

Whale Song: Collagraph Print

Inspired by Anne Meredith Barry

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TOPICS: Techniques for creating a collagraph print; Representing animal communication through symbols and colour; Representing whales and underwater environments

SUBJECT(S): Visual Arts

GRADE(S): 4-7

UNIT DURATION: 4 lessons

OVERVIEW & CULMINATING TASK: In this lesson students will explore the work of artist Anne Meredith Barry. Barry works primarily in the Canadian landscape genre, exploring the forces of nature in fresh and inventive ways. Barry was born in 1932 in Toronto and attended the Ontario College of Art. She has lectured and taught workshops for art colleges, public schools, art councils, and universities across Canada. She is a prolific artist and has exhibited drawings, paintings, and prints in many solo and group exhibitions in both commercial galleries and public museums across Canada and the United States. She currently lives in Newfoundland.

Students will create a collagraph print that features a whale, its underwater environment, and its method of communication.

BIG IDEAS (What students will understand):

- Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us. (Arts Education 5)
- Artists experiment in a variety of ways to discover new possibilities. (Arts Education 4)

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES (What students will do):

- Choose artistic elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques and environments using combinations and selections for specific purposes in art making
- Interpret and communicate ideas using symbolism to express meaning through the arts
- Describe, interpret and respond to works of art and explore artists' intent



Ann Meredith Barry, *Whale Song*, 1993, lithograph on paper, 16 x 57.5 inches framed. Image courtesy of the artist.

CONCEPTS & CONTENT (What students will know):

- Image development strategies
- Elements of visual art; principles of design
- Symbolism and metaphor to explore ideas and perspective

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

- How can I represent animal communication through colours and symbols?
- How can I use textures and shapes to represent an animal in its environment?

FIRST PEOPLES' PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING:

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

MATERIALS & TECHNOLOGIES:

- digital image of *Whale Song* by Anne Meredith Barry (see end of document for large image)
- digital projector/computer
- 8.5" x 11" white printer paper (1 per student)
- 8.5" x 11" white construction paper (1 per student)
- 8.5" x 11" pre-cut pieces of cardboard (1 per student)
- black water soluble printmaking ink (or black acrylic or tempera paint)
- 1 or more brayers
- spatula for spreading ink or paint
- 1 or more sheets of glass or plexiglass to roll ink or paint on
- pencils
- scissors
- construction paper (to cut out whale communication shapes in Lesson #2)
- white glue
- glue pots
- brushes for spreading glue
- oil pastels
- collage materials such as: scrap cardboard, bubble wrap, tinfoil, popsicle sticks
- printed images of whales

VOCABULARY:

printmaking, collagraph, symbol, texture, masking, stencil, environment

RESOURCES & REFERENCES:

- Audio clips of whale calls from 7 different species: <https://www.thedodo.com/listen-to-the-7-different-ways-609741174.html>
- Video of humpback whale being freed from fishing nets: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcXU7G6zhjU&feature=youtu.be>
- Collagraph printmaking demo with cardboard and tempera paint: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcXU7G6zhjU&feature=youtu.be>
- Collagraph printmaking demo with mixed media and acrylic paint: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzkPgNYQwdQ>
- Glossary of art terms: <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/>

ADAPTATIONS & MODIFICATIONS:

Students with difficulties using scissors may need assistance with cutting materials for creating collagraph plates. Students with hand function difficulties may need thick handled brushes and pastels.

DISCUSSION & ACTIVITIES (Teacher Action/Student Action):

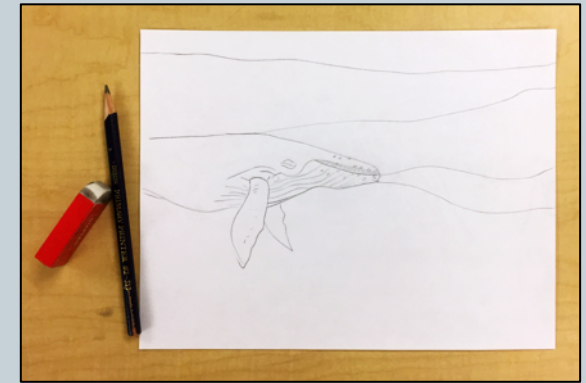
LESSON #1 (intro to Anne Meredith Barry and whale communication, sketching:

- Introduce students to the artwork of Anne Meredith Barry. View Barry's print (see large image at the end of document) and pose questions for discussion:
 1. What is a symbol? What symbols do you see? Why has the artist used symbols?
 2. What do you think the whale is saying? If a different message was communicated, what symbols would be used? Brainstorm on the board a collection of visual symbols that could be used to express whale's communication.
 3. Look at the picture and add to this sentence: "Once upon a time..." Students should develop a narrative that refers to each of the symbols and elements in the image. Students may share these narratives with a partner or record them in a sketchbook.
- Play students a video of a humpback whale being freed from fishing nets and audio clips of whale calls (see list of resources for web links).

- Tell students that they will create a collagraph print that will represent a whale in profile, its environment, and its method of communication.
- Discuss with students definitions of the following terms:
 - printmaking
 - collagraph
- Share with students 1 or more of the online video clips demonstrating the collagraph printmaking process (see list of resources for web links).
- Show students the collage materials that they will use to create their collagraph plates (i.e. cardboard, tinfoil, popsicle sticks, bubble wrap).
- Explain that the whale and its environment will be created as a collagraph print. They will create a shape that will be left blank in their print where they will later draw the whale's communication using oil pastels. Refer to Anne Meredith Barry's print to provide an example of what this shape could look like (i.e. similar to a speech bubble).
- Have students sketch their composition on 8.5" x 11" white printer paper using pencil.
- Provide students with printed images of whales in profile as visual references.

LESSON #2 (creating collagraph plates):

- Have students re-draw their sketch from Lesson #1 onto a 8.5" x 11" piece of cardboard. Students should include the main big shapes in this sketch, as opposed to small details.



Sample sketch created in Lesson #1 depicting a whale in its environment. This plan will guide the creation of a collagraph plate in Lesson #2.



Collagraph plate created in Lesson #2 using a variety of collage materials. The whale communication shape has been cut out from construction paper and is not glued down.



Example of inking station created in preparation for Lesson #3. A spatula and brayer are used to spread the black ink or paint on a plexiglass plate.

- Have students build their collagraph plate using materials such as: cardboard scraps, tinfoil, bubble wrap, and popsicle sticks. Students will then glue collage materials down using white glue. When the plate is complete, students will then coat both sides of the entire plate using a thick layer of white glue.
- Have students cut from construction paper the shape that they will represent their whale communication within. Keep these shapes separate from the collagraph plates.

LESSON #3 (printing collagraphs):

- Create inking stations or work with students one by one to use brayers to roll black water-based printmaking ink (alternatively, acrylic or tempera paint could be used) onto their finished collagraph plates.
- Before students create their prints, have them carefully place their whale

communication shapes (cut from construction paper in Lesson #2) onto the correct location within their collagraph plate. This shape will block the ink from transferring to the print. Students will therefore be left with a blank space within their print where they have placed their whale communication shape.

- Lay 8.5"x11" white construction paper on top of collagraph plates and rub the paper gently to transfer the ink. Carefully peel up the paper and allow the print to dry.
- Students may gently wash their collagraph plates so that they can be used again.
- Allow the prints to dry.

LESSON #4 (Adding details using oil pastels):

- Using oil pastels, have students draw details within the blank whale communication shape in their collagraph prints (see sample collagraph print with oil pastel details on the next page).
- Prompt students to consider the following: What symbols and colours will you use to represent your whale's communication?
- Students may include additional details using oil pastels within the white spaces of their print. Refer to Anne Meredith Barry's print for

examples of minimal details that could be included within the whale's environment using oil pastel.

- Display the finished student artwork and discuss what students notice and appreciate about the work, what worked well, what they would improve on, and what successful strategies they used.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT:

After Lesson #2, have students share their sketches with a partner answering the following discussion questions: How will you represent the whale's communication in your print? What kind of symbols will you use in your print? Describe the environment in your composition and the details and textures that you plan to include within it.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT:

After students complete their collages in Lesson #4, have them reflect on the following questions: What title will you give your print? What is your whale saying? What textures did you include in your print? What would you change about your print if you were to create it again? What new artmaking techniques and processes have you learned about and used in creating your print?

EXTENSIONS & POSSIBLE CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS:

In connection to their learning about Anne Meredith Barry's print *Whale Song*, students could further their learning about whale communications. Students could carry out research on specific whale species, learning also about the impacts on whales from noise and ocean pollution.



Example of collagraph plate that ink has been rolled onto in Lesson #3. The whale communication shape (cut from construction paper) has been placed over top of the wet ink prior to printing the plate.



Collagraph print created in Lesson #3.

AFK RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS:

Looking for more art lesson ideas? Looking for ways to connect art to other areas of the curriculum? Visit the AFK Resources page to find lesson plans for all grade levels!

<http://tiny.cc/AFKResources>



Teacher sample of completed collagraph print with oil pastel details added in Lesson #4.



Ann Meredith Barry, *Whale Song*, 1993, lithograph on paper, 16 x 57.5 inches framed. Image courtesy of the artist.