

Jack Cowin

Biography of the Artist

Jack Cowin was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA in 1947. Leading to a career in medical illustration, he entered Indiana University as a Visual Communication major and Biology minor; later transferring to Fine Arts specializing in printmaking (BFA 1969). He further specialized in printmaking and painting at the University of Illinois (MFA 1971), before accepting a position as lecturer at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan where he is currently a professor in the Visual Arts Department. His work has been shown throughout Canada and the United States, as well as Europe and Asia.

The Art Style of Jack Cowin

A naturalist and skilled fly fisherman since childhood, the objects of his sport became the objects of his art. The fish he catches are photographed before being returned to the water unharmed and later portrayed in his art. Jack Cowin is known internationally for his drawings, paintings, and etchings.

Art Lesson / Jack Cowin / Detail and Composition

Student Objectives

- Students will be inspired by the life and art of Jack Cowin.
- Students will be able to draw a fish that is anatomically correct.
- Students will utilize cropping to create interesting composition.
- Students will use the rule of thirds to place fish in an interesting compositional space.

Materials

Images of Saskatchewan fish
Pencil crayons
Fine tip Sharpie markers
Water colour paint/brushes

Web Links

Susan Whitney Galley, collected works

<http://www.susanwhitneygallery.com/artists/cowin.html>

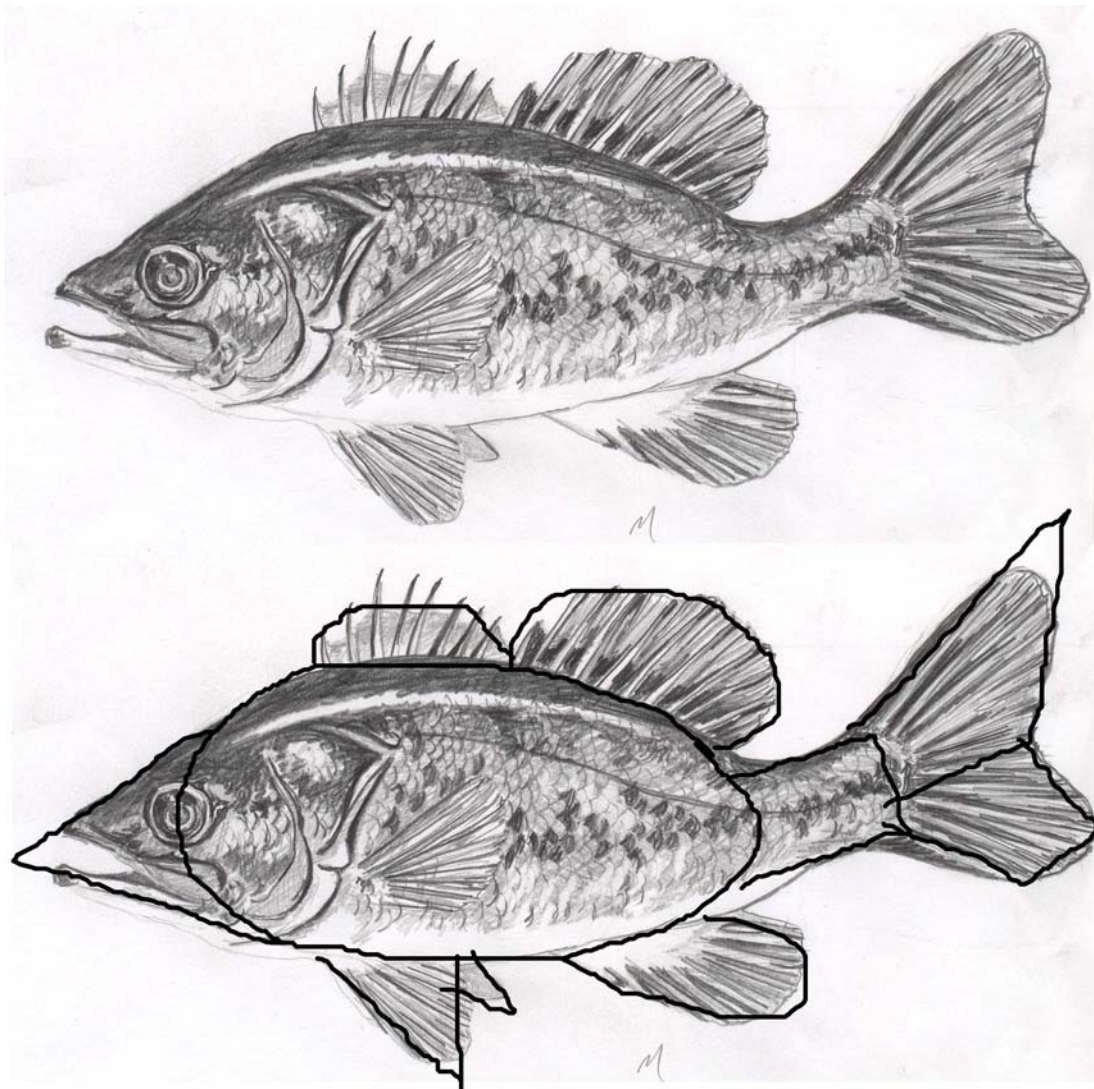
Resources

Saskatchewan Art Works, a Visual Art Resource for K-8, Sask. Ed 1991. Slide #53

Procedure

1. Read the Bibliography of Jack Cowin to the students. Review the compositional elements from the *John Perret Art Lesson*. View Jack Cowin's work on the Internet. See Web Links. View the slide of his work.
2. This unit involved the breakdown of the shapes within a fish and close attention to detail.
3. Rather than drawing what I call the wishbone fish, have the students carefully draw the shapes within the body of the fish. Focus on not doing a contour (outline) drawing of a fish, but rather looking for shapes.
4. Encourage students to find the ovals, triangles, and squares inside the fish. Students reproduce these shapes lightly on their paper. As an example, draw directly on a copy of a fish so they can see the shapes.

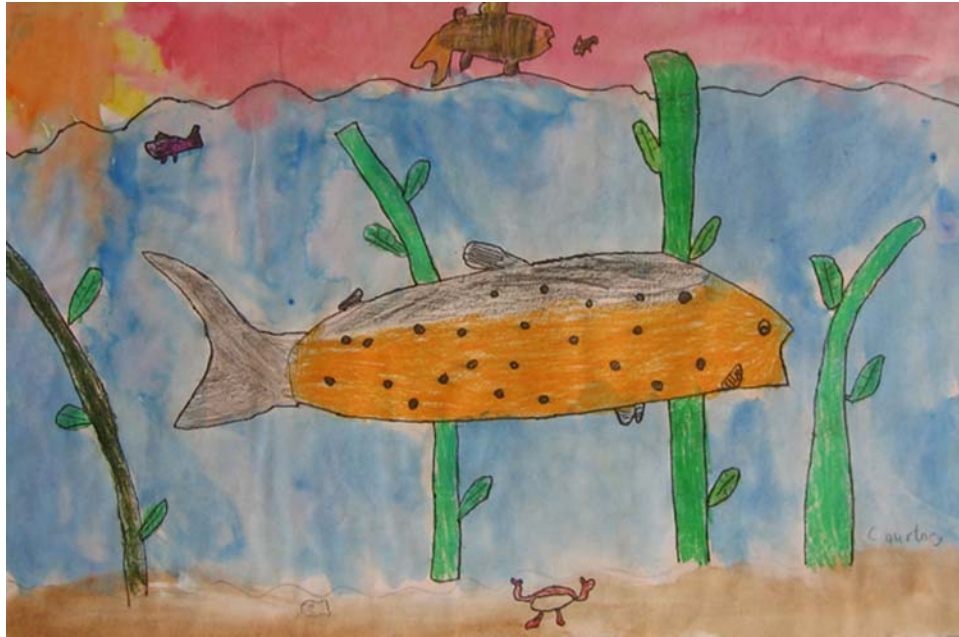
Diagram



5. After the shapes are drawn, students connect the shapes to make the smooth outline of the fish's body.
6. Colour the fish. Saskatchewan fish in general are not very colourful but encourage students to use the correct colours. This is one opportunity for students to explore Saskatchewan wildlife for its distinctive beauty. Colour with pencil crayons as they allow for detail.
7. Outline the scales, gills, tails etc. with fine tip markers.
8. To create the background, students paint a wash. Water is placed on the paper first and then watery paint is placed on the watery surface. The paint will move around and create a translucent water effect. If the water is not placed first, the paint may become too vibrant and the fish may be

- hidden in the dark blue water. Incorporate greens and purples in the water.
9. The work can be created as if someone were ice fishing with a person fishing and the sky painted.
 10. Students title their work.

Student Art / Jack Cowin Artist Study



Courtney Acorn, Grade Two



Brittany Peacock, Grade Two

















