

## OVERVIEW

**Grades:**

Grades 2 – 3; adaptable to all grade levels (see Adaption Suggestions)

**Subjects:**

Visual Art, Science, Literacy

**Duration:**

One hour-long period from start to completion.

**Lesson synopsis:**

How can you add your memories of your home state to a California-inspired class tree? Create a collaborative class tree using California leaf-shaped rubbings covered with student-written Haiku poems.

**Museum Connection:**

*The Garden Project*



This lesson can be explored solely in the classroom but it is best supported with an accompanying field trip to The New Children's Museum to view *Eureka!*, an exhibition all about the state of California and the ideas that come from it. Among its installations, *Eureka!* includes the work, *The Garden Project* designed by Urban Plantations. *The Garden Project* showcases native plants and food and introduces contemporary topics related to the environment like drought-resistant planning. Visit this space with students and discuss the plant life in it.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Students will:**

- o come to understand the term native and examples of native California plants.
- o be introduced to specific examples of native California leaves and explore their shapes, colors, and textures.
- o write a poem informed by their native city and inspired by poetic elements from the poetry readings.
- o learn about Japanese haiku poetry and create their own nature-inspired poem.
- o share and respond to each other's works.

# HOW-TO

## Materials Needed:

- o Texture Rubbing Plates (*to be shared; can be purchased or made using glue guns and cardboard*)
- o Scissors (*one pair per student*)
- o Crayons with wrappers taken off for using with rubbings (*to be shared*)
- o Cardstock (*for creating leaf stencils*)
- o Several stencils in the shape of California leaves. (*The Museum uses: California Redbud, California Sycamore, California Live Oak and Big Leaf Maple*). You may choose to cut the stencils out of cardboard so that students can trace them or have pre-printed leaves ready to be cut out.
- o Display Tree (*Find a tree branch and paint it or create a paper tree on the wall out of construction paper.*)

## Vocabulary:

**rubbing** – an impression made by rubbing with crayon, pencil or chalk on paper laid on top of a textured surface

**native (as it relates to plants)** – living or growing naturally in a particular place

**haiku** – a Japanese poem of seventeen syllables, in three lines of five, seven and five, traditionally evoking images of the natural world

**texture** – the quality of a surface, usually characterized by its roughness or smoothness; can refer to both visual and tactile qualities

**stencil** – to draw, trace, or define the outer edge or shape of something

**collaborative work** – when individuals work together to create a work of art

# STEPS

## Pre-Class Prep:

- o Collect images of native California trees and/or collect actual leaf examples to bring in and share with the students.
- o Create stencils in the shapes of leaves of native California trees (The Museum uses: California Redbud, California Sycamore, California Live Oak and Big Leaf Maple) or prepare pre-printed leaf templates on cardstock.
- o Create texture plates by cutting square pieces of cardboard approximately one inch larger than the size of your leaves. Use a hot glue gun to create raised shapes on top of the cardboard squares in various designs. Draw slowly and make sure to leave a thick line of glue behind. The thicker the lines, the more pronounced the rubbing will be. Let the plates cool off before allowing students to rub against them with paper and crayons.
- o Take the wrappers off of the crayons to prepare them for use when rubbing against the texture plates.

- o Create a display tree onto which you'll attach the students' completed leaves. There are countless ways to create your three-dimensional or relief display tree. Some examples include creating your tree using a fallen tree branch which you can display in a container on the floor or hang from the ceiling using string, or creating a tree from construction paper and attaching it onto the wall of the classroom or in the hallway.

**Motivation:**

Discuss the term native with students: something that can be found someplace in the world and usually only lives there (e.g., Kangaroos are native to the Australian continent.).

Introduce examples of trees and plants that are native to California. This includes plants that have developed, occur naturally, or have existed there for many years. Share full images of the trees and, if possible, bring in real leaf examples for students to observe. Identify each leaf type and, as a class, discuss their differing shapes, colors, and textures. Record the descriptive words used.

Now take a moment to have students think about all the memories they have of living in the state in California (or their home state). Think of smells that remind them of a special memory, the different plants and their favorite places. They will use these memories as inspiration when writing their home-inspired haikus.

Explain the project. They we will be making a collaborative poet tree. They will be writing poems inspired by their memories of California (or their home state). They will write them on leaf shapes that they will create using California leaf-shaped stencils and use crayons and texture plates to color them in. Their final works will be displayed together in a collaborative work in the form of a poet tree.

Introduce related vocabulary.

**Process:**

1

Introduce haiku poetry. A haiku is a style of Japanese poetry that consists of 3 lines. The first and last lines are composed of 5 syllables, while the middle line is composed of 7 syllables. These poems rarely rhyme.

**Example of a haiku:**

Sunny days I like	1	2	3	4	5		
In the beach I play all day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
California dream	1	2	3	4	5		

2

Have students write a few poems and then choose their favorite for the tree.



3

Have students trace their leaf using a leaf-shaped stencil and write their chosen haiku on their traced leaf shape.



4

Have students choose a texture plate and place their paper on top of it. Have them rub it with a crayon. Encourage students to notice how the texture from the texture plate begins to transfer onto their leaf.



5

Once finished with the rubbings cut out the leaf shape and use a piece of tape to attach the leaf to your Poet Tree.

### **Sharing Session:**

Display all finished leaves and talk about them. Break students into groups or collect as a class to discuss each other's works. If time allows, encourage students to read their poems out loud for the group and to describe their process for creating their poem.

## **ADAPTATION SUGGESTIONS**

### **For older students (Grades 4 – 5):**

This lesson can be adapted to suit upper elementary-aged students by having students help research native California trees and to create the leaf-shaped stencils themselves. Consider challenging students to incorporate the use of metaphor into their poems.

### **For middle and high school students (Grades 6 -12):**

Rather than creating a collaborative tree, break students into teams to work together on a collaborative work inspired by their home state and using materials that they feel inspired to use.

### **For student with special needs:**

For students with motor skill challenges, consider pre-cutting the leaf shapes. Also, consider working with larger-sized papers. Help students keep track of the remaining time that they have to work on their project.

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

### **Cultural Connections**

Combine the introduction of the Japanese poetry form of Haiku with a traditional artistic process from the same country, Sumi-e brush and ink renderings. Have students take their Haiku poem and incorporate it into a brush and ink-based painting.

## **STANDARDS**

### **CALIFORNIA STATE STANDARDS**

#### **Visual Art Standards**

##### **Grade 2**

1.3 Identify the elements of art in objects in nature, the environment, and works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, and space.

2.1 Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of basic tools and art-making processes, such as printing, crayon rubbings, collage, and stencils.

3.1 Explain how artists use their work to share experiences or communicate ideas.

4.1 Compare ideas expressed through their own works of art with ideas expressed in the work of others.

4.3 Use the vocabulary of art to talk about what they wanted to do in their own works of art and how they succeeded.

##### **Grade 3**

1.5 Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, space, and value.

2.4 Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes in daily life, emphasizing value changes.

5.2 Write a poem or story inspired by their own works of art.

### **English Language Arts Standards**

#### **Grade 2**

3.4 Identify the use of rhythm, rhyme, and alliteration in poetry.

#### **Grade 3**

1.3 Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression.

Next Generation Science Standards

#### **Grade 2**

2-LS4-1 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

#### **Grade 3**

3-LS4-4. Make a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change.

## **COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

RL.2.4 4. Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

RL.2.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

RL.3.5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

SL.2.5 Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings

SL: 3.1: Engage effectively in collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL: 3.1d: Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

## **RESOURCES**

### **RESOURCES FROM THE SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**California poetry: from the Gold Rush to the present (2004), edited by Dana Gioia, Chrissy Yost & Jack Hicks**

811.00809794 CAL

California Poetry: From the Gold Rush to the Present is a groundbreaking new book presenting the work of 101 writers. An authoritative yet accessible collection, it brings together 150 years of the finest California poetry by authors of all schools and ideas.

**The year comes round: haiku through the seasons (2012),** by Sid Farrar; illustrated by Ilse Plume  
J 811.6 FAR

Presents haiku poetry about nature and the seasons.

## WEB RESOURCES

Trees of Southern California:

<http://www.calflora.net/trees/trees.html>

How to write a Haiku: poetry for children:

<http://www.poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/how-to-write-a-haiku/>

Information on the installation, *The Garden Project*, currently on view at The New Children's Museum:

<http://www.thinkplaycreate.org/exhibition/feast/garden-project>