

THE NATURAL WORLD OF

Heather Anderson

We can learn about flowers by becoming more observant of their color and shape, season, and habitat, both on site and through

environmental study. We also learn through works of art by artists like Margaret Hudson, Joseph Raffael, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Claude Monet.

We become more aware of nature as expressed in their unique paintings of flowers and create our own pastel drawings of flowers.

Margaret Hudson

Margaret Hudson discovered art as an adult when she noticed the life growing from rotting logs during a walk in the woods. She first worked in clay, making birds, leaves, and squirrels, then bought a studio, hired helpers, and developed a business—Earth Arts Studio—to support her

family. Her fine art in sculpture and painting is a different matter. Often she uses it as a way of dealing with suffering and exploring spirituality. The grief that came with the suicide of her son resulted in forty-five clay sculptures. The joy that came with a tour of European cathedrals resulted in thirty spontaneous flower oil paintings.

Hudson's art is interwoven with the events in her life. Her art helps her work through grief, death, bitterness, and sadness to arrive at joy and satisfaction when working in her garden and with schoolchildren, showing them nature and helping them sculpt in clay.

Lesson Overview

- Students will study a variety of flower images from nursery catalogs,

photographs from the Internet, as well as artists' works, identifying their shapes and colors.

- Students will become familiar with artists who have drawn and painted flowers.
- Students will create a flower picture in either a close-up or panoramic format using oil pastels.

Artistic Behaviors

- Learning techniques for drawing freehand with oil pastels.
- Expressing thoughts and feelings through flowers.
- Becoming aware of "flower artists" and their artistic eras.



FLOWERS

Materials

- 12 x 18" (30 x 46 cm) colored construction paper
- oil pastels
- photographs of flowers from nursery catalogs and the Internet.

Guiding Inquiry

Show and discuss Hudson's work. What style do you think Hudson is using? How would you describe her work and why? What feelings does the artist convey? What about the message, media, mood, and colors?

Contrast and discuss Georgia O'Keeffe's *Poppies* with Claude Monet's *Field of Poppies*. What is the major difference?

Bring in a flower for each student and guide them to recognize the parts of the flower, not just to understand botany, but also to be more observant and to stimulate interest.

Guiding Expression

If possible, take students to a nursery or nearby garden for some quick sketching with pen, paper, and clipboard. Demonstrate using the point or side of a pastel, mixing, and layering colors. Make a "one-minute-sketch" using a light pastel to sketch the overall idea and composition quickly and lightly before working in more detail. Students can create a field of flowers, a bouquet of flowers, or a single enlarged flower image.

Eco-Awareness Activities

In addition to drawing flower pictures, try some of the following activities with your students to enhance their understanding of flowers and the environment:

- What is a weed? Learn about invasive species: what they are, why they are a problem, and what to do about them.
- What are native plants? Why are they disappearing in our natural environments?

- Why are flowers important? How do we use them in our everyday lives?
- What are some problems facing plants and flowers? How can we solve these problems?
- Share different floral-scented perfumes in class to increase sensory awareness.
- Write a short poem about your favorite flower. 🌸

*Heather Anderson is a former art teacher who lives in Fresno, California.
Heatheranderson8@comcast.net*

NATIONAL STANDARD

Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art.

WEB LINK

www.wildflowerinformation.org

