

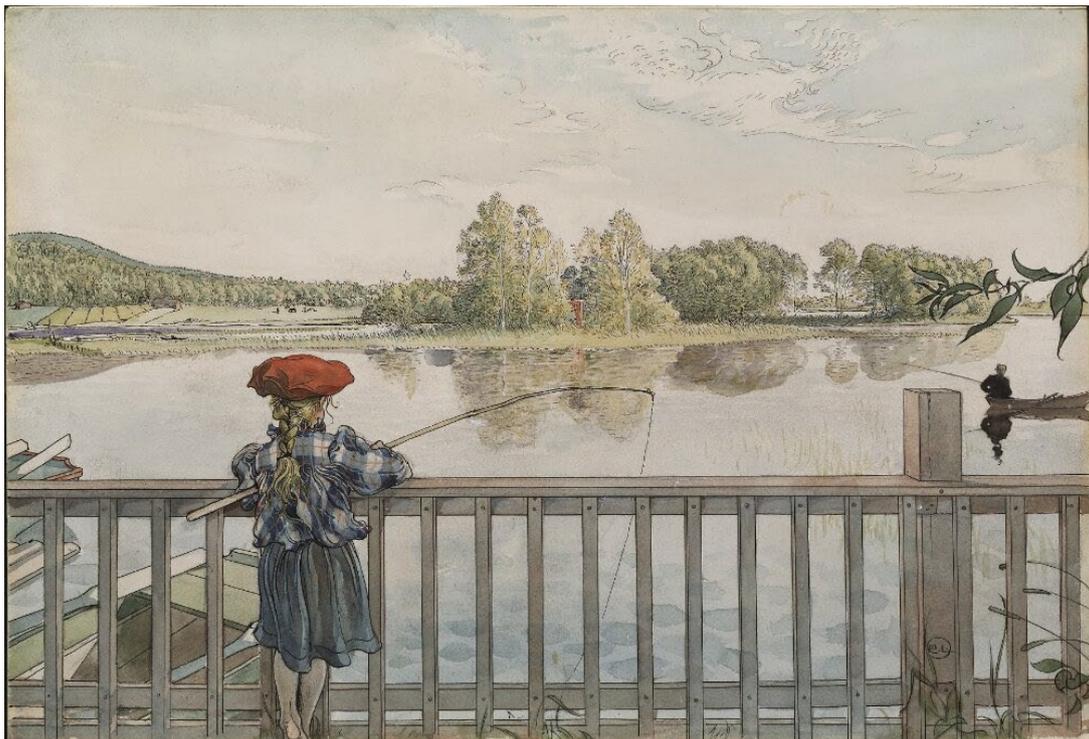


**GET CREATIVE**  
WITH ART ONLINE

MODULE No: 3 of 8

# NATURE

- Lesson Background for Teachers -



# LESSON AIMS and OBJECTIVES

- To consider nature and how we think about it
- To think about human interactions in nature
- To examine the relationship between people and nature in Art

## FOCUS

Art, Drama, Language (SMSC) Spiritual, moral, social, cultural understanding

## AGE RANGE

Ages 9 – 11 (Adaptable for younger or older pupils)

## SKILLS

Analytical Thinking/ Creativity/ Perception/ Self Awareness

# Theme: Nature

## What do we think of when we think of it?

When we think of nature, we think of the natural world which surrounds us.

Over the centuries, that environment has provided us with the resources to live and grow. But nature also provides us with places to play and relax.

The way we experience nature depends on who we are and where we are and what we are doing.

But nature is also always changing -- from season to season and from year to year.

In some places, nature sometimes seems to sleep beneath a layer of winter snow, which allows us to ski and skate. In other places, summer heat leaves us unprotected and needing shelter.

Nature provides our food and the land we farm, but it can also be a dangerous or frightening environment.

It's important to respect and value the natural environment we have around us, wherever we are in our diverse world.

## Why is it important?

Nature gifts many benefits to humans. It provides us with the resources we need to live. From the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat, nature freely

provides the essentials for our survival. It underpins our economy, our society, and our very existence.

Nature also provides us with beauty and inspiration and the settings to enjoy life in the best way. Without the fresh air, space and plants and animals found in nature, our health and well-being would be badly impacted.

Because nature is free, we often take it for granted and overexploit it. But without it, we could not continue to live happily. So, our most important aim in life should be to protect and value nature.

## How does it affect our lives/ our world?

The health of the natural world has a direct impact on the health of us all. Without a strong and healthy natural environment, we can't have the resources we need to thrive.

But being in nature also affects the way we feel. Connecting with nature, or even viewing pictures of nature, can reduce stress and fear and increase pleasant feelings. Being in nature not only makes us feel better emotionally, but it can also reduce muscle tension and blood pressure and contribute to our physical well-being. We can benefit from and enjoy nature when walking, hiking or biking in parks or forests or fields. We can feel differently about nature, depending where we live on Earth.

Nature is vital and we should protect and use it to enrich our lives without reducing its benefit to future generations.

## Did you know ...

- The surface of the Earth is 70% water and only 30% land. About 2 % is fresh water and the rest salt water. Fish can live in either fresh or salt water, but humans need fresh water to survive. The water on which we depend is limited and precious.
- 2000 years ago, 80% of Europe was covered by forests. Today, it is estimated to be closer to only 37%. However, the amount varies from country to country. In Sweden, the figure is 60% while in the UK, it is only 13%. The amount of forest affects the number of animal species able to survive in the forest habitat.
- The mountains contain important materials for the mining industry and are exploited for human and industrial use. The oldest mountains were formed about 400 million years ago.

# HOW MIGHT AN ARTIST PORTRAY NATURE?

- Nature can be visualized in many different ways, as we can see in the variety of representations found in art galleries. As in nature, colours can vary from subtle and lifelike to vivid and wild.
- Techniques can be hyper realistic or verging on abstract. And every medium, from oils and water colour to charcoal sketching and even sculpture is possible. Nature can also be expressed through different shapes: square, rectangular, oval, triangular.
- Artists can portray nature in a contained way as an observer, but some choose to show the interaction between humans and the natural world or even place themselves within the natural world. Exploring these relationships can suggest a deeper meaning than simply recording the landscapes they see. Artists can express feelings and senses in their paintings. We see details and colours that strengthen the message that they want to express in their paintings. A stormy sea, for example can express not only nature but also strength, worry and even fear.

## OUR MAIN ARTWORK



- Title: LISBET ANGLING
- Artist: CARL LARSSON 1853 --- 1919, Swedish
- Medium: Water colour and paper
- Dimensions: 32 x 43 cm
- Date Completed: 1898
- Location Displayed: NATIONALMUSEUM, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
- Web link: <https://bit.ly/3MR33GO>
- How / When was it acquired by the gallery? Bought 1900

### How does it communicate 'Nature'?

The artist shows a girl (Lisbet) standing on a bridge with her fishing rod. This is our introduction to the scene which the artist tries to capture for us of the still, watery lake before her and the trees and sky reflected in it.

It communicates nature as vast and unfolding with the small girl contrasting with the wide and open sky. Lisbeth is strongly anchored to the foreground while nature is shown as spreading out to infinity beyond her.

Artist Carl Larsson mostly painted in water colour throughout his life. In this picture, he communicates the softness of the still water and the flowing clouds with the watery paintwork he uses to capture them, showing nature in a relaxed and relaxing way.

Carl Larsson painted many other water colours during his life, but he is most famous for displaying the daily life of the Larsson family, in the series called "A Home".

## IN CONTEXT

Are there other works by the same artist (or others) that help us understand it more?

These 3 paintings by Carl Larsson show the variety of ways he captured scenes, both in nature and inside.



In "A landscape study from Barbizon", an early painting in oil, the landscape is empty and without human interaction. The painting gives a feeling of abandonment. The air is still and we can almost smell the dry grass.



In "Open Air Painter", Larsson presents a winter theme from Åsögatan, in the centre of Stockholm. The painting shows human interaction in different ways – the horse pulling the sledge, the painter working on his picture in the chilly daylight surrounded by spectators, the boy with his sledge. The colour tones are greyish, showing the greyish day light.



"Getting ready for a game" is one of the pictures from Larsson's home in Sundborn. This is more typical of his painting style. The richness of details illustrating the ordinary life of the family is the same as we can see in "Lisbet Angling".

# OTHER ARTWORKS THAT SAY SOMETHING ABOUT NATURE



From Greece

- Title : **TWO CHILDREN ON THE BEACH**
- Artist: **Triantaphyllidis Theopharistos 1881-1955, Greek**
- Date Completed: **1919**
- Location Displayed: **THE NATIONAL GALLERY, ATHENS, GR**

## What it says about 'Nature'

The Greek artist Theopharistos Triantaphyllidis was an impressionist painter. This is visible in this picture representing the landscape and the riverbank with the sand surrounding the children. Perhaps it shows nature as a place for them to explore.



From United Kingdom

- Title: **BATHERS AT ASNIERES**
- Artist: **Georges Seurat**
- Date Completed: **1884**
- Location Displayed: **THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ENGLAND**

## What it says about 'Nature'

Seurat shows nature here as both a place for industry, supporting human life, and as a place of recreation and refreshment on a hot day. People swim and lie by the river. They rest on the shore and use a boat--maybe for fishing. But the factories in the background also show the river as a place of industry.



From Italy

- Title **ALLA STANGA**
- Artist **Giovanni Segantini** 1858 – 1899, Italian
- Date Completed: 1886
- Location Displayed: **NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART, ROME, ITALY**

## What is says about 'Nature'

Nature and the connections of people to nature are the core themes of the art of Giovanni Segantini. Throughout his life, it was important to him to paint mountains and fields and rural areas with humans and families with their animals. The animals here accompany the people and are lit by 'heavenly light' to show their importance.

# PUPIL ACTIVITIES:

## (POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES TO USE AS APPROPRIATE WITH YOUR PUPILS)

Teachers can choose from each category below or devise their own – or different activities, like creating computer generated images, a piece of music/ song/ rap inspired by art or researching other galleries or pieces of art they feel illustrate this theme.

## ART ACTIVITIES

Cartoon animation can be an effective way of showing movement and activities like throwing or running or flying. In a series of drawings which show an activity, imagine yourself as the main character and show the event in a cartoon of 3 pictures.

*Link to toolbox*

Painting with water colours can allow an artist to quickly capture a scene. Use paper and various colours, find out how mixed colours can be used for different kinds of landscapes.

*Link to toolbox*

Imagine that the picture 'Lisbeth Angling' is a poster of a new film. Create the idea for a different film and make your own poster for it. Include a suitable film title that would attract people to watch it.

*Link to toolbox*

## LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Imagine you are Lisbeth from the painting/ or someone else fishing on a beautiful spring day. Write a letter to a friend describing the experience and how you prepared, what you saw and what you did.

Search for facts about one of the following types of nature: forests, seas, mountains, pastures, oceans. Then write an ad which could be used to promote that aspect to tourists and present it to the class.

With a friend, imagine a dialogue between cows in a meadow. Discuss what they might they be thinking and talking about.

Deliver a presentation about fish and fishing. What do you think about fish? What types of fish have you heard of? Have you prepared or eaten them? Have you ever gone fishing?

# DRAMA ACTIVITY / Circle Time

Split in twos and decide of a nature element (wind, fire, wave etc) or animal that makes a distinct sound. Try to make this sound identical between the two of you. Now all the class students spread in the class; try to be as far from your partner as possible. Now everyone close your eyes. Try to find your partner in the space, by making your agreed sound. Do not open your eyes, until every pair's players have found one another.

In groups of 5-6, take up a different case of nature landscape and circumstance: forest during the nights, forest during rain, calm sea, sea storm etc. What kind of sounds would there be? Create the soundscape using your hands, bodies, mouths or small objects and present it to the rest of the class, who will have their eyes closed.

## USEFUL RESOURCES:

The WWF Conservation Organisation View of the Importance of Nature  
<https://www.wwf.org.uk/what-we-do/valuing-nature>

Working with Water Colours  
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=LzereRZ4WJE>

Weblink to Sundborn, the home of Artist Carl Larsson  
[www.carllarsson.se](http://www.carllarsson.se)

Weblink to the landscape where Carl Larsson lived  
[www.visitdalarna.se](http://www.visitdalarna.se)