne Claude, <i>Surrounded Islands</i> , 1983. https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/surrounded-islands/
	 An aerial view of a coastal area where several small islands are completely encircled by a bright pink plastic sheeting, floating in the water.

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5	Christo and Jeanne Claude, <i>Wrapped Trees</i> , 1997-98. https://christojeanneclaude.net/artworks/wrapped-trees/
	

6	Mark Osborne, <i>Landscape Intervention 1</i> , 2012.
	

7	Andy Goldsworthy, <i>Screen</i> , 1998. Image can be found at https://barbarapicci.com/2022/03/17/screen-by-andy-goldsworthy/
	