

STORM KING ART CENTER VIRTUAL TEACHING GUIDE



What's the Big Idea?: Concepts & Connections

This teacher guide is accompanied by a digital slideshow, and both resources are designed to help you facilitate remote learning around the theme of *What's the Big Idea?: Concepts & Connections*. Construct connections across art, time, nature, and humanity by exploring sculptures and installations in Storm King Art Center's collection. Recommended for grades 6-12.

Dear Teachers,

We're pleased to offer this virtual teaching resource for exploring ideas and artworks from Storm King Art Center, a 500-acre outdoor museum located in New York's Hudson Valley.

This teacher guide provides prompts, resources, and information to be used in conjunction with the digital slideshow for the theme *What's the Big Idea?: Concepts & Connections*. By focusing on a theme within Storm King's collection, we hope to engage your students in conversation, close looking, and activities that can support your visual art, language arts, science, and social studies curricula.

While we are unable to offer guided group visits in the 2020 season, we hope to welcome your students to build on these explorations during a future visit to Storm King. If you have additional questions, please contact us at: groups@stormkingartcenter.org

Thanks for joining us in bringing Storm King into your virtual classroom!

Sincerely,
The Storm King Education Team

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Cover Image: Nam June Paik (American and German, born Korea, 1932–2006), *Waiting for UFO*, 1992. Bronze, stone, plastic, and concrete (in three parts), 10 ft. 7 in. x 15 ft. x 20 ft. 2 in. (322.6 x 457.2 x 614.7 cm). Gift of Cynthia Hazen Polsky, the Joseph H. Hazen Foundation, and the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation. © Nam June Paik Estate

PREPARATION

- **READ** through this Teacher Guide and look through the accompanying slideshow. The slideshow is what you will share with your students, and this written guide provides additional information, prompts, and questions you might use while sharing each slide.
- **CONSIDER TIMING.** You may choose to present the slideshow as one complete lesson, or to break it down into segments shared over the course of a week or weeks. This written guide offers additional information, prompts, and questions you can use while sharing each slide, and you can decide which of these prompts you use, based on the time you have available. You can also choose what length of time you will provide for students to engage with each prompt. You might give them a few minutes to draw a quick sketch, or half an hour to create a more detailed drawing. You might have students discuss a concept in breakout groups and share back, or simply ask everyone to type a few words into that chat box as a response. Depending on your needs, you might also choose to focus only on certain slides during your lesson. We've designed these resources to be flexible and support your virtual classroom needs. So, the slideshow session could take anywhere from 45 minutes to several hours, depending on how you choose to use it.
- **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** We've limited materials for hands-on activities to what most students should have access to for remote learning at home: paper and pencil. Some prompts might require students to search for an object in their home, based on an open-ended prompt (Ex: "Find an object that symbolizes something about yourself or a friend."). If students have particular notebooks, journals, or sketchbooks for certain subjects, you might encourage them to write or draw in these during the session, as well.
- **ENABLE SCREEN AND VOLUME SHARING** from your computer. Because these slideshows include videos of artists, please be sure you are sharing the volume from your computer, as well as your screen.

SLIDESHOW

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?: CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS

The following pages provide additional information and potential prompts you can use while presenting each slide in the accompanying slideshow.

Slides 1 & 2: Title Slides

Let students know that you'll be leading an interactive session, guided by a Storm King Art Center slideshow. Storm King Art Center is celebrating 60 years of engaging artists, visitors, and learners. During this session, students will be exploring the work of three artists and using observations, information, and their own experiences and perspectives to interpret each artwork.

Slide 3: Introduction to Storm King Art Center

- Ask students if they have ever been to Storm King Art Center. If so, what do they remember?
- Play the video featuring Storm King President John P. Stern.
- What did students notice or learn about Storm King from the video?
- How do students think an outdoor museum might be engaging for visitors, artists, and staff?
- How do students think an outdoor museum might be challenging for visitors, artists, and staff?

Additional Information for teachers: Storm King Art Center is a 500-acre outdoor museum, where visitors experience large-scale sculpture under open sky. You and your students can learn more about Storm King's [environmental stewardship](#), collection, and community connections by visiting Storm King's [website](#).

Slide 4: Introduction to the theme *What's the Big Idea?: Concepts & Connections*

- "The viewer completes the artwork." Ask students what this idea, expressed by many modern and contemporary artists, means to them. They might discuss as a class or in smaller breakout groups, or you can ask them to write their response and then share back.
- Invite students to watch the SF MoMA video on Slide 4, in which several artists share their ideas about the role of the viewer in completing artwork.
- Ask students what ideas from the video resounded with them. Students might journal about or discuss their responses to some of the questions below:
 - In the video, the artist Richard Tuttle talks about how artists hope to reach "higher and broader levels of communication." How do students think that communicating through art might be different than other forms of communication?
 - Liz Deschenes talks about creating work that encourages viewers to be "not passive, but active." How do students think they could be active viewers of art?
 - Teresita Fernández talks about the viewer "completing the circuit of meaning in the work." Ask your students what that might mean to them.

- Ask students why they think viewers might sometimes feel hesitant to engage with artwork, or worried about sharing their ideas or responses. Why do students think it might be valuable for viewers to engage and share their ideas anyway?

Slide 5: Exploring Interpretation

- This slide features some concepts that can contribute to the process of interpreting art. You might choose to briefly define these words with your class and further engage with these ideas through the activities and prompts below.
 - **Association:** Invite students to play a verbal free association game. Start by sharing one word and then call on each student to share the first word that comes into their head, inspired by the word you shared. The next student will respond to that new word with an association, etc (ex: Tired. Bed. Sleep. Dreams. Flying. Airplane. Florida. Oranges...). See if any of their classmates' connections surprised them. Alternatively, you could hold up different objects (ex: spoon, pinecone, paper) or share different words (ex: movement, future, city) and ask students to create a list of as many associations as they can for each object or word.
 - **Material and Form:** Artists often engage us by inviting us to create connections. Certain materials and forms can evoke different ideas or feelings. You might ask students to consider what associations they have with different materials (metal, wood, etc) or forms (curvy, sharp, hollow, etc). They could also search the space around them to find a material or form for the rest of the class to respond to with associations.
 - **Symbolism:** Artists might communicate through symbols, which are concrete images or objects that represent ideas. Ask students to search around them for an object, or create a drawing of an object, that could symbolize themselves or a friend. Invite them to share why they chose that symbol.
 - **Context and Juxtaposition:** Our interpretation of an artwork can depend on its context, or the time, place, and events surrounding its creation and viewing. Artists might also juxtapose different materials, forms, or symbols--combining elements to invite new ideas. For example, an apple on a plate might invite ideas about nourishment or roundness, but an apple in a pile of dirt might invite ideas about decay or life cycles. Juxtapose some of the objects or words that students initially free-associated about (ex: pinecone wrapped in paper, a pinecone on a spoon) and see what ideas emerge.

Slides 6 & 7: *Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary)* by Alice Aycock

- Ask students to look closely at the images of this artwork. You can go back and forth between Slide 6 and Slide 7 to see the artwork from different angles and during different seasons.
- What do students notice? What ideas does it make them think of? What choices did the artist make to evoke those ideas?

Additional Information for teachers: [*Low Building with Dirt Roof \(For Mary\)* \(1973/2010\) by Alice Aycock](#)

Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary) was first created in 1973—a time when many artists were working with the earth as an artistic medium—at Gibney Farm, Pennsylvania, land owned by Aycock's family. There, its roof was intended to be planted with whatever crop was growing in the fields surrounding it.

Aycock has associated *Low Building* with both a farmhouse and a small cemetery on her family's property. Mary, of the work's title and dedication, was a child in Aycock's family who died prematurely. Aycock also has said that she was inspired by "frontier homes, the tunnels and tombs of Mycenae, the myth of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, dreams, the memory of my grandparents' attic," and finally adds, "I also have a shelter concept—a sort of physiological need for a 'first house'." The work was re-created at Storm King in 2010.

Media: [Alice Aycock's Oral History Video](#)

Slide 8: Alice Aycock Oral History

- Play the video of Alice Aycock discussing her work.
- What did students discover? How does that relate or add to the ideas they formed?
- Aycock described the piece as both safe and warm, as well as oppressive or dangerous. Do students agree? Why or Why not?

Slides 9-13: *Waiting for UFO* by Nam June Paik

- Ask students to look closely at the images of this artwork, which is installed in three parts around Storm King's Museum Hill. Slides 9, 11, and 13 show each of the three parts, followed by images of details from multiple angles.
- Some parts of this sculpture include TV consoles, bronze and stone representations of Buddha, plastic flowers, and masks of the artist's own face. Ask students what associations each of these objects and materials evoke on their own. When juxtaposed, how might the different parts relate to each other?
- How do students think the artwork might relate to its title, *Waiting for UFO*?
- Ask students to write and/or tell a brief story inspired by this artwork. Share back and explore what elements were similar among students' stories and what elements were different.

Additional Information for teachers: [Waiting for UFO \(1992\) by Nam June Paik](#)

Nam June Paik's *Waiting for UFO* is a three-part work installed in three locations on and near Storm King's Museum Hill. The sculpture has no single focus or narrative; it is discovered gradually throughout the viewer's encounters with its three distinctly sited parts. While it features some of the elements typical of Paik's interior artificial landscapes—scattered televisions, castings of TV consoles, and representations of Buddha—*Waiting for UFO* is one of very few pieces of outdoor sculpture the artist created. A commissioned gift to Storm King, the sculpture was sited according to the artist's choice, but it can be moved to other locations.

Paik was a pioneer video and performance artist who became world-renowned for his experiments with technology. He began to exploit televisions in his art in the early 1960s, exhibiting his earliest "electronic paintings"—television sets with scrambled images—in 1963. His interactive video works of the period presented the spectator with unprecedented visual experiences. In subsequent decades Paik was known for his installations of television sets filled with assorted objects or stacked video monitors displaying witty or dazzling abstract imagery. In Paik's work, television often represents a landscape of contemporary America, assuming a shrine-like role as it does in modern society.

Installed outdoors, *Waiting for UFO* takes on additional significance, suggesting unanswerable questions about the relationship between technology and nature. Old, empty television consoles, dropped haphazardly onto the ground, appear like technological ruins. Paik also included artificial flowers, bronze and stone Buddhas, and solemn bronze masks of himself staring blankly up toward the heavens. Does the work suggest that technology (or its detritus) has overtaken nature, or merged with it? What do Paik's own self-portrait masks signify? This evocative work lends itself to a variety of interpretations.

Slide 14: Artist's Quote

- This slide features a quote by artist Nam June Paik, from a 1986 *New York Times* article.
- Ask students if they agree with the idea that technology and nature/humanity should be balanced. Do they believe those forces are balanced in their own lives? In contemporary society? What does/would a balance between nature and technology look like?
- How do students think this quote might relate to the artwork *Waiting for UFO*?

Slides 15-18: *Permanent Field Observations* by David Brooks

- You can introduce this artwork with the Oral History video on slide 15, and then invite students to look closely at the images on Slides 16-18 and share details they notice.
- Why do they think an artist might choose to capture ephemeral, or changing, natural spaces with more permanent metal sculptures?
- How do students imagine this artwork might look in one hundred years?
- The artist has talked about how this artwork relates to our experience of climate change. In breakout groups, ask students to discuss how they think this artwork might connect with climate change.

Additional Information for teachers: [Permanent Field Observations \(2018\) by David Brooks](#)

An artist who has participated in many scientific expeditions, David Brooks believes that a great challenge of addressing climate change is that its effects are often imperceptible. Brooks has created thirty bronze castings of ephemeral natural objects within Storm King's woods—such as tree roots embracing rocks, or delicately intertwined branches—and permanently affixed them next to the subjects from which they were cast. As future weather patterns alter the site in unknown ways, these intimate replicas will act as time capsules. Brooks has stated, "I'm asking viewers to reconcile the intimacy of apprehending the sculptural object in the quietude of the woods with the vastness of the sculpture's potential lifespan of thousands of years. Such a reconciliation of disparate perceptions is similar to how one might introspectively experience the conflicted notion and existence of climate change."

Media: David Brooks' [Oral History Video](#)

Slide 19: Connections & Reflections

Review the three artworks that your class just explored, and invite students to reflect through discussion or journaling. What connections can students make between the three artworks? You might encourage them to consider similarities in themes, materials, or processes. If students had a favorite artwork, you

could ask them to share why that artwork especially resounded with them. During the introductory conversation, students considered how viewers can complete artworks with their own perspectives and ideas. What did students think about the process of “completing” these three artworks? What was enjoyable about exploring conceptual artworks as a group? What did they find challenging?

Slide 20: Imagine & Draw

- Students will consider how they would create a sculpture that explores an idea. It could be an abstract concept (eternity, joy, freedom) or a political, social, or cultural issue. Invite students to make plans for their sculpture by drawing and writing notes.
- Students might consider the following as they create their plans:
 - What **concept**, or idea, would you choose to explore through art?
 - What **materials** would you use to express your idea?
 - What shapes and **forms** would make up the sculpture?
 - What **context** would the sculpture be viewed in? What type of space would it be in? How would people interact with it?
 - How might you use **symbols** to communicate your idea?
 - Will you **juxtapose** different elements to help inspire connections?
- After they have created plans for their sculptures, invite students to share some of their choices with the class or in smaller breakout groups. Do students notice any connections between their classmates’ work and the Storm King artworks they explored earlier?
- If circumstances allow, the project could be extended by challenging students to construct small scale models of their sculpture out of materials like paper and aluminum foil.

Slide 21: About the Artists

You and your students can follow the provided links to learn more about the artists featured in this slideshow.

Slide 22: Website

Please visit our website for more information and ideas for exploring sculptures, landscapes, and conceptual connections with your students. The next section of this guide directs you to some additional resources you may find useful.

IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

ENGAGE STUDENTS' FAMILIES. Invite students' families to explore our [Summer Camp Anywhere](#) and [Storm King: Create](#) web pages, which include instructional videos and resources for art-and-nature-based activities. While Storm King is currently unable to host groups, the grounds are open for individual or family visits during select months with advanced online reservations. Families can find more information about visiting [here](#).

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE. Storm King's [website](#) offers a range of resources, including [Oral History](#) videos, [Archives](#), and [Current Exhibition](#) information. The website also offers resources related to [Site Ecology](#), highlighting the unique relationship between Storm King Art Center and its surrounding landscape and ecosystems. You might explore parts of the website with your class, or invite older students to do independent research on the website, choosing an artwork or idea to write about or present. The [Storm King at Home](#) page connects you with up-to-date digital content for offsite explorations.

EXPLORE PERSPECTIVE. Whether viewing images on Storm King's website or inviting students to explore 3-D objects in their immediate environment, you can engage students in observing forms from different angles and distances. Invite students to create a rectangle with their hands to use as a viewfinder, "zooming in" on details and "cropping" views. They can try photographing or drawing the same object from multiple perspectives. You might also ask students to imagine or draw what something might look like from a bird's-eye view or a worm's-eye view.

SKETCH. Sketching is a valuable activity for closely observing images, artwork, or a surrounding environment. Ask students to try capturing what they see with single-line contour drawings: Challenge them to create quick sketches without lifting their pencil from the page. Students can also experiment with mark making to capture different textures.

GET MOVING! As you discuss artworks, encourage students to explore ideas with their bodies. They might physically recreate shapes they observe, or respond to art through dance and movement.

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS. Engage students in conversation by asking open-ended questions, such as: What do you notice? What does this make you think of? What do you wonder? What artworks do you like the most? Why?

CONSIDER TITLES. While the audio guide and Storm King [website](#) can provide additional information about each artwork, you might add an additional layer to group conversations by considering how a title might relate to an artwork.

TUNE INTO THE AUDIO GUIDE. Text STORM to 56512 to access Storm King's [audio guide](#) on a mobile device. Learn about works in our special exhibitions and permanent collection right from your phone.

RESOURCES

Storm King Art Center Collection

<https://collections.stormking.org/index.php/About/collection>

John P. Stern Oral History

<https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/4867>

SFMOMA Shorts: *Art is... Complete by the Viewer*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQVZ9tREv2c>

Alice Aycock Oral History

<https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/4862>

Alice Aycock website

<https://www.aaycock.com/>

Nam June Paik, quoted in Douglas C. McGill, "Art People," New York Times, October 3, 1986

<https://www.nytimes.com/1986/10/03/arts/art-people.html>

Nam June Paik Art Center website

<https://njpac-en.ggcf.kr/>

TateShots: 'My crazy uncle', Nam June Paik

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/nam-june-paik-6380/my-crazy-uncle-nam-june-paik>

David Brooks Oral History

<https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/5725>

David Brooks website

<http://davidbrooksstudio.com/>

Storm King Art Center Groups

<https://stormking.org/groups/>

Storm King Art Center Groups

<https://stormking.org/groups/>

Summer Camp Anywhere

<https://stormking.org/education-2/summercamp/summer-camp-anywhere/>

Storm King: Create

<https://stormking.org/education-2/family-programs/storm-king-create/>

Storm King at Home

<https://stormking.org/athome/>

IMAGE & ARTWORK CREDITS

Slide 2

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 3

John Stern Oral History

Video directed by Graham Mason © Storm King Art Center, 2018

Slide 4

SFMOMA Shorts: *Art is... Complete by the Viewer*

Produced by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2017

Slide 6

Alice Aycock, *Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary)*, 1973/2010.

Wood, stone, and earth

30 in. x 20 ft. x 12 ft. (76.2 x 609.6 x 365.8 cm)

Gift of the artist

© Alice Aycock, courtesy Marlborough Gallery, New York

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 7

Alice Aycock, *Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary)*, 1973/2010.

Wood, stone, and earth

30 in. x 20 ft. x 12 ft. (76.2 x 609.6 x 365.8 cm)

Gift of the artist

© Alice Aycock, courtesy Marlborough Gallery, New York

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 8

Alice Aycock Oral History

Video directed by Graham Mason © Storm King Art Center, 2018

Slide 9

Nam June Paik, *Waiting for UFO*, 1992.

Bronze, stone, plastic, and concrete (in three parts)

10 ft. 7 in. x 15 ft. x 20 ft. 2 in. (322.6 x 457.2 x 614.7 cm)

Gift of Cynthia Hazen Polsky, the Joseph H. Hazen Foundation, and the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation

© Nam June Paik Estate

(installation view, 1994)

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Slides 10-13

Nam June Paik, *Waiting for UFO*, 1992.

Bronze, stone, plastic, and concrete (in three parts)

10 ft. 7 in. x 15 ft. x 20 ft. 2 in. (322.6 x 457.2 x 614.7 cm)

Gift of Cynthia Hazen Polsky, the Joseph H. Hazen Foundation, and the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation

© Nam June Paik Estate

Photos by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 14

Nam June Paik in New York City, 1983. Photo by Lim Young-kyun

Slide 15

David Brooks Oral History

Video directed by Graham Mason © Storm King Art Center, 2018

Slide 16

David Brooks with cast elements at the Polich Tallix Foundry, March 2018

Wax cast elements of *Permanent Field Observations*, March 2018

Bronze cast of one element of *Permanent Field Observations*, March 2018

Slide 17

David Brooks, *Permanent Field Observations*, 2018.

Bronze

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist

Photos by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 18

Map with precise locations of David Brooks's *Permanent Field Observations*.

Part of the exhibition *Indicators: Artists on Climate Change*, May 19 – November 12, 2018.

Slide 19

Alice Aycock, *Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary)*, 1973/2010.

Wood, stone, and earth

30 in. x 20 ft. x 12 ft. (76.2 x 609.6 x 365.8 cm)

Gift of the artist

© Alice Aycock, courtesy Marlborough Gallery, New York

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Nam June Paik, *Waiting for UFO*, 1992.

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© Nam June Paik Estate

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

David Brooks, *Permanent Field Observations*, 2018.

Bronze

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Slide 21

Alice Aycock. Photo by Johan Lindskog

Nam June Paik in New York City, 1983. Photo by Lim Young-kyun

David Brooks at the Member Tour of Storm King exhibition *A Proverbial Machine in the Garden* (2013)