

Panoramic Prairie Pictures in Pastel

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All images of artwork created by Grade 3 students.

This lesson will take more than one lesson. Generally I introduce the concepts the first week, sketch the second, begin the good copy the third week and finish on the fourth week.

Objectives

Be able to create a composition in panoramic format that is pleasing.

Be able to blend colours using oil pastels.

Be able to understand the concepts of panoramic format and landscape format

Be able to use the terms panoramic, cropping, sketch, artistic interpretation, perspective, horizon line and placement of objects.



Resources

http://www.cartermuseum.org/inspiring_visions/moran/moran_activites.html

Materials

Oil pastels

Chalk pastels

Drawing paper 11 x 17" cut lengthwise

Newsprints 11 x 17"

Calendar pictures



Procedure

Terminology discussion: panoramic (you may have a panoramic photos of your school or students on hand that you can show them so that they can see the difference between the formats), landscape (format), a reference to the computer word programs where they select portrait or landscape format when printing is a good connection.

The children selected from calendar images any image that could be adapted for panoramic. Panoramic pictures need to have a focal point that is not in the center of the picture. They also require an image that is contained somewhat in the picture plane. Ex. A tree where you just see the middle of the trunk would not be effective, whereas if you have a grain elevator and see the entire elevator and some of the sky is more effective. When selecting the pieces they can take out a part of the piece or add a building from another picture, or if they feel that an animal for instance is too difficult to draw they can remove it. I encouraged the children to remove the animals or people.

I had the children fold the calendars into panoramic format in order to see if they had selected an effective composition. I had all the children observe the other students selections and help each other select and image that would work.

I had the students fold a newsprint sheet into a panoramic format and begin sketching. I always have the children do a rough draft as the newsprint allows them to experiment but not worry about perfection. It is important to teach them or review that something closer to you on the calendar is larger and lower on the paper to give the impression of distance.

This can be done by creating two sheets of paper with a large black square on both. Place a horizon line a little higher on the one than the other. Place one black box higher on the horizon line and one lower. Hold both up and ask the children which one is closer.



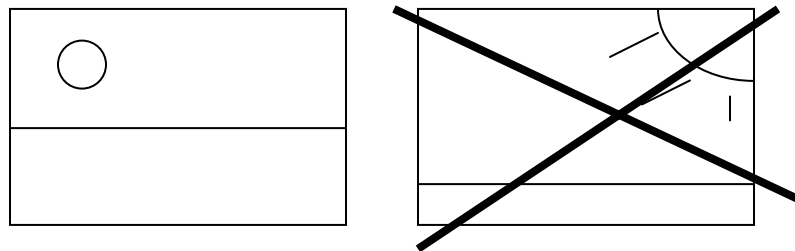
This proves to the children that objects that are placed farther down the paper appears larger and closer to the viewer.

As well, having the objects that are far away be less crisp and clear can create atmospheric perspective.

Explain that the rough draft may need to be cropped again to make their picture composition work effectively.

The student then traced the image that they had drawn. When using pastels it is best to not have any eraser lines as the pastel will resist that area and the tracing allows for no errors that have to be erased. It is my experience that children draw very hard and when they erase a dent is usually left on the paper where their line was.

The students then used crayons to experiment with colour on the rough draft. A lesson on layering of colours is effective in getting the children to not just use colours directly from the pastel and just fill in like a colouring book. The sky can have several colours of blue. The wheat fields can be layers of brown, gold and yellow. The red barns can have dark red by adding green and placing red overtop. The greens of the forest can be made darker by first placing red on the paper (a light layer) and then adding the various greens overtop. It is important to remind students that sky and water are not always blue. Often what we think we see is not what we see. It is through constant exposure to the idea of the sky being blue and water blue that we assume it is blue and colour it blue. It is also important that the children are taught the sun is not in the corner of the picture but when really viewed we often see it as a circle not a quarter of a circle in the corner of our vision. Often we don't even see the sun at all in our line of vision.



The students then began colouring the good copy. Remind them to layer their colours. If the children are using chalk pastel it is best to start at the top of the paper and work from the top down as the children will often mess up the picture with their sleeve or hand. The oil pastels are less likely to smudge.

The children shared their work with others, why did they choose that piece? What effect does the grain elevator on the bottom right corner have on the piece?

They shared their image from the calendar and then the final product and the changes that they made with their artistic decisions. The children need to know that art is not copying the picture but rather interpreting the picture in their own way.

Can they imagine what that might look like in a different season or different weather? If you wish they can make the picture in these different ways.

Would their pictures encourage people to travel to Saskatchewan to see the landscape? We focused on the landscape of Saskatchewan but the lesson can be adapted to any area.

To tie this into the Saskatchewan Centennial you can expand the project by asking what would this image look like 100 years ago and what might it look like 100 years from now.



