UNIT OF STUDY: Harvey Dunn, painter

TITLE OF LESSON PLAN: Weather on the Plains

GRADE LEVEL: 3-5

SOUTH DAKOTA CONTENT STANDARDS:

U.S. History:
• 4.US.1.2 Students are able to identify basic environmental, economic, cultural, and population issues of concern to South Dakota.

Geography:
• 5.G.2.1 Students are able to describe how climate and geography influenced the way of life of Native American tribes and the movement and activities of settlers.

Science:
• 4.E.1.2 Students are able to describe how weather conditions and phenomena occur and can be predicted.
• 4.S.1.1 Students are able to describe how people continue to invent new ways of doing things, solving problems, and getting things done.

Writing:
• 4.W.1.3 Students can compose a paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting details, and a conclusion.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES:
• Class discussion
• Classroom observation of work behaviors
• Evaluation of student writing using 6+1 Writing Traits as a guide

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
• Students will learn about South Dakota artist Harvey Dunn.
• Students will observe how Dunn portrayed weather through his use of color and type of cloud formations.
• Students will analyze the emotions being depicted in the painting.
• Students will identify the basic cloud structures.
• Students will predict the weather based on cloud formations.
• Students will explain the impact technology has had on weather forecasting.

TIME REQUIRED:
• One class period about 30 - 45 minutes long that could be used in conjunction with a unit on weather.
MATERIALS/TECHNOLOGY NEEDED:
• Harvey Dunn Paintings: “The Prairie is My Garden”, “Just a Few Drops of Rain”, and “Storm Front”
• Paper
• Pen/pencil

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Harvey Dunn is an artist who grew up on the South Dakota prairie near Manchester, SD in the late 1800’s. He is widely known for his depictions of prairie life as he remembered it from his childhood. He captured many of the successes and struggles found in living on the prairie including the weather’s impact on daily life.

LESSON DESCRIPTION:
• Review the different types of cloud formations and how they can be used to anticipate different types of weather.
• Show students the paintings by Harvey Dunn (“The Prairie is My Garden”, “Just a Few Drops of Rain”, and “Storm Front”). Have students write in a journal type format to analyze how the author’s use of color and cloud shape evoke different emotions in each painting. Also, why does weather cause such strong emotional reactions (paintings, photos, real-life)?
• After students complete their reflections, discuss as a class the emotions associated with each painting.
• Ask students to think about what it would have been like living in an era where technology was not available to provide any real forecast capabilities (or the ability to send and receive those forecasts). How would a person plan activities (i.e. like planting) or seek shelter without any notice?
• Have students discuss how life would be different today without the technology we have today to forecast the weather.

ENRICHMENT:
Students could complete an online activity where they forecast weather based on cloud information. The activity is located at <http://weathereye.kgan.com/cadet/forecast/figgerbottom.html>.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES:
• Dunn Painting Collection at the South Dakota Art Museum
  • Harvey Dunn Paintings: “The Prairie is My Garden”, “Just a Few Drops of Rain”, and “Storm Front”