

April Art Enrichment: Environment Meets Art

Introduction: (5 minutes)

- Artist/Illustrator of the Month: Dr. Seuss
- Bring in different Dr. Seuss books, show the class their pictures and see if they can name the artist/illustrator...Dr. Seuss is perhaps the most easily recognizable artist/illustrator.
- Discuss how his characters/creatures/plants etc. are similar or different throughout different books.
- “Earth Day” is April 22nd and many celebrate April as “Earth Month”. This month we are combining Art Enrichment with “Earth Month”.

Artist/illustrator background information: (5 minutes—see biography)

Before The Lorax: (5 minutes)

On the blackboard, large paper on easel, dry eraser board etc., create BEFORE and AFTER columns. Write down the children’s ideas of how we can be nice to our environment or save our environment in the BEFORE column. Let the children state their ideas in the before heading without much assistance.

Read The Lorax-written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss: (10 minutes if you read from cover to cover-feel free to pick out the most important parts if time is an issue.)

After The Lorax: (5 minutes)

Fill in the AFTER column. Notice any new ideas that arose after reading the story.

Give support in this column. (recycle, reuse, reduce, carpool, ride bikes and walk, don’t pollute air or water, save the trees, conserve energy and water, clean energy sources etc.)

Art Activities: (25 minutes) Pick and choose according to your grade level, etc.

- Color Choices: (a starter for all ages) Look at the first and last few illustrations with the students. What colors are used? (grey, purple, blue....cool colors) Next look at the first illustration with the Truffala Trees. What colors are used here? (bright colors) Which place would you rather live? What feelings do you have when you look at the first and last illustrations? (sad, gloomy, depressed, angry) What feelings do you have when you look at the Truffala Trees? (happy, cheerful, proud, energetic) Discuss how color can affect mood.
- Before and After: (Younger kids) Use crayons, paint, craypas on white construction paper. The color, mood and environment in the illustrations before the greedy Once-ler started making his “thneeds” and after all the Truffala Trees were cut down are very different. Have the students create “before” and “after” pictures of the environment. Review the illustrations from the book and discuss shapes, form and colors used. They can divide a large piece of art paper in half or draw on the front and back of the same sheet.
- Drawing the Once-ler: (Older kids) Use crayons, paint, craypas on white construction paper. Throughout this story Dr. Seuss only lets us see parts of the Once-ler (his eyes and hands). What do you imagine the rest of the Once-ler looks like. Review the illustrations throughout the book. Help them brainstorm some ideas and then have them make a portrait of the Once-ler. Be sure to use cool colors in the background.
- Create A Character: (probably older kids) Using Dr. Seuss’ imaginative style, draw your own character for Earth Month. Name it! What would your character’s message to the world be?

Wrap-up: (5 min) Kids can show their work, and review ways we can help to preserve our environment. After all, we all want to live among the “Truffala Trees” instead of the smog and pollution that comes along with greed and irresponsibility. Have fun!