

# STORM KING ART CENTER VIRTUAL TEACHING GUIDE



## Material Matters

This teacher guide is accompanied by a digital slideshow, and both resources are designed to help you facilitate remote learning around the theme of *Material Matters*. Explore sculptural materials through prompts, videos, and images of artwork from Storm King Art Center's collection. Make connections between materials and ideas, and consider the processes and choices of artists as they work with diverse materials. Recommended for grades K-5.

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 *Material Matters*. 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 during 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](mailto:groups@stormkingartcenter.org)

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

Sincerely,  
The Storm King Education Team

**Cover image:** Chakaia Booker (American, b. 1953), *A Moment in Time*, 2004. Rubber tires, stainless steel, and steel, 10 ft. x 9 ft. 1 in. x 10 ft. 2 in. (304.8 x 276.9 x 309.9 cm). Gift of the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

# CONTENTS

Preparation	4
<i>Material Matters</i> Slideshow: Accompanying Prompts and Information	5-9
Ideas for Further Exploration	10
Resources	11
Slideshow Image & Artwork Credits	12-13

# 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: "Try to find something made of wood" or "Try to find something round"). 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: MATERIAL MATTERS

The following pages provide additional information and potential prompts you can use while presenting each slide in the accompanying *Material Matters* 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 learning about how artists transform and use materials, and students will also consider what ideas different materials make them think of.

## 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?
- What do students think is special about an outdoor museum?
- What do students think might be challenging about an outdoor museum?

**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 *Material Matters*

- Introduce the word “material.” Ask students what it means to them, or provide a definition with examples. A material is the substance from which something is made. For example, the sole of a shoe might be made of rubber, or a soda bottle might be made of plastic.
- Invite students to do a material search around their room or home. The slide lists four materials for students to search for and gently touch: wood, metal, rubber, and glass. Students do not have to bring back any of these materials--just search for them and notice how they look and feel.
- To help students find each material in their home, you might suggest searching for and touching some of the following objects.
  - Wood: pencil, floor, piece of furniture
  - Metal: spoon, coin, doorknob or handle, furniture or furniture legs
  - Rubber: the side of a shoe sole, rubber band, a strip of rubber along the inside of a refrigerator door
  - Glass: mirror, drinking glass
- Ask students to return and share words that describe how each material feels. They could write word lists as they search, or share their descriptions verbally or in the chat afterwards.

- Ask students what ideas each material makes them think of. For example, wood might make you think of trees, insects, houses, or building blocks.
- Artists might combine materials, or put more than one material together. They also transform, or change, materials by cutting or shaping them in new ways.

### Slide 5: Material Transformation Activity

- Invite students to experiment with transforming a familiar material: paper.
- First, ask each student to take out just one sheet of paper. They could tear it from a notebook or select a loose leaf of paper.
- Model that one way to transform paper is to tear it into a few separate pieces, and ask them to try creating 4 smaller pieces from one sheet of paper.
- Then, ask students what other ways they can think of to transform paper, using only their hands and the four torn pieces of paper they just created. Some ideas include rolling, folding, or crumpling. Challenge them to take a flat piece of paper and turn it into something 3-D that can stand up on its own.

### Slides 6 & 7: *A Moment in Time* by Chakaia Booker

- Ask students to look closely at the images of this sculpture. You can go back and forth between Slide 6, which shows the full sculpture, and Slide 7, which shows details from another angle.
- What do they notice?
- How would they describe the shapes and textures they see? What does the sculpture make them think of? Students can create descriptive word lists or come up with similes (“The sculpture is like \_\_\_\_”).
- Invite students to use their hands or bodies to recreate some of the shapes they see. For example, they can use their whole bodies to take the shape of the larger pieces, and use their hands to recreate the close-up details.
- Share the information that Chakaia Booker created this sculpture out of metal and used rubber tires.
- Where have students seen rubber tires before? What are some associations that students have with tires? (ex: tire swings, screeching sounds)
- What do they think the artist might have done to the tires to create these shapes and textures?
- Why do they think Booker might have chosen old rubber tires as a sculptural material?

#### Additional Information for teachers: [A Moment in Time \(2004\) by Chakaia Booker](#)

Chakaia Booker works almost exclusively with recycled tires—slicing, twisting, stripping, weaving, and riveting rubber and radials to create and exaggerate the textures, prickled edges, and torqued forms of her radical refashioning. Whether she is creating small-scale wall reliefs resembling ballistic blowouts, suggestively hairy and ovoid pedestal sculptures, or colossal landscape-like tableaux, Booker transforms tires—iconic symbols of urban waste and blight—into extraordinary compositions of renewal.

*A Moment in Time* conveys multiple meanings that crisscross historical, social, political, and cultural contexts. The different tonalities of the rubber, for instance, from brown- and blue-, to green- and red-black, are linked to issues of African-American identity as well as to the history of black as a color in

modern art. As commercial objects, tires symbolize the rise and fall of industrial revolutions, the movement of populations across the landscape, the growth of the suburbs, and the decay of urban centers. Discarded and now re-used, the tires are also metaphors for the modern cycle of industrial manufacture and waste in an era of global expansion. *A Moment in Time* alludes not only to environmental degradation and decay but also to the possibility of transformation and redemption through the artist's own brand of environmental spiritualism.

## Slide 8: Chakaia Booker

This slide provides some additional resources for learning about the artist Chakaia Booker. You may choose to explore this with your students now, or return it to it after the rest of the *Material Matters* session. When showing this slide, you might choose to incorporate some of the following prompts:

- On the right side of the slide, we see two different views of the same sculpture, *Foci* (2010). Ask students what they notice about each view. Invite them to walk around a 3-D object and notice or sketch what changes from different viewpoints.
- In addition to creating sculptures out of used tires and metal, Chakaia Booker has spoken about her early work recycling cloth and other materials to create [wearable art](#), such as the intricately woven headdresses you see her wearing in the photos and videos. What are some ways that students reuse materials? Do they have ideas for their own art projects using recyclable materials? You might challenge them to work with their families to create wearable art or sculptures from recycled materials.
- On Booker's website, you can view examples of public artworks. Have students seen any large artworks in a public place before? What do they remember about them? Ask students why they think an artist might want to create work in public places, instead of just in a museum or gallery.
- In the video of Booker, she talks about her work being "abstract" and "organic." Abstract work does not represent something real, but includes shapes, lines, and forms that might lead to different ideas and feelings. Organic shapes are more like shapes from nature, as opposed to a geometric shape like a rectangle. Ask students to create organic, abstract shapes with their bodies or with pencil and paper. How does it feel? What do the shapes make them think about?

## Slides 9 & 10: *Mirror Fence* by Alyson Shotz

- Ask students to look closely at the images of this sculpture. You can go back and forth between Slide 9, which shows the full sculpture, and Slide 10, which shows details from other angles.
- What do they notice?
- What seems familiar? What surprises them?
- The artist, Alyson Shotz, talks about this artwork as a way of seeing the landscape around it. In the photos, what do students notice about the surrounding landscape?
- Why do students think the artist might have chosen mirrors as a material?

**Additional Information for teachers:** [Mirror Fence \(2003\) by Alyson Shotz](#)

The individual pickets of Alyson Shotz's *Mirror Fence* share their shape and height with picket fences enclosing front and back yards all across the United States, but Shotz's fence is reflective and extends in a straight line, enclosing nothing. Shotz has commented on the irony of the acceptance of the picket

fence—it is an innocuous, everyday element in American life, but it serves a protective purpose: each picket is topped with a spike.

Shotz, who studied Geology before becoming an artist, engages the fleeting realities and subtleties of vision and perception in her work. “I’m interested in making objects that change infinitely, depending on their surroundings,” she has noted. “The light at different times of day, the weather, the seasons... all these are just some of the variables that will make the piece different every time one comes in contact with it. For me an ideal work of art is one that is ultimately unknowable in some way.”

Media: Alyson Shotz [Oral History video](#)

### Slide 11: Alyson Shotz Oral History Video

- Play Alyson Shotz’s Oral History video for students.
- What did they discover or wonder about the sculpture while watching the video?
- The artist said that fences are usually used as borders to keep things or people out or in, but this fence does not enclose anything; it’s just a line. What do students think about that choice?
- Alyson Shotz talked about how the sculpture looks different from different places. In the video and the photos, how does the fence change depending on where you view it from? The fence reflects the space around it, so it can also change when the environment around it changes. What do students think might change in the landscape over the course of a day or a year?

### Slide 12: Alyson Shotz

This slide provides some additional resources for learning about the artist Alyson Shotz. You may choose to explore this with your students now, or return it to it after the rest of the *Material Matters* session. When showing this slide, you might choose to incorporate some of the following prompts:

- The photos at the bottom of the slide show the installation of *Mirror Fence*. Ask students what they notice about how the sculpture is put together.
- On the top, right side of the slide are three images of the artwork *Viewscope* (2006). How do students think *Viewscope* and *Mirror Fence* are similar? How are they different?
- In the video of Alyson Shotz’s studio tour, from Storm King’s Instagram, she shows a new process and artworks involving materials from bicycle tires. Ask students to compare Shotz’s new works with Chakai Booker’s sculptures from automobile tires.
- In the video, Shotz shares two books that she’s reading to inspire her artwork. You might invite students to create artwork inspired by a book that they are currently reading.

### Slide 13: Compare/Contrast

- Invite students to look at Chakaia Booker’s *A Moment in Time* and Alyson Shotz’s *Mirror Fence* at the same time.
- What do students think is similar about each sculpture? What is different? You might encourage them to consider shapes, materials, and the space around and between the parts of the artwork. You might also ask them about how they think they would move around or interact with each sculpture.

## Slide 14: Imagine & Draw

- Students will imagine a sculpture they would like to create using either rubber or mirrors, and then draw what it would look like.
- First, ask students to choose which material they would want to make a sculpture from: rubber or mirrors.
- How would they transform and shape their material to make a sculpture? Will it be an abstract shape from their imagination, like Chaikaia Booker's curvy, wavy sculpture? Or will it be inspired by something from everyday life, like Alyson Shotz's fence?
- Ask students to draw a picture of what their sculpture would look like. Encourage them to include details that show what the material is like.
- Additional Challenge: Ask students to imagine in what place their sculpture would be and draw the setting around the sculpture.
- Invite students to share back their drawings. If time allows, each student could share the material they chose and one other choice that they made. Or, students could hold up their drawings while you share something you notice about each of them. Another option for a shareback is to ask students to hold up their drawings in response to questions: "Hold up your drawing if you chose to use mirrors. Hold up your drawing if you chose to use rubber. Hold up your drawing if your sculpture has curvy shapes. Hold up your drawing if your sculpture is an outdoor sculpture. Etc."

## Slide 15: Website

Please visit our website for more information and ideas for exploring sculptures, materials, and landscapes 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>

Chakaia Booker Interview for “WONDER” at the Renwick Gallery

<https://americanart.si.edu/videos/artist-chakaia-booker-interview-wonder-renwick-gallery-153913>

Chakaia Booker website

<https://chakaiabooker.com/>

*Enter the World of Amazing and Original Wearable Art*, Widewalls Magazine, 2016

<https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/wearable-art>

Alyson Shotz Oral History

<https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/4833>

Alyson Shotz Studio Tour Video

[https://www.instagram.com/tv/B\\_z8Q8mhHzh/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_z8Q8mhHzh/?hl=en)

Alyson Shotz website

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

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 6

Chakaia Booker, *A Moment in Time*, 2004.

Rubber tires, stainless steel, and steel

10 ft. x 9 ft. 1 in. x 10 ft. 2 in. (304.8 x 276.9 x 309.9 cm)

Gift of the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation

Installation view from *Chakaia Booker at Storm King Art Center*, May 12 - November 14, 2004.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

### Slide 7

Chakaia Booker, *A Moment in Time*, 2004.

Rubber tires, stainless steel, and steel

10 ft. x 9 ft. 1 in. x 10 ft. 2 in. (304.8 x 276.9 x 309.9 cm)

Gift of the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation

Installation view from *Chakaia Booker at Storm King Art Center*, May 12 - November 14, 2004.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

### Slide 8

Chakaia Booker installing *Foci* (2010) at Storm King, July 2010.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Chakaia Booker, *Foci*, 2010

30' x 8' x 8'

Rubber tire and stainless steel

Courtesy of the artist and Marlborough Gallery, New York

Installation view from *5+5: New Perspectives, Storm King at Fifty*, June 5 – November 14, 2010 and

April 1 – November 14, 2011.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Chakaia Booker Interview for WONDER at the Renwick Gallery

Produced by Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery, 2015

### Slide 9

Alyson Shotz, *Mirror Fence*, 2003 (refabricated 2014).

Starphire mirror and aluminum

36 in. x 4 in. x 138 ft. (91.4 cm x 10.2 cm x 42.1 m)

Gift of the artist and Derek Eller Gallery, with generous lead support from Roberta and Steven Denning.

Additional support provided by The Donald R. Mullen Family Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Schwartz.

© Alyson Shotz

Installation view from *5+5: New Perspectives, Storm King at Fifty*, June 5 – November 14, 2010 and April 1 – November 14, 2011.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

### Slide 10

Alyson Shotz, *Mirror Fence*, 2003 (refabricated 2014).

Starphire mirror and aluminum

36 in. x 4 in. x 138 ft. (91.4 cm x 10.2 cm x 42.1 m)

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© Alyson Shotz

Installation views from *5+5: New Perspectives, Storm King at Fifty*, June 5 – November 14, 2010 and April 1 – November 14, 2011.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

### Slide 11

Alyson Shotz Oral History

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

### Slide 12

Alyson Shotz, *Viewscope*, 2006 (installation view, 2010)

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Storm King Art Center Archives

Alyson Shotz, *Mirror Fence*, 2003 (refabricated 2014).

Starphire mirror and aluminum

36 in. x 4 in. x 138 ft. (91.4 cm x 10.2 cm x 42.1 m)

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© Alyson Shotz

Installation views from *5+5: New Perspectives, Storm King at Fifty*, June 5 – November 14, 2010 and April 1 – November 14, 2011.

Photo by Jerry L. Thompson

Alyson Shotz Studio Visit

Storm King Art Center Instagram, May 5, 2020

### Slide 13

Chakaia Booker, *A Moment in Time*, 2004.

Rubber tires, stainless steel, and steel

10 ft. x 9 ft. 1 in. x 10 ft. 2 in. (304.8 x 276.9 x 309.9 cm)

Gift of the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation

Installation view from *Chakaia Booker at Storm King Art Center*, May 12 - November 14, 2004.

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Photo by Jerry L. Thompson