

Collaborating With a Cultural Resource

Length: 30 minutes

Featured School

School:	Lusher Alternative Elementary School
Location:	New Orleans, Louisiana
In this program:	Kathleen Hurstell Riedlinger, principal Nancy Lilly, fourth-grade teacher Ann Rowson Love, curator of education, Ogden Museum of Southern Art Louise Trimble Kepper, artist and student of Will Henry Stevens Warren Irwin, local artist

About This Program

Local arts organizations can be rich sources of knowledge, skills, resource materials, and other tools to enrich classroom learning. In New Orleans, Louisiana, the arts-based **Lusher Alternative Elementary School** collaborates with community resources such as the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, which is affiliated with the University of New Orleans.

In this program, Lusher fourth-grade teacher Nancy Lilly teams with Ogden's curator of education, Ann Rowson Love. With the support of Lusher's principal, Kathy Riedlinger, they develop a unit of study based on the work of artist Will Henry Stevens, who worked in New Orleans and elsewhere in the south.

Titled "Will Henry Stevens and a Place for Me," the unit leads students into a rich exploration of their cultural heritage as well as the colors, lines, forms, and other elements found in Stevens' art:

- In their classroom, students reflect on the phrase "a sense of place" and what it means in their own lives. They also compare and contrast Stevens' oil pastels with Japanese prints that they studied in a previous unit.
- At the museum's temporary gallery (its permanent home was under construction at the time of filming), students view New Orleans and North Carolina scenes painted by Stevens, comparing the colors and composition used in each location. They experiment with Stevens' medium, oil pastels, to investigate how the artist achieved the muted tones he typically used.
- Also at the museum, students meet Louise Kepper, an artist who worked with Stevens 60 years earlier. Kepper tells the children that Stevens "taught me to see and to feel. Even more than drawing, he taught me to look...in detail and pick out what was the most important thing."
- On the banks of the Mississippi River, where Stevens once made his own drawings, local artist Warren Irwin helps students see with artists' eyes as they sketch the horizon line.

Back in the classroom, students complete oil pastel drawings and create poems that further explore their sense of place. As a culminating project, their pictures and poems are presented in a gallery show for parents.

"They were very proud, and I think they saw that their parents were impressed by the amount of knowledge they had," says Lilly.

About This Program, cont'd.

Arts Education Standards Addressed in This Program

Visual Art

- **Content Standard 1**—Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes
 - Describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses
 - Use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories
- **Content Standard 2**—Using knowledge of structures and functions
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas
- **Content Standard 3**—Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Explore and understand prospective content for works of art
 - Select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning
- **Content Standard 4**—Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places
- **Content Standard 5**—Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Describe how people’s experiences influence the development of specific artworks
- **Content Standard 6**—Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines
Achievement Standards for Grades K–4:
 - Identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

Source: *National Standards for Arts Education*, published by Music Educators National Conference (MENC). Copyright 1994 by MENC. Used by permission. The complete National Arts Standards and additional materials relating to the Standards are available from MENC, The National Association for Music Education, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191, telephone 800-336-3768.

Viewing Suggestions

Who Should Watch This Program

“Collaborating With a Cultural Resource” is an excellent tool for professional development in partnership building and arts integration. Classroom teachers, arts specialist teachers, and curriculum planners can increase their understanding of how teachers and arts organizations can work together to offer students a greater variety of perspectives and resources.

Other audiences for this program might include:

- prospective partners at local arts organizations, to acquaint them with the benefits and opportunities to be gained from collaboration, and
- parents, school administrators, and policymakers, to encourage them to support collaboration initiatives.

Before Watching

In this program, a school and a museum team up to provide a much richer learning experience than either organization could easily offer alone.

As you watch this program, identify the different kinds of resources—knowledge and skills, tools and materials, artwork, human resources, and others—that went into the “Will Henry Stevens and a Place for Me” unit of study:

- Which resources is the school in the best position to provide?
- Which resources is the museum best able to provide?
- Can you think of other likely partners for such a project? What resources could these partners bring to the project?

Watching the Program

Watch “Collaborating With a Cultural Resource” (30 minutes).

Viewing Suggestions, cont'd.

Suggested Activities and Discussion

Consider the following questions for reflection:

- What cultural resources are available in your community with which your school could collaborate on a unit of study involving dance, music, theatre, or visual art?
- What units of study might be enhanced by teaching with those resources?

Below are some additional ways you can build on the ideas in this program in a variety of school and community settings.

Professional Development Sessions for Teachers

- Plan a joint training session with current or future collaborators. Identify the skills that would be necessary to work in each other's environment and plan a mentoring or other system for sharing these.
- Take a course in drawing, movement, or another art form at a local arts organization. If you don't have time for a whole course, try volunteering for an hour or two a month. Learn firsthand how the group operates, what resources they have to offer, and how you might bring these into your school.

Curriculum-Planning Sessions

- Brainstorm possible collaborators in your community for an upcoming unit of study. How might each enhance the learning experience?

Parent-Teacher Meetings

- Ask parents for their ideas for potential collaborators. Ask if any parents have contacts with community resources that might work with the school on an arts-based project.

Community Collaboration

- Become acquainted with community foundations and other organizations in your area that might fund a collaboration with a local arts organization. Learn their requirements for funding, and consider what it would take for your school or project to qualify.
- Invite representatives from one or more arts organizations to your school. Share your curriculum plans, and ask your visitors to identify possible opportunities for collaboration.

Additional Resources

Related Video Library Programs

Watch these programs for more information on ideas explored in “Collaborating With a Cultural Resource”:

- Working With Local Artists
- Developing an Arts-Based Unit
- Bringing Artists to Your Community

Web Resources

The Arts in Every Classroom video library Web site: www.learner.org/channel/libraries/artsineveryclassroom

The Arts in Every Classroom workshop Web site: www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom

Organizations Mentioned in This Program

Ogden Museum of Southern Art: www.ogdenmuseum.org

Related Organizations and Resources

Information on Will Henry Stevens: www.bluespiral1.com/stevens/whsindex.htm

Information on Japanese Woodblock Printmaking: www.asia-art.net/japan_prints.html

Recommended by Nancy Lilly

Getty ArtsEdNet: www.getty.edu/artsednet

National Gallery of Art: www.nga.gov

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

Recommended by Ann Rowson Love

The Whitney Doceo Program: www.whitneydoceo.org/servlet/gateway