South Dakota Artists Curriculum Unit

Ada Caldwell
“Perspectives in Nature”

Provided by the South Dakota Art Museum
Brookings, South Dakota
Unit of Study: Ada Caldwell, painter

Title of Lesson Plan: Perspectives in Nature

Grade Level: 3 – 5
Science:

5.P.3.3 Students are able to describe basic properties of light.
South Dakota Content Standards

Fine Arts:

Visual Arts Standard Two 3-4
Students will understand selected techniques which give artwork detail.

Visual Arts Standard Two 5-8
Students will describe the various techniques which give artwork definition and detail.
South Dakota Content Standards

Geometry:

3.G.1.2 Students are able to identify points, lines, line segments, and rays.

4.G.1.2 Students are able to identify parallel, perpendicular, and intersecting lines.

4.G.2.1 Students are able to compare geometric figures using size, shape, orientation, congruence, and similarity.
Assessment Strategies

- Class discussion
- Evaluation of student writing using 6+1 Writing Traits as a guide
- Identification of key art and geometric terms
- Creating a layered landscape portrait
Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about South Dakota artist Ada Caldwell.
- Students will evaluate the painting using VTS techniques.
- Students will define geometric terms like plane, size, shape.
- Students will define art terms like: dominant color, cool colors, overlapping, geometric shapes vs. organic shapes, background vs. foreground, depth, and asymmetrical balance.
- Students will create a landscape implementing various aspects of geometry and art techniques.
Time Required

- One class period of 45 minutes

Materials/Technology Needed

- Ada Caldwell painting: untitled (mountain landscape) SD Art Museum reference number 1977.03.07
- Journals
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.
Background Information

- Ada Caldwell taught art at Yankton College from 1898-1899 and then at South Dakota State from 1899-1936. She loved to paint a variety of landscapes; this painting is one that incorporates elements of geography, geometry, and several visual techniques of painting.
Lesson Description

- Show students the untitled painting by Ada Caldwell that has the SD Art Museum reference number of 1977.03.07. Have students write in their journals about the print using a variety of VTS questions like:
  - What all do you see?
  - What is the first thing that you noticed?
  - What would you title this picture?
  - What do you smell?
  - What do you hear?
  - How does this picture make you feel?

- After students have written their evaluation of this painting in their journals, discuss as a class.
Lesson Description continued

- Next, identify geometric and key art terms (listed under objectives) illustrating them using the Caldwell print. A good resource to use to define these art terms is located online at Harcourt Multimedia Art Glossary site listed below (if you have an in-focus projector the online art glossary would be a good resource to show students because of the examples they use).
Lesson Description continued

- Have students think about a particular landscape - outside the classroom or their bedroom window, from a vacation, etc. They will be illustrating that landscape implementing the various terms that were taught earlier (foreground, background, depth, overlapping, organic and geometric shapes, etc). First have students sketch out their landscape, then to add depth, students can use crayons, markers, construction paper, etc. to create their desired look.

- A more detailed description of an art project similar to this is located at the Crayola website under Landscape Layered Collage (see website below). This would be more detailed than what is listed under this lesson.

- The objective of this lesson using Caldwell’s print is to illustrate their understanding of key terms and applying them in their landscape picture.
Enrichment

- Students could incorporate a discussion about how people and their environments co-exist (science discussion). Have students discuss how people have affected the environment from this painting. Have students compare this interaction between nature and people to a growing South Dakota city (i.e. Sioux Falls, Brandon, Tea, or community growth in the Black Hills).
Bibliography/Resources

- Caldwell Painting Collection at the South Dakota Art Museum
  - Ada Caldwell painting: untitled (mountain landscape) SD Art Museum reference number 1977.03.07


Ada Caldwell Presentation to Students
Ada Caldwell

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Ada Caldwell

- Born September 28, 1869
- Died 1938
- Attended University of Nebraska and Chicago Art Institute
- In 1898, accepted position as head of Art Department at Yankton College
Ada Caldwell

- 1899
  - Professor of Art and head of the Art Department at South Dakota State College (now South Dakota State University)
  - Set up the College Art Club which was open to students and faculty
  - Put together a traveling art exhibit every year for the Art Department
    - Open to public
    - No admission charge
Ada Caldwell

- Talented in many areas of art such as drawing and painting with watercolor and oil
- Taught Harvey Dunn when he attended South Dakota State College
- Encouraged Dunn to attend Chicago Art Institute
Bibliography

- South Dakota Art Museum Collection
  - Ada Caldwell

- South Dakota Print Collection at the South Dakota Art Museum
  - Ada Caldwell print: Missouri Cabin
  - Ada Caldwell print: Trees, Rice Lake, WI

*For more information contact the South Dakota Art Museum*
untitled (mountain landscape)

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Examples of Ada Caldwell’s Artwork
Missouri Cabin

Image Courtesy of the South Dakota Art Museum
Trees, Rice Lake, WI