STORM KING
ART CENTER

Art & Landscape

Teacher Resource: A Guide for School Groups

How do art and landscape support one another at Storm King Art Center? Move around and through sculpted space as we consider how artists and landscape architects create a dynamic, interactive environment.

Recommended for grades K-12.

How to Use This Resource

This Teacher Resource is designed to help you explore the theme of *Art & Landscape* with your students. It is designed for classes planning a visit to Storm King and is accompanied by a slide deck. The resource can also be used in classrooms that are **not** planning a visit to the Art Center. For those classes, the *Storm King Visit* section is included in the slide deck.

By approaching artworks through a thematic lens, we hope to engage learners in focused close looking, activities, and conversations, providing a solid foundation as students construct connections throughout their experience.

Content

This resource and accompanying slide deck is organized in four parts.

1. **Pre-Visit in your classroom**, pages 3-4.
    - **a.** Introduction to Storm King
    - **b.** Art & Landscape Theme
    - **c.** Conversation prompts and activities

2. **Visit to Storm King**, pages 5-7.
    - **a.** Artwork Engagement
    - **b.** Landscape Features

3. **Post-Visit in your classroom**, page 8.
    - **a.** Reflection
    - **b.** Conversation prompts and hands-on artmaking

4. **Additional Resources,** pages 9-10.
    - a. Research links
    - **b.** Key Vocabulary Terms

About Your Storm King Visit

Storm King Art Center is pleased to welcome K-12 school groups. Availability is limited and requests must be submitted at least three weeks in advance. Plan your visit now.

School groups may select a guided tour or facilitate their own visit to Storm King. If you choose an educator-led walking tour, students and chaperones will spend 45-60 minutes with a museum educator exploring three to four artworks through close looking and inquiry-based discussions. While you will not see all the artworks in this packet during a guided tour, we invite you to visit additional works after the tour, if time allows. If you are planning a self-guided visit, use the *Visit to Storm King* section of this resource when you are onsite.

Most artworks featured in this resource packet are located within one mile of the School Group arrival area. Routes between artworks may include paved paths, unpaved paths, and grass.

Contact Us

For more information about accessibility, to request alternative suggestions for this theme, or if you have any additional questions about your upcoming visit, please contact us at groups@stormkingartcenter.org.

Introduction

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Be attentive to what they see, hear, smell and feel. Recall other experiences at museums and compare and contrast those with their visit to Storm King.
- Describe the weather and identify evidence of the season. Discuss how the weather and season affect how a visitor perceives an outdoor sculpture. Predict and discuss how that experience might be different at other times of day, in different weather, or at other times of year.
- Notice the materials, color, and form of sculptures and compare them with the surrounding landscape. Consider why an artist or curator may have chosen that site for the sculpture.
- Observe the scale of a sculpture in relationship to their bodies and to the landscape.
- Identify and describe elements of Storm King's landscape, such as native grass fields and mountainous viewsheds. Discover how Storm King's landscape has been designed, developed, and maintained by humans. Explore the landscape as an active ecosystem, supporting relationships between living and non-living things.

Connections to Educational Standards

Here are a few ways in which this lesson plan connects to the New York State Department of Education learning standards. This list is not exhaustive.

Visual Arts:

- **Enduring Understanding 2.1:** Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and artmaking approaches.
- **Enduring Understanding 6.1:** Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented communicate meaning and function as a record of social, cultural and political experiences; resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding.
- **Enduring Understanding 8.1:** People gain insight into meanings of artwork by engaging in a process of art criticism.

Science:

- **Weather and Climate:** Describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season.
- **Earth's Systems:** History of Planet Earth, Earth Materials and Systems, Ecosystem biodiversity.
- **Engineering Design**

Language Arts:

- **Reading Anchor Standard 7**: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats.
- **Writing Anchor Standard 4:** Develop personal, cultural textual, and thematic connections within and across genres through written responses to texts and personal experiences.

Pre-Visit

Introduction to Storm King Art Center

Storm King Art Center is a 500-acre outdoor museum where visitors experience large-scale sculpture under open sky. **We strongly recommend using our free digital guide on Bloomberg Connects,** via the QR code here. You'll find photos, videos, audio recordings, maps, suggested routes, activities for children and families, and more. Use the guide to plan your visit, then easily access helpful insights when you're onsite. Afterward, use it in the classroom to dive deeper into your favorite works. You and your students can also learn more about Storm King's environmental stewardship, collection, and community connections in this brief video.

Introduction to Art & Landscape Theme

Invite students to draw or describe some different types of landscapes, or areas of land, that they've experienced. Some examples include beaches, city parks, and deserts. What parts of the landscape might have been naturally occurring (trees, mountains, etc.)? What parts of the landscape might have been designed by humans (gardens, walls, etc.)?

Storm King is an outdoor museum with some naturally occurring landscape features, like the view of Schunnemunk Mountain. However, many landscape features are designed and maintained by people, such as the grassy fields and Museum Hill. Share this Oral History video of architect Joyce Rutherford, who reshaped Storm King's indoor and outdoor spaces along with her husband, landscape architect William Rutherford, Sr. What did students notice about Storm King's landscape in the video?

At Storm King, art and landscape interact. Many artists choose specific areas to place their artwork, and Storm King's grounds team might also add hills or flatten the ground to create the perfect site for a sculpture. When students visit Storm King, they'll have a chance to explore artworks from different perspectives, like looking down on them from a hill and then standing right under them on flat ground. As a warmup, invite younger students to look at their hand from multiple perspectives (from below, from above, up close, far away, etc.) and see what they notice. Sculptures at Storm King might also help students notice different things about the space around the artworks, such as repeating the shape of a mountain or framing the clouds in the sky.

Observe and Discuss

A site-specific artwork is designed to be experienced in a particular space. Introduce students to one of Storm King's first site-specific artworks, Robert Grosvenor's *Untitled*, and one of Storm King's most recent site-specific works, Sarah Sze's *Fallen Sky*.

Ask students what they notice about how each sculpture relates to the landscape. Share Robert Grosvenor's Oral History Video and Storm King's exhibition video about *Fallen Sky*.

In small groups or partners, ask students to discuss what they learned. Compare and contrast the two works. What choices did each artist make about materials, site, and negative, or empty, space? What might change about each sculpture and its surrounding landscape during different seasons, or at different times of day?

Visit to Storm King

If you are on a self-guided visit, or have time before or after your tour, walk the grounds. View the same artwork from multiple perspectives and notice how it changes. Ask students to think about the relationship between each sculpture and the landscape around it. Do they frame or highlight one another in new ways?

Artwork Engagement

Storm King Wall and *Storm King Wavefield* are a greater distance from the School Group arrival area than other artworks and will require additional time and walking.

Click each artwork title to view artwork information.

Artwork: Robert Grosvenor, Untitled (1970)

Location: Meadows | **#302** on our Map

Engagement: View from multiple angles. Ask students what they notice about the artwork in person, which they did not notice when viewing photos in class. The artist talked about creating a work of “a size that fit” the space. How do you think your experience might be different if the sculpture was smaller, or longer, or higher? Students might take photos or make sketches that include part of the sculpture and part of the landscape.

Artwork: David von Schlegell, Untitled (1972)

Location: Meadows | **#305** on our Map

Engagement: View from far away, close-up, and within each structure. Older students might take photos from different angles. The artist said that these forms “force a particular awareness of the most basic element of nature, the sun.” Do students agree? What do students notice about light and shadow? How might this work invite them to engage with the sky and landscape in new ways?

Artwork: Sarah Sze, *Fallen Sky* (2021)

Location: Museum Hill | **#232** on our Map

Engagement: View from far away, close-up, and from above and below the hill. Ask students what they notice from each perspective. Invite them to consider why the artist might have given this work the title *Fallen Sky*. Watch the reflections in *Fallen Sky* for a few minutes, while relaxing and breathing deeply. Students might take some time to write thoughts that come to mind when they look at *Fallen Sky* or draw part of the artwork and landscape that interests them.

Artwork: Andy Goldsworthy, *Storm King Wall* (1997-98)

Location: South Ponds | **#603** on our Map

Engagement: Walk along the wall for a while. How does it relate to the landscape elements around it? Invite students to choose several individual stones to sketch on the same page. Invite them to make word lists to describe the stones and the wall. How might they arrange their words around the sketches on their page?

Artwork: Maya Lin, *Storm King Wavefield* (2007-08)

Location: South Ponds | **#605** on our Map

Engagement: Ask younger students what kind of movements they can make to capture the shapes of *Wavefield* and the landscape around it. If the work is open for interaction, invite older students to walk quietly and meditatively through the rolling fields. Alternatively, they can walk alongside the earthwork, experiencing the waves and surrounding landscape. Afterwards, they might journal about their experience or discuss it with a partner.

Landscape Features

As you explore the theme of *Art & Landscape* with your students at Storm King, you might also consider how the Art Center preserves and transforms its landscape over time. Storm King Art Center is actively involved in its site ecology, which is the relationship between living things and their surrounding environment. For more details, check out the landscape section on the digital guide on Bloomberg Connects or visit the online exhibition *Site Ecology: Land, Leadership, Art*.

During your visit to Storm King, explore site ecology with your students by pointing out some of the following examples:

Viewshed: The viewshed is land beyond the property line that forms the backdrop to Storm King's art and landscape. Storm King has worked with other local organizations to protect this land, some of which is now Schunnemunk State Park. Storm King's co-founder, H. Peter Stern, called the viewshed the Art Center's "green wall." What are some other ways students would describe it?

Native Grasses: In 1996, Storm King began to re-introduce native long grasses and wildflowers into its fields. The fields are burned by controlled fires each year to help keep the native grasses healthy. The burning helps remove thatch, a build-up of organic materials at the base of the grass. It also eliminates some invasive plant species. Invite students to search for wildlife that the native grasses and flowers attract. What do they notice about the textures and colors of the fields? Learn more and see photos of the grass burning in the digital guide on Bloomberg Connects.

Allées: Allées are paths lined with trees or bushes, which provide visual and wind barriers. In 2019, Storm King replaced an allée of deteriorating maple trees with black gum trees, which are better suited to withstand changing climate and ground conditions. Discover more about the allée revitalization in the video here. As you walk through allées with your students, consider how the pathway might change during different seasons and over the course of many decades.

Tree Wells: Tree wells were constructed during the final stages of building the sculpted hillside of Museum Hill in the late 1990s. The wells were constructed to prevent damage to the roots and trunks of the trees as a means of preserving their integrity as the earth was reshaped on the hillside. More information about the tree wells is available in the Landscape section on Bloomberg Connects.

Post-Visit

Reflect

Ask students to individually journal or talk with a partner about their visit to Storm King. What do they remember about the artwork and the landscape they experienced?

Earthwork

At Storm King, many artists create sculptures that interact with the landscape around them. Some artists even reshape the land to create earthworks. Play Maya Lin's Oral History Video for students. You can also share some archival images of *Storm King Wavefield* and its construction. What do students notice about Lin's process?

Some questions for students: Maya Lin talked about the *Wavefield* as a "living sculpture." Why do you think she might call it that? The artist also said that the sculpture was "in dialogue with the surrounding hills." What do you think it means for an artwork to be "in dialogue" with the area around it? If you had a chance to experience *Storm King Wavefield* during your visit, what did it feel like to explore that artwork? One of Maya Lin's goals was to invite people to "get lost within a wave." How might that connect with your experience of the artwork?

Art Exploration

Prompt for Students: Choose one image of Storm King's landscape from this digital folder. What type of artwork would you create to interact with this landscape? Would it be a sculpture that frames or highlights the space around it? Would you transform the earth to create land art? What shapes and materials would you include? How would people engage with the artwork?

Ask students to discuss their ideas with a partner and then create a drawing showing what their artwork would look like.

Invite students to share some of their choices with the class or do a "gallery walk" around the room to explore students' sketches.

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

Joyce Rutherford Oral History
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/4864

Robert Grosvenor Oral History Video
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/4868

Robert Grosvenor Archival Images
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/entities/114

David von Schlegell Archival Images
https://collections.stormking.org/Browse/archival/facet/rel_entity_facet/id/135

Storm King Art Center's Instagram video of *Untitled*
https://www.instagram.com/stormkingartcenter/reel/C7Zc6HMOAqA/

Sarah Sze Exhibition Video and Website
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/occurrences/152

Andy Goldsworthy's 2000 Exhibition
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/occurrences/105

Maya Lin Oral History
https://collections.stormking.org/Detail/oralhistory/5724

Storm King online exhibition *Site Ecology: Land, Leadership, Art*
https://collections.stormking.org/Featured/index

Storm King Landscape and Allée Revitalization
https://stormking.org/about/landscape/

Storm King Art Center Groups
https://stormking.org/groups/

Vocabulary

Perspective: typically the representation of 3-D objects or spaces in two-dimensional artworks. In sculpture, perspective relates to the angle or view one has on an artwork and the space around it.

Site-specific artwork: a work of art created and designed specifically for a particular location, and whose meaning often has an interrelationship with the location.

Scale: the size of one part or object in relation to another part or object. Artists at Storm King use scale, or perception of size, in relation to landscape features.

Positive and negative space: positive space is the subject or areas of interest in an artwork, while negative space is the area that surrounds the artwork.

Landscape architecture: the practice of analyzing, planning, and designing outdoor environments that are functional, sustainable, and enjoyable.

Earthwork/Land art: art that is made directly in the landscape, sculpting the land itself or making structures in the landscape using natural materials.

Credits

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Cover Image: Sarah Sze, *Fallen Sky*, 2021. Photo by Jeffrey Jenkins.