UNIT OF STUDY: Robert Aldern, painter

TITLE OF LESSON PLAN: Varying Perspectives

GRADE LEVEL: 3-5

SOUTH DAKOTA CONTENT STANDARDS:
Fine Arts:
• Visual Arts Standard One 3-4 – Students will describe how visual arts tell stories, express moods, or convey ideas.
• 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.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES:
• Class discussion
• Observation using VTS
• Demonstration of understanding for foreground, middle ground, and background
• Creation of an art project graded by requirements in a rubric

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
• Students will learn about South Dakota artist Robert Aldern.
• Students will evaluate the art piece using VTS techniques.
• Students will differentiate foreground, middle ground and background.
• Students will illustrate images found in the foreground, middle ground and background.
• Students will create a ripped paper art project showing images from different perspectives.

TIME REQUIRED:
• One class period of 45 minutes

MATERIALS/TECHNOLOGY NEEDED:
• Image of Robert Aldern painting: “Plowed Field With Cows”
• Construction paper
• White paper (for the base of the project)
• Glue
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Robert Aldern is known for his various church art by doing a variety of projects commissioned by various churches and businesses. He is also known for his series of prairie horizons. This lesson features some of those images.

LESSON DESCRIPTION:
• Show students images of the following work from Robert Aldern: “Plowed Field With Cows”.
• Using VTS observation, have students answer questions like:
  • What do you see?
  • What is in the distance? How do you know?
  • Describe the artist’s techniques.
  • What emotions do you feel looking at this painting?
  • How does the artist show distance?
• Discuss the answers to these questions as a class.
• Explain to students the difference between foreground, middle ground, and background.
  • There is a good illustration of foreground and background on the Multimedia Art Glossary link listed below.
• Students will be creating a ripped paper image demonstrating their understanding that images in the foreground are larger than those in the middle ground. Images in the middle ground are smaller than the images in the foreground, but larger than those in the background. Images in the background are the smallest images to show distance.
• Students will use a sheet of white paper as the base of their project. They will use ripped pieces of construction paper to create images in the foreground, middle ground, and background. Students will glue the images on the white sheet of paper.
  • The image can be of anything that students choose, like: a farm, a park, their school or house.

ENRICHMENT:
Have students create a ripped paper picture where they illustrate looking toward the South Dakota Capitol building from one of the nearby bluffs while incorporating principles of perspective (foreground, middle ground, and background).

Here are two examples:

BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES:
• South Dakota Art Museum Collection
  • Robert Aldern
• “Giclee Prints: ‘Plowed Fields With Cows.’” Aldern Art Studios. 2009