

THINGS ON THE SHORELINE

A TEACHER'S GUIDE

A TEACHER'S GUIDE to inky things

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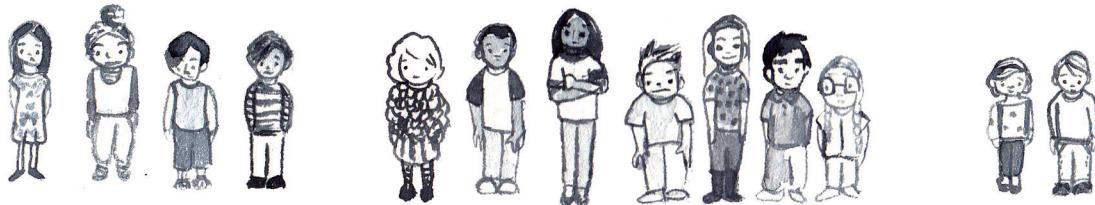
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The *Things On the Shoreline* project facilitates a creative environment for picture- and meaning-making by way of drawing out images and stories in the form of creaturely “things” that are imagined by children. The Making Inky Things workshops follow the premise of the storyline from the book, *Things on the Shoreline*. In the book a group of children walk along a barren and empty seaside, staring at the shoreline and waiting for “something” to appear. The story begins with the “nothingness” of the blank page and moves us through the quiet space of waiting and patience. We are propelled to ask the simple question: how do we create something from nothing?

Ink droplets, grains of salt, and water: the comingling of these three simple elements begins to slowly conjure Thing after inky-blue Thing along the edge of the shoreline. They gradually congregate, and before our very eyes, this once bleak space plays host to a raucous world of creaturely life, previously hidden behind the quiet of the empty page.

Integral to the project is a means to provide the children the agency to develop a visual language: they lead with their own voices and build their own stories. The students in the workshop will develop their own individual pieces but are encouraged to gather together to discuss their artistic choices that will generate a discussion around each of their Things.

The Making Inky Things workshops guide children through four weeks of focused steps that will result in the creation of inky creatures and a paper diorama: a pop-up habitat.



Things On the Shoreline was produced by Access Gallery and artist Cindy Mochizuki in collaboration with grades four and five students at the Vancouver Japanese Language School and the Lord Strathcona Elementary School in 2015-2016.



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THE STEPS

Week 1 Drawing Things From Nothing

Week 2 The Thing and All Its Parts

Week 3 Building Meaning and Narrative

Week 4 Performing our Things

THE MATERIALS



rock salt ink droppers
toothpicks Qtips water payne's gray water colour palette



black and white
fine liners



many pieces of water
colour paper cut to
different sizes
(Large Size 10" X 10" and
Small Size 5" X 5")



Additional
materials:



scissors and white card stock

*if you are building paper-cut dioramas in Week 3

NOTES



Remember:
There is
no right or
wrong
way of making
Things

* Because of the amount of watery ink being used, it's best to select strong watercolour paper!

* Create darker and lighter shades of ink diluting with water, but always leave one dab of paint on the palette!

* Use a cup of water with an ink dropper or spoons! A paintbrush can easily also load up with water too!

* Have plenty of paper towels handy. There may be spills! But it also works well to blot the inks away and create texture!

* A yoghurt container or plastic lids makes a fine substitute for the watercolour palette if you don't have one!

* Try non-traditional brushes like Q-Tips, twigs, and toothpicks!

* Have different sized brushes on hand! Fat ones, small ones, thin ones, medium ones!

Week 1 Drawing Things From Nothing

The workshop begins with the emptiness of a blank page of paper. Students will work to imagine that this blank page becomes the first stage for conjuring their inky things. By way of a few drops of water, ink and maybe even salt, the students will develop their own method of drawing that considers patience, slowness and mindfulness. They can take their time here and enjoy the careful of finding their Things. Children will look at scale and are encouraged to create both miniature and gigantic Things.



Materials: ink, water, brushes, salt, Q-Tips and other non-traditional brushes, paper towels, and paper.



Methods of Making Big and Small Things:

Take 2 pieces of large paper. Bring water to the blank page by using the spoons, droppers or simply load your brush with water and drop onto the page. Place the blue ink into your pool of water using any one of the drawing tools. Move the ink around by pushing the water with your drawing tool or by taking the paper in hand and giving it a shake or a dip. Keep adding more ink to your liking or wipe ink away with Q-Tips or paper towels.

Try another big experiment on another sheet of paper, using a different technique. Remember that this part is about making the outer appearance of your Thing!

After you have done at least two or more big things, let them dry to one side. Try making a small and quiet 'thing' by using smaller drops and tiny toothpicks and Q-Tips.

Experiment with Salt

Load up the page with a darker inky shape; be generous with your dark ink. Gently place a few crystals of salt upon the form. What happens? Let the salt dry on top of the inky shape and wipe off the salt crystals when dry.



Remember: It's okay if mistakes are made! In fact, we encourage messy drips and drops. As a rule let's try not to replicate creatures, monsters, or things found in popular culture that we can already quickly identify. This process is about inventing your own unique and individual Things!

End of Day Reflections

Spend some time writing about what you are beginning to see appear.

Do you already see aspects or characteristics of a particular Thing?

Describe it as best you can and the process of how you arrived there.

Week 2 The Thing and All Its Parts

The students will revisit their Things from the previous week and work with tiny paintbrushes or non-traditional brushes (ie: toothpicks, sticks, feathers, etc.) to create little details, adding layers of meaning and characteristics to their Things. This is the week where we add all the Things' parts, including eyes, tails, hair, teeth, feet, hands, mouths, etc.

Materials: Bring back the painted inky Things from last week! More paper for testing lines and shades, blue inks, cups of water, paper towels, Q-Tips, brushes (just the fine brushes), white gel pens or white felt-tipped pens, fine black liner pens, twigs, and toothpicks. You can also use a fine brush and white gouache paint for detailing the Things!

Methods to Adding All the Parts!

As a group, list all the possible parts of a Thing and create a master list for reference. This can include tails, eyes, ears, legs, hands, teeth, and so on!

Introduce each of the following techniques, using sheets of paper allocated for ink testing:

1. Shading: use layers of darker inks to add depth and shadow.
2. Fine Lines: try making rows of different kinds of fine lines by using fine liner or non-traditional tool, like the twig or toothpick.
3. Patterns: use a white gel pen or white gouache paint with a fine brush to make an assortment of patterns. You can also do the same with black fine liner. an assortment of patterns. You can also do the same with black fine liner.



Now we are ready to return to the quiet activity of working on the parts to our things from last week. What has changed? Begin to ink in and create the parts that will make the Thing complete. Use some of the techniques such as shading, fine lines, or patterns.

End of Day Reflections

Write a little bit about your Thing. Does it have a name? Does it make sounds? What does it like to do? What does it eat? Where does it live and sleep? How does it move? Describe your creature's traits and characteristics.

What else can you tell us about your Thing?

Remember: Sometimes at this point we tend to see a lot of Things we can already identify with, such as cats or birds! This workshop is best when it really is about creating Things we've never even seen before!



Week 3 Building Meaning and Narrative

Students will spend time producing meaning and narrative for their Things — a name, characteristics, and actions that give their particular Thing its distinct meaning. Students will spend time writing down their short descriptive texts that detail and document their Things. If you wish to continue further in this project, you may work with digital colour print-outs of the scanned Things made by each student. Use them like small pop-up characters to be placed within simple paper-cut habitats.

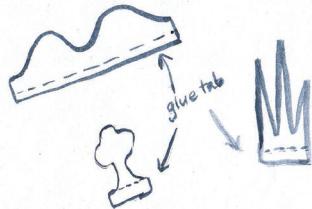
Materials: Digital print-outs on card stock, white card stock for base, more white card stock for cut-outs, scissors and glue/tape, hole punchers, pencils.



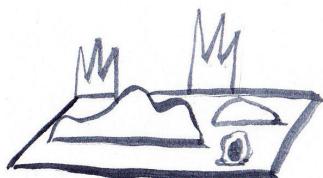
Method:

Each student will spend time cutting out their Things leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ cm border around each character. Using your stories, think of where these Things might live. Are they connected to the sea? Maybe they flew in from afar? Maybe they live underground?

On a sheet of paper, students will begin to sketch out what they think their habitat might look like.



Use white card stock and cut out the shapes, leaving behind an area for a simple glue tab (this can be a simple folded-over tab). Students are encouraged to play with height, textures, holes, folds. Some things to imagine: what kinds of shapes would make grass, trees, waves, rocks, walls, holes, doors, springs? Glue the pieces onto a separate white piece of card that will form the base. Add the foreground, middle ground, and background by way of cut-outs, and eventually find a spot for your inky Thing.



Week 4 Performing our Things

In large or small groups, students will perform and talk about their Things and share their stories. In this week, if the class is interested in documenting this process, the students can work individually or in pairs to perform for the video camera.