



WATER COLOURS

Timing: 1 hour and a half

Activity Type: Art and guided writing

Materials:

- Red, yellow and blue water-soluble paint
- Wide and thin paintbrushes, pencils
- Sturdy, thick paper for watercolours
- A computer with access to Google Earth

Description: A drawing activity in which students demonstrate awareness of the presence of water in both urban and rural environments.

Expectations:

Science and Technology: Life Systems, 1.1, 1.2

Arts: Visual Arts, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3

Social Studies: 1.2, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 4.1

Teaching Strategies

1. Explain that this lesson will deal with the differences between urban and rural areas. What are the things that make them different? Make a list, explaining that the students can look to this list when making maps of each area.
2. Begin by demonstrating how to draw a map, using the rural area as an example. The students have to imagine how the land looks from above, like a bird. Using a pencil, draw a few quick lines to represent rooftops, roads...
3. Explain that the maps will also need colour. What would be the main colours we would see? (Suggest that the city would have different colours than the country). As you show the painting supplies, however, point out the dilemma that there is only blue, yellow, and red paint left! How can we paint the colour green, for instance, to show trees? (Wait for the students' suggestions).
4. Offer to show an easy technique for mixing colours right on the paper. Allowing the whole class to see, begin by dipping a wide brush in water and wetting the paper from end to end. Dip the brush again in blue paint and fill the paper with broad, side-to-side strokes to create a "wash," making an even blue backdrop for the map. It doesn't matter if you paint over the pencil drawings of rooftops and trees. This is to show that water is everywhere in the landscape, even underground.
5. While the paper is drying, review what the students have already learned about plants and their needs (light and water). Remind them that blue is the colour of water on maps, and that yellow is the colour used to draw the sun. Next, take the brush dipped in yellow, apply a few strokes to the blue paper, and presto! You have plant life, which is green. Quickly paint in trees or grass in this way (make sure to do this lesson after covering the plant life unit).

6. To make the colour brown, the students will have to each make their own by pre-mixing the three primary colours. Remember to emphasize that the colour blue is needed to make brown, just as there is always water in the soil. If necessary, remind them that green + red equals brown just as soil is composed of dead plants and animals (at least one student is bound to ask what the red signifies!)
7. For the open water on the map, leave the paper blue. Before making their maps, the students will need to think of three ways that open water can be found in both environments (a Venn diagram can be provided for this initial writing activity).
8. Ask the class to predict what the urban map will look like. Since there will be more human structures, it will have more pencil lines. How will they react with the blue wash that will go over the paper?

Application

Review the steps of the map-making activity:

1. Write down three sources of open water in both urban and rural environments on the Venn diagram sheet (ex.: rivers and lakes go in the middle, while swimming pools might go in the urban circle).
2. Draw the two maps in pencil, making sure to include areas of open water. Write down what a "map list," or legend, of everything in the drawing.
3. Ask to look at pictures from Google Earth on the teacher's computer if you are not sure.
4. Paint each landscape one at a time. Start by making a blue wash over the whole paper, then by painting in the green and brown areas. Use only the three primary colours.
5. When you are finished, put the legend and map together with a paper clip.
6. Fill out the following questions: What water can you see in your rural map? What does the hidden water do? (Answer the same questions for you urban map).

Assessment

Once the students have completed their maps, talk about what they have learned about water in urban and rural environments. Encourage them to ask questions about how water could be present, aside from the blue areas, and how human activity could affect it.

For summative assessment, the students can exchange drawings and mark them using a checklist of essential elements (are there three sources of open water, and does the legend include urban and rural features). The teacher can evaluate the worksheet and artwork using the attached rubric.