



Maud Lewis Lesson Plans for Schools



Art Gallery *of* Nova Scotia



About Nova Scotia Heritage Day 2019: Maud Lewis

In 2015, the province of Nova Scotia declared the third Monday in February **Heritage Day**. The next important step was to give the new holiday a meaningful name and theme. To do this, the province's Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) launched a naming campaign that engaged Primary to Grade 12 classes in local schools. Students were asked to work together to create a suggestion for a holiday name that would instill pride in being Nova Scotian, as well as suggestions for a remarkable person, place or event that have helped to make Nova Scotia what it is today. Once all the entries were collected, a three-member panel was convened to review the students' submissions and select 12 to use for the next 12 years.

Nova Scotia's 2019 Heritage Day has been named in honour of Maud Lewis. A world-famous folk artist, Maud Lewis painted scenes that evoke feelings of innocence and child-like exuberance that is as enduring as the spring times she loved to paint.

For more information on Nova Scotia Heritage Day, visit <https://heritageday.novascotia.ca/content/history-heritage-day>

Lesson Plans

Suggested Grade levels:

4 – 6 (but can be modified for younger grade levels)

Subject Areas:

Visual Arts, Social Studies, Math, Language Arts

Rationale:

Maud Lewis is one of Nova Scotia's best-known folk artists. Her cheerful and unique paintings of simple flowers, birds, animals and her local community of Digby County are a cherished reminder of Maritime life gone by. She was a true hero who triumphed brilliantly despite her physical disability and poverty.

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to investigate the life of Maud Lewis and appreciate what an amazing woman she was.

Students will be expected to:

- create works of art in response to Maud's bright, colourful paintings and simple compositions
- explain their use of elements and principles of design and material choices through discussions
- learn about Maud's life in Digby County and her tiny home (which has restored and is now on exhibit at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia)
- use math skills to map out her house

Classroom Setup:

- access to Chrome Books, computers or library resources so students can undertake their own investigations to learn about Maud Lewis and view her works of art online
- space for mapping out the perimeter of Maud's home, in the classroom or another area in the school
- for painting – access to a sink, coverage for desks/tables, containers for water and paint, and clothing suitable for painting or aprons.

Materials:

House Mapping Lesson – Journey Inside Maud's House

tape measures or metre sticks
painter's tape or masking tape

Painting Lesson – My Maritime Painting

pencils, sharpeners and erasers
paper suitable for painting, such as Mayfair or Fabriano Academia (20 x 26 cm and 26 x 30 cm are good sizes)
paint – tempera, or watercolour (acrylic paint may also be used but it is more expensive and does not wash out of clothing once it is dry)
paintbrushes in a variety of sizes and painter's tape

Additional Resources

Maud Lewis Visual Resources PDF document, available on the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia website.

Additional images are available through the Gallery's Argus database public access portal.

Search "Maud Lewis"

http://as002.prov.gov.ns.ca/Argusnet/Argus_ArtGalleryNovaScotia/Login.aspx?referrer=%2fArgusnet%2fArgus_ArtGalleryNovaScotia%2fdefault.aspx&lang=en-US

Maud Lewis Art Gallery of Nova Scotia <https://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/maud-lewis>

Maud Lewis The Canadian Encyclopedia <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/paying-tribute-to-painter-maud-lewis>

I can make Art Like Maud Lewis NFB Film https://www.nfb.ca/film/i_can_make_art_like_maud_lewis/

Maud Lewis A World without Shadows NFB Film

https://www.nfb.ca/film/maud_lewis_a_world_without_shadows/

Our Maud: The Life, Art and Legacy of Maud Lewis by Ray Cronin

The Illuminated Life of Maud Lewis by Lance Woolaver, Photographs by Bob Brooks

Suggested Outcomes

Outcome 1

Use a variety of materials, technologies and tools to create art in many forms. (CZ, COM, CI, CT, PCD, TF)

Outcome 2

Examine art images throughout history and from various cultures to compare how artists create art to communicate ideas, feelings, and understandings. (CZ, COM, CI, CT, PCD, TF)

Outcome 3

Explain the reasons why a particular subject matter and/or materials have been selected when creating personal artworks. (CZ, COM, CI, CT, PCD, TF)



Maud Lewis, 3 black cats. Private Collection.
© Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

Citizenship (CZ) Communication (Com) Creativity and Innovation (CI) Critical Thinking (CT) Personal Career Development (PCD) Technological Fluency (TF)

Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)

Visual Arts 4 – 6 Streamlined Curriculum https://www.ednet.ns.ca/files/curriculum/visualarts_4-6_streamlined.pdf

Introduction to Maud Lewis (for both lessons)

Begin with an introduction to Maud Lewis and a brief explanation of her life. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's features a good introduction to Maud Lewis and her artwork ~

<https://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/maud-lewis>

Use guiding questions with your students to further their understanding of Maud Lewis and Nova Scotia folk art:

First impressions:

What words best describe Maud's artwork?

Looking and Describing:

What objects, materials and elements do you see in her artwork that are familiar?

How would you describe her art to someone who could not see?

Analyzing:

What do think is the most important part of this artwork?

How do the objects in the artwork relate to one another?

Interpreting:

How does the artwork make you feel?

Informing:

Reference Maud Lewis information gathered by you and/or the students.

Personalizing:

Why do you think Maud Lewis made art?

Why do you think other people would want to see her artwork?

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Researching Maud Lewis Students can further their understanding of Maud Lewis by conducting their own research on line and through resources provided by the library or in the classroom (see Additional Resources on Lesson Page 2).

You may want to provide specific questions to guide the students' investigations:

Where and when did Maud Lewis live?

What challenges did she face?

How did she sell her paintings?

Name some of Maud's favourite subjects to paint.

After the students complete their research, compile a biography of Maud Lewis.

Instructions: House Mapping Lesson - Journey

Inside Maud's House

Gather information pertaining to average home sizes.

Canada's Globe and Mail newspaper also did a feature on average home sizes by country.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/average-home-size-by-country/article27181802/>

Show the students images of Maud Lewis' house, now housed at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in its entirety.

Maud's house measures 4 metres by 3.7 metres. The main floor is one room and there are stairs that lead up to a sleeping loft.



Clear a space in the classroom (or use an area in the school) and map out Maud's house on the floor using painter's tape or masking to indicate the perimeter.

Place a piece of tape on the wall to show how high her ceiling is (1.8 meters). Discuss how Maud painted the objects in her home and made it a living work of art.

Challenge the students to consider how they could configure the space for their living needs. Instruct all of the students to sit or stand within the space - could everyone have visited Maud Lewis together?

Ask students to consider how her living space may have impacted her art making?

Suggested Student Self-Assessment:

- | | | | |
|--|-----|------|----|
| 1. I shared my ideas with the group. | Yes | Some | No |
| 2. I encouraged others in a positive way as we worked. | Yes | Some | No |
| 3. I helped make decisions and solve problems. | Yes | Some | No |
| 4. I worked in a cooperative manner. | Yes | Some | No |
| 5. I helped clean up the materials and our work space. | Yes | Some | No |



Instructions: My Maritime Maud Painting

Begin the lesson by showing the students a selection of Maud Lewis paintings using *the Maud Lewis Visual Resources* PDF document available with this lesson plan. You can choose to focus on a theme or show a variety of her work.

Suggested Themes:

The seaside ~ scenes with water, lighthouses, boats, seagulls

Winter ~ scenes with snow, children skiing, oxen pulling sleds

Animals ~ scenes dominated by animals (birds, oxen, deer, horses)

Introduction

Looking at landscapes – landscapes are pictures that show the natural or man-made physical elements of the land (hills, bodies of water, vegetation and buildings). When we view Maud Lewis's paintings, we see the world she lived in. Painting a landscape is also a way of reminding us of a place that we have visited or imagining a place we would like to visit.

Painting Idea Drawing:

Inform the students they are going to do an idea drawing (a sketch) to guide their final painting. Copy paper is fine for this.

Introduce the concept of a horizon line (where the land or sea meet the sky) and demonstrate how they can begin their composition by adding this line to their paper using a pencil.

One way to make a painting look realistic is to use perspective. This means making the things closest to you (the foreground) bigger than those in the distance (the background).



In this Maud Lewis painting, the deer in the foreground are as big as the houses in the background because the deer are closer to us, and the houses are farther away. Students can complete their idea drawings with the subject matter of their choice, keeping in mind the use of foreground and background sizes.

Other Possibilities for painting subject matter: a favourite animal, thing, person, or place

Animal ~ your pet, or an animal you love (dog, cat, hamster, fish, dinosaur, giraffe, turtle...

People ~ your family, your friends

Place ~ your school, your home, a place you like to visit, the playground, your backyard, the beach

Thing ~ favourite food, favourite toy, a bike, trucks, boats, dinosaurs, outer space, your favourite thing to do

Nature ~ a garden, flowers, a tree

A discussion of the use of elements and principles of design can also be included: The Nova Scotia Department of Education Primary - 6 Curriculum Document has comprehensive explanations and can be downloaded free of charge:

<https://sapps.ednet.ns.ca/Cart/description.php?II=22&UID=MTBKYW4yMDE5MTU1NTEzMTk4LjE2Ni4yMTQuNQ==>

Step by Step Painting: This example was done using tempera paint.



Have the students edge their painting paper with painter's tape, which creates a border that can be left blank or decorated later. It also makes paintings easier to frame.

Instruct students to lightly draw their painting idea on their paper. Students can paint in their backgrounds (their large areas of colour) and allow them to dry before drawing on and painting in the smaller details.

In the Maud Lewis painting below, the large areas are the ground in front with the tulips, the grey road and the yard on the other side of the road.



Here is a sample of painting in the background colours for the Maud Lewis painting on the previous page.



Once the background layer is dry, students can add their small details to finish their painting.

* Painting tip: when the background areas were painted, the white house was left unpainted (it is the white of the paper). The white tulips were painted over the background colour using white acrylic paint, as white tempera paint is slightly transparent and does not show up well over a coloured background.



Remove the painter's tape after the artwork is completed and dry.



And the painting is complete!

Suggestions for Assessment

Presenting Artworks

Have students volunteer to share or present their completed artworks to the class. To help guide or facilitate discussion, have possible “Sharing Topics” listed on chart paper for student presenters to refer to (e.g., explain your use of line, describe your use of colour, identify your subject matter, explain how you created a certain effect...) or make a circular poster with a “spinning” arrow. Students take turns spinning, then respond to the topic chosen by the arrow with regards to their work (e.g., talk about your use of shape, talk about your use of colour, talk about your background, talk about your medium, talk about the most challenging part, talk about your favourite part...).

Art walk – Let students know that in ten minutes, they will be asked to stop midway in their art making to take a walk around the classroom to view and respond to classmates’ work. Students can also respond to their own work and the work of others through teacher directed discussions.

Suggestions for Assessment Notes and Resources

Student responses: (oral or written)

1. The subject or topic for my artwork was _____.
2. I tried to express or show this by using _____.
3. The thing I want you to notice about this work is _____.
4. What pleases me most about my artwork is _____.
5. I would like to improve or get better at _____.

Make anecdotal observations based on students’ oral presentation and engaged participation during “art talks”.

Ideas for Lesson Extensions

Card Making Maud Lewis began her painting career by copying images she saw on Christmas cards.

Students can collect/research old greeting cards as inspiration for their own cards – for composition, use of elements and principles of design, colour schemes, written sentiments, etc.

Materials: Card stock, envelopes, markers, coloured pencils, etc.

Scale model of Maud Lewis’ house Working in groups, have students can produce a scale model of Maud

Lewis’ house_House Model Materials: cardboard, chipboard, Attachment options - tape, glue, hot glue.

For adding visual details – markers, coloured pencils, paint.

* Chipboard – a type of cardboard used as a structure for architecture and industrial design models, backing for paper, or to prevent damages to photographs while being shipped, etc. 100% recycled and recyclable, cut with a utility knife. * Deserres - size : 32 X 40 inches, from \$1.99 - \$9.99

(<https://www.deserres.ca/en/zbchb>)

*Lesson plan contributions by Kris Webster and Brenda Conrad



Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax.

About the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is the largest art museum in Atlantic Canada and is one of the premier arts institutions in Canada, responsible for acquiring, preserving and exhibiting works of art and for providing education in the visual arts. With a collection of over 17,000 works, the Gallery is an incredible resource that provides the people of Nova Scotia and its visitors a unique way to explore the province, country and world through art.

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