

“MakerSpace - Plants as Creative Expression”

- **Summarizing the Project:** What elements of native Alaskan plants make them valuable for creative expression?
 - **Concept(s) addressed:**
 - Plants have inherent characteristics that are desirable for creating art/craft projects
 - The elements of a plant can direct the design and form of artistic expression
 - **Essential Question(s) Investigated:**
 - How does a plant’s physical and chemical makeup (size/shape/growth pattern/qualities) contribute to its usefulness/desirability in creating art or crafting? (qualities include but not limited to: waterproof, malleable, color, etc).
 - **Critical skills taught**
 - Researching and selecting applicable resources (i.e. books, online sources¹, Native elders through ANE² connections)
 - Forming questions throughout the research phase
 - Locating information about their chosen plants and generating a list of desirable traits for use in artistic expression
 - Analyzing the traits of their chosen plants in relation to their desired art project
 - Experiment with and design an art project driven by the elements of plants chosen for their desired elements
 - Collaborating and reflecting with peers resulting in reiterations of project
- **Connecting to the AASL National Standards**
 - Inquire:
 - A.1. Formulating questions about a personal interest or a curricular topic
 - B.3. . Generating products that illustrate learning
 - Collaborate:
 - C.1. Soliciting and responding to feedback from others
 - C.2. Involving diverse perspectives in their own inquiry processes

¹ Curated by teacher/librarian (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, Native Corporations, Museum of the North’s Ethnobotany Film Series, etc.)

² FNSBSD’s Alaska Native Education team

- Explore:
 - B.1. Problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection
 - 2. Persisting through self-directed pursuits by tinkering and making
- **Designing for Learning**
 - **Learning outcomes desired: I can...**
 - Through investigation, research, and experimentation, students will recognize that natural mediums can be used for creative expression
 - **Assessing for Learning: I will**
 - Explain the process used to achieve expected results³
 - Demonstrate understanding of the qualities of natural material that can be used for creative expression

Learning plan to achieve outcomes:

- **Prepare** at least five rotating stations:
 - Flower pounding with berries, leaves, flowers
 - Contour drawing
 - Rubbing
 - Chromatography (grinding etc)
 - Bark/needles/yarn/grasses, etc
- **Introduce:** Inquiry or I Wonder phase
 - Introduce the guiding question: What elements of native Alaskan plants make them valuable for creative expression?
 - Choose at least three stations to visit
 - Experiment: make notes of changes/colors/durability/ease of use
- **Model:**
 - Examples of traditional native arts (birch bark baskets, whale bone carvings, masks, etc.)
 - Examples of botanical drawings
 - Examples of chromatography using coffee filters and natural dyes from native plants
 - Students share their initial understandings from “I Wonder” phase

³ http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/pdfs/dye_plants.pdf (example on page 7 - to be modified)

- **Practice:**
 - Experiment and engage in “What if...”, “What happens when...”, “How do these..”
 - Reflect
 - Reiterate
- **Assess**
 - Students will prepare their project for a gallery walk
 - Students will prepare their notes for explaining how their project began and how the reflection process helped their project evolve
 - Students will prepare notes for explanation on how they achieved their results
 - Using a prepared rubric, students will reflect on self and peers

Bibliography

- “JOIN GEF NOW!” *Tips to Use Less Plastic - Green Education Foundation | GEF | Sustainability Education*,
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- “Painting with Plants.” *Alaska Master Gardener Blog*,
alaskamastergardener.community.uaf.edu/2015/08/04/painting-with-plants/.