

Representing Paths: Mixed Media Collages

TOPICS: Representing texture by creating rubbings; Drawing a variety of lines using sharpies; Creating abstract imagery; Hand stitching

SUBJECT(S): Visual Arts, Science, Social Studies

GRADE(S): 4-7

UNIT DURATION: 2-3 lessons



Charlene Vickers, *Fish in Astral Projection under Moons*, 2022, 7 colour, 6 plate intaglio print, 40cm x 45cm.

and performance works explore memory, healing, and embodied connections to ancestral lands. Vickers' works has been exhibited across Canada and the United States. Vickers holds a BFA from Emily Carr University of Art and Design, a BA in Critical Studies of the Arts and MFA from Simon Fraser University.

Fish in Astral Projection under Moons (2022) was produced using a technique called soft ground lift, where the texture of fabrics (felt, foam, and cloth) selected by Vickers and her hand sewing was

OVERVIEW & CULMINATING TASK:

In this lesson students will learn about an intaglio print by Canadian artist Charlene Vickers.

Students will create a mixed media collage by creating rubbings, drawing with sharpies, and stitching with yarn.

Charlene Vickers is an Anishinaabe artist living and working in Vancouver. Born in Kenora, Ontario and raised in Toronto, her painting, sculpture,

transferred into the soft ground and then etched into the plate.

The fish silhouette is a copper plate cut into the shape of the fish and aquatinted to achieve the rich black colour and texture. Aquatint is a printmaking technique that produces tonal effects by using acid to eat into the printing plate creating sunken areas which hold the ink. The final piece to this work is the addition of a button that is hand sewn to the printing paper.

BIG IDEAS (What students will understand):

- Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us (Arts Education)

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES (What students will do):

- Explore elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, and techniques of the arts
- Describe, interpret and respond to works of art and explore artists' intent
- Create artistic works using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, and experimentation
- Express feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS:

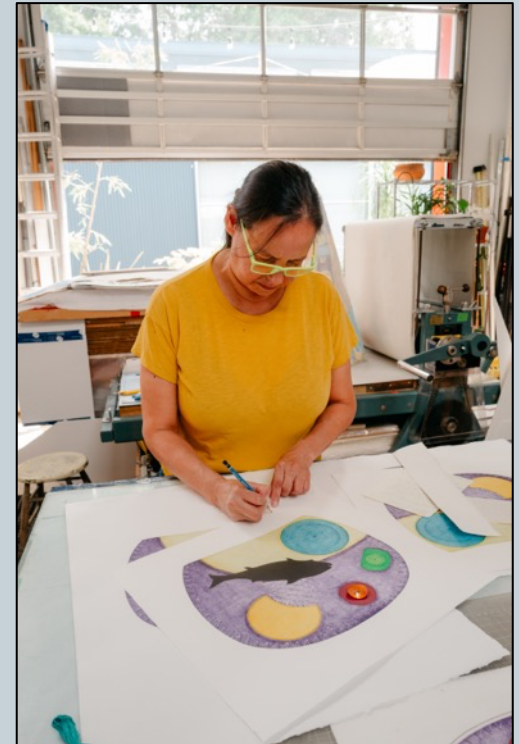
- **Science:** mapping, salmon life cycle, lunar cycle
- **Social Studies:** culture, history, and territories of the Anishinaabeg peoples

CONCEPTS & CONTENT (What students will know):

- Image development strategies
- Elements of visual art; principles of design

ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) (What students will keep considering):

- How can I represent paths that I travel and experience in life through texture, line, and patterning?



Charlene Vickers signs editions of her finished print

She also captured the texture of her own hand stitching in the print.

- Share with students that they will create a mixed-media collage in which they use colour, texture, and line to represent the unique paths that they travel and observe in their own lives.

- Give each student 4 sheets of 4"x4" white printer or white cartridge paper
- Show students how to find textures around the classroom or school and create a rubbing on their 4"x4" white paper using a dark oil pastel or wax crayon (i.e. dark blue, dark green, dark purple). Students should use the edge, NOT the tip of the pastel to create the rubbing. Students should cover the entire paper with the rubbing (no white space remaining).



Student artwork

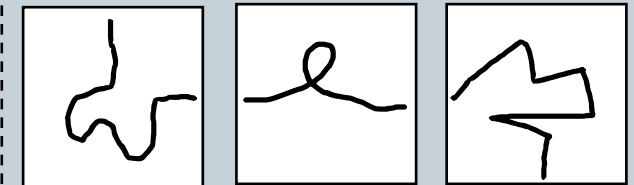
- Once students have completed 4 rubbings hand out a sheet of 9"x9" black construction paper to each student.
- Encourage students to experiment with different arrangements of their squares before gluing them down onto the black paper (see student samples included in this document for ideas).

LESSON #2 (Drawing and stitching paths):

- Create a mind map on the board recording a student brainstorm of all types of paths they can think of (in stories, nature, life, creative process, systems in the human body, artwork, etc.)
- Demonstrate on the white board how you could draw a line representing the journey of your morning – leading from your bed, all the way to school (using curves, twists, bumps, spirals, dots, etc.)
- Ask the students to put their heads down on the table and think about their favourite path. How does it start? How does it end?
- On a sheet of 8.5" x 11" paper have students draw a path using sharpie representing the journey of their morning. Then have them draw an additional path (i.e. the path of their favourite character in a book) overlapping on top of the first.

- Referring to this sketch, have students use sharpies to draw a path (or more than one path) of their choice over top of their glued down texture rubbings.
- View Charlene Vickers' print with the class and ask them to identify the lines that she created by hand stitching.
- Explain that they will each create a final path (or multiple paths) in their collage by hand stitching.

- Have students draw a simple path in pencil on the back side of their black paper. Optionally, all students in the class can draw this path so that it starts in the middle of one edge of their paper and ends in the middle of an edge – so that all of the student artworks can be joined together afterwards (see example, above).



If each student creates a path that starts and ends in the middle of their edges, all artworks can be joined together to create a continuous path, as shown above.

- Demonstrate how to use a thumb tack to poke holes along this path (through the back of the paper). The holes should not be too close to the edge of the paper and they should be about 1cm apart from one another. These are the holes that the students will then stitch through, using needle and yarn.
- Demonstrate how to thread the plastic needles with yarn. Students can knot their yarn at the end, or they can use tape to hold the end of their yarn in place on the back of their piece of paper.
- Students can then start stitching through the holes that they poked. Once they get to the end of their path, they can trim their yarn and secure it in place on the back of their paper with either a knot or a piece of tape.
- Students may design and stitch additional paths, if they wish.



A sculpted 3D object has been incorporated into this student's collage

OPTIONAL 3D EXTENSION:

- Refer to Charlene Vickers' inclusion of a button on her print.
- Ask students: Why do you think that Charlene Vickers' included a 3D button on her 2D artwork?
- Have students collect objects outside (small rocks or pieces of wood) or sculpt small objects out of air dry clay or polymer clay. Alternatively, provide students with buttons.
- These 3D objects can be added to the collage by gluing them down (using white glue or glue guns) or by wrapping them in yarn and incorporating them into the stitched pathways (see student samples for ideas).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISPLAYING STUDENT ARTWORK:

Completed student artwork can be displayed in a grid on a bulletin board. Students can collaboratively arrange the artworks so that the paths connect.

When displaying the student art, it is important to credit the influence of Charlene Vickers' artwork. Optional caption to include with the display:

Our class learned about the Canadian artist Charlene Vickers and her intaglio print *Fish in Astral Projection under Moons*. Inspired by this print, we have created our own collages representing the paths that we travel and observe in our lives. We created rubbings, we drew with sharpies, and we hand stitched our own unique paths.

CORE COMPETENCIES (suggested questions for reflection):

- COMMUNICATION: What kinds of paths did Charlene represent in her print through textures, shapes, lines, and colours?
- THINKING: Describe the paths that you represented in your artwork. How did you represent paths that you observe or travel in your own life?
- PERSONAL AND SOCIAL: What differences and similarities can you observe between the collages that you and your classmates created?

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT REFLECTION:

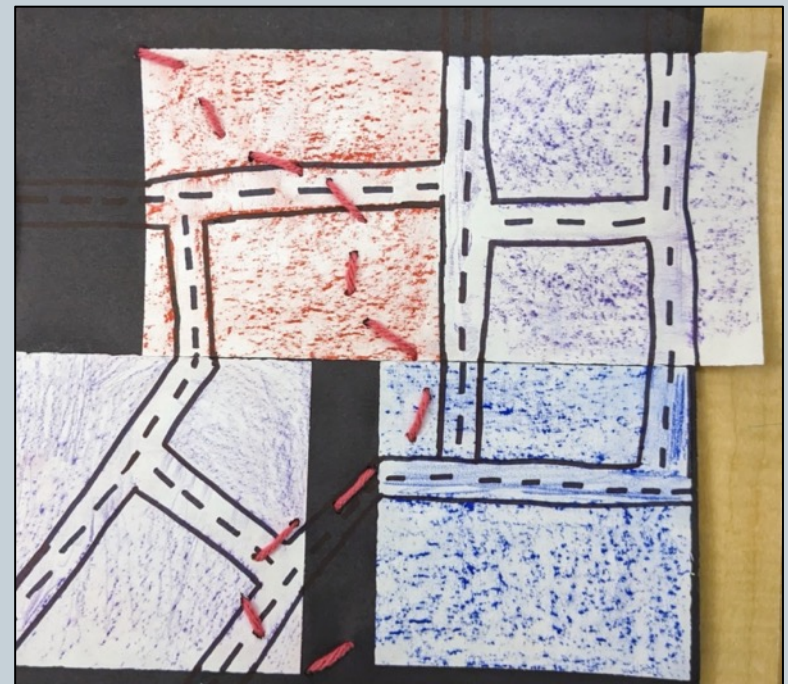
Teachers are invited to adapt and edit the following questions for student reflection:

Respond to the following questions, reflecting on your finished collage:

What am I happy with?	
What was challenging for me?	
What helped me do my best work?	
What would I do differently next time?	

SUGGESTED DESCRIPTIVE FEEDBACK:

- Nora contributes her ideas and observations about artists' use of processes and techniques and asks thoughtful questions about works of art.
- Nora used processes and tools to create a mixed media collage including representing texture by creating a rubbing, drawing with sharpies, and hand stitching.
- Nora made intentional use of a variety of drawn and hand stitched lines to represent paths that she travels and observes in her own life.

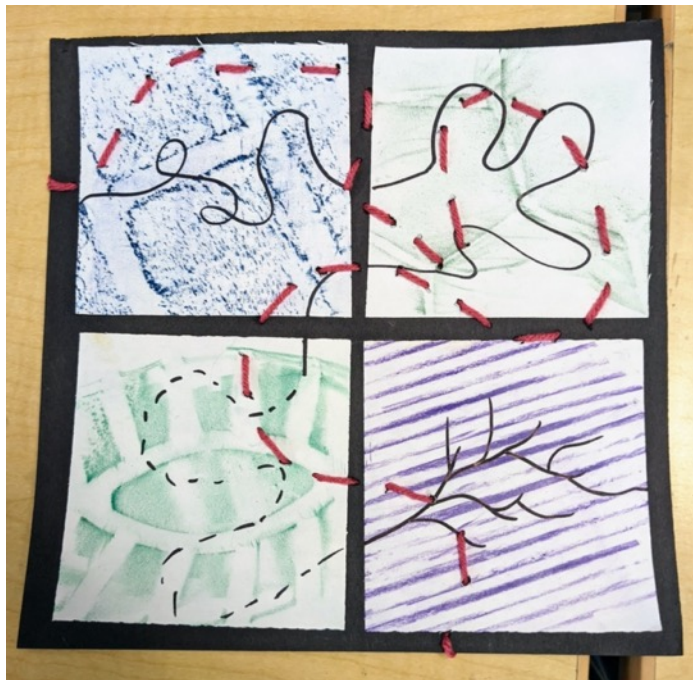


Student artwork

SUGGESTED SUMMATIVE EVALUATION RUBRIC:

Teachers are invited to adapt and edit the following evaluation rubric:

	<p>Emerging The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</p>	<p>Developing The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</p>	<p>Proficient The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</p>	<p>Extending The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</p>
<p>Symbolism and Image Development: Student has intentionally created varied lines through drawing and stitching to represent paths that they travel or observe.</p>				
<p>Composition: Elements of Art and Image Development Strategies: Student has thoughtfully planned and considered the composition of their collage, using the elements of line, space, balance, and variety. Student has thoughtfully arranged their rubbings before gluing them down. Student has intentionally considered the placement of their drawn and stitched paths.</p>				
<p>Material, Technique, and Tool Exploration: Student has followed teacher directed processes in creating texture rubbings, in drawing a variety of lines with sharpie, and in creating hand stitched paths in their artwork. Student's artmaking techniques demonstrate care, craftsmanship, and purposeful play.</p>				
<p>Studio Habits "Work Habits": Student demonstrates personal and collective responsibility when creating art, contributing to a safe learning environment. Student actively contributes to cleaning up art materials and work space.</p>				



Artwork by Grade 7 Students



Charlene Vickers, *Fish in Astral Projection under Moons*, 2022, 7 colour, 6 plate intaglio print, 40cm x 45cm



Materials used by Vickers to create plate for printing



Printing plate and other materials



Charlene Vickers signs editions of her finished print