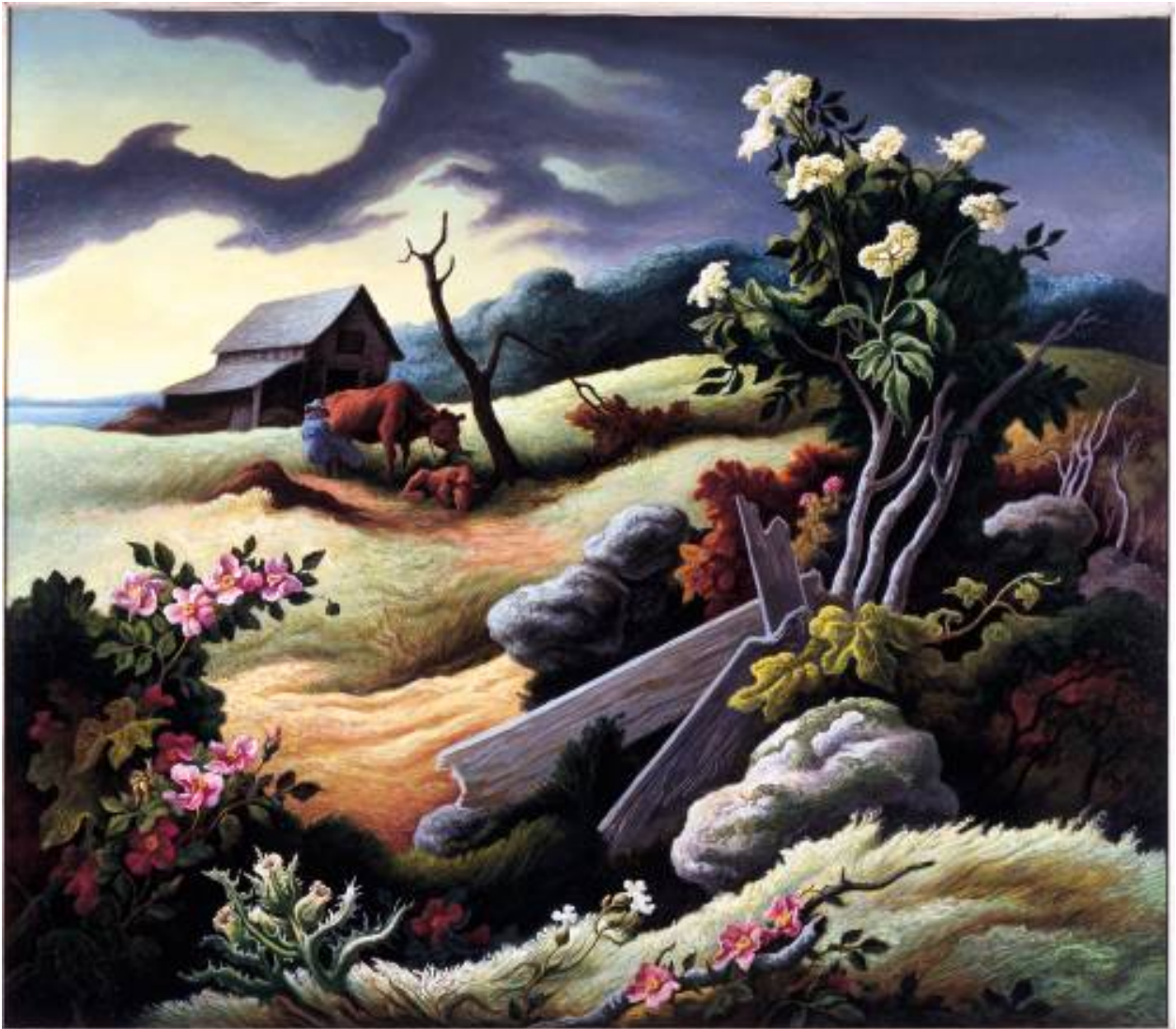


# My Outdoor World

SCHOOL TOUR PACKET – Pre-Kindergarten

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Thomas Hart Benton (American, 1889 – 1975), *June Morning*, 1945, oil on masonite, 42 x 48 in., Purchased with funds from the Cummer Council, the Morton R. Hirschberg Bequest, and the Mae W. Schultz Charitable Lead Trust, AP.1994.2.1. Art © T.H. Benton and R.P. Benton Testamentary Trusts/UMB Bank Trustee/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

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## INTRODUCTION

This Pre-Kindergarten packet has been designed in line with Florida Early Learning and Development Standards for four year olds to encourage students' natural curiosity about the world around them including learning about plants, animals, and weather they see in various artworks. A selection of artwork is included in each of our school tour packets to build background knowledge. Works that are included in the packet and not highlighted on the tour are similar examples of what students will see and expose them to multiple works of art in our Permanent Collection.

Please email [schooltours@cummuseum.org](mailto:schooltours@cummuseum.org) with any questions.

## TOUR SUMMARY

### Objective

Students will make meaningful connections to art, gardens, and the outdoor world through observation and dialogue while building critical thinking skills.

### Theme

My Outdoor World

### Big Ideas

- + Nature is represented in art
- + Humans depend on nature
- + Artists paint the world around them
- + Interconnections of gardens, animals, insects, people, and mother nature

## **STANDARDS**

### **LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION, AND EMERGENT LITERACY**

#### **Listening and Understanding**

- + Increases knowledge through listening; benchmark: Child shows understanding by asking and answering relevant questions, adding comments relevant to the topic, and reacting appropriately to what is said.
- + Follows multi-step directions; benchmark: Child achieves mastery of two-step directions and usually follows three step directions, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

#### **Speaking**

- + Speech is understood by both a familiar and an unfamiliar peer or adult; benchmark: Child's speech is understood by both a familiar and unfamiliar peer or adult.

#### **Vocabulary**

- + Shows an understanding of words and their meanings; benchmark: Child has age-appropriate vocabulary across many topic areas and demonstrates a wide variety of words and their meanings within each area (e.g., world knowledge: names of body parts, feelings, colors, shapes, jobs, tools, plants, animals and their habitats, and foods; words that describe: adjectives, verbs, and adverbs).

#### **Conversation**

- + Uses language to express needs and feelings, share experiences, predict outcomes, and resolve

problems; benchmark: Child demonstrates varied uses of language (e.g., requesting, commenting, using manner words, problem-solving).

### **MATHEMATICAL THINKING**

#### **Number and Operations**

- + Begins to develop an understanding of separating a set into a maximum of four parts, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

#### **Patterns and Seriation**

- + Understands characteristics of patterns and non-patterns and begins to reproduce them with at least two elements (e.g., red/blue, red/blue versus a non-pattern like a rainbow); benchmark: Child recognizes patterns and non-patterns.
- + Understands various two-dimensional shapes, including circle, triangle, square, rectangle, oval, and other less common shapes (e.g., trapezoid, rhombus); benchmark: Child categorizes (sorts) examples of two-dimensional shapes; benchmark: Child names two-dimensional shapes.

### **COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**

#### **Scientific Inquiry – Earth and Space**

- + Explores the outdoor environment and begins to recognize changes (e.g., weather conditions) in the environment, with teacher support and multiple experiences over time.

- + Discovers and explores objects (e.g., rocks, twigs, leaves, seashells) that are naturally found in the environment.

### **Creative Expression Through The Arts – Visual Arts**

- + Explores visual arts.
- + Creates visual arts to communicate an idea.
- + Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by an artwork.

### **Creative Movement and Dance:**

- + Explores creative movement and dance.
- + Creates creative movement and dance to communicate an idea.
- + Discusses and responds to the feelings caused by creative movement and dance.

## **ARTFUL THINKING AND CLOSE LOOKING**

The purpose of Artful Thinking and Close Looking is to engage students in meaningful, thoughtful conversation while closely observing artwork. By observing and looking closely at a work of art, students can activate their critical thinking skills through making observations, explaining their reasoning, listening to others, and discussing – all while making personal connections and interpretations.

The process of looking closely can be broken down into different stages (observation, analysis, and interpretation) and is appropriate for and successful with ages PreK through adult. It's helpful to note that this process works not only for observing artwork but can also be applied when making observations in nature or while reading (e.g. observe and notice images/illustrations in a book). Use these looking strategies while viewing the artwork in the packet with your class.

Before launching into Artful Thinking, preview the focus of each of the three phases, to get a sense of the skills that are isolated within each phase and how they build off of each other.

### **Observation**

To begin the Artful Thinking method, encourage students to look closely at the work of art and describe what they notice and see. Questions using the elements of art (line, shape, color, form, value, texture, and space) are particularly helpful in driving the conversation to what students actually see, rather than what they think is happening (interpretation). Ask

students to observe a work of art for 30 to 60 seconds before beginning conversation about the work. After the designated time has ended, ask the following questions:

- + What do you notice/see?  
(Encourage students be specific)
  - What colors do you see?
  - What types of lines do you see?
  - What types of shapes and forms do you see?
- + What else do you notice/see?  
(Encourage answers from other viewpoints)
- + Can you describe them in more detail?
  - How would you describe the colors?
  - How would you describe the lines?
  - How would you describe the shapes and forms?

### **Analysis**

During this stage, students are analyzing the arrangement of objects and the general composition of the work of art and how the objects work together. The conversation can move to the following line of questioning:

- + How is it all arranged?
  - Where do you see those colors?
  - Where do you see those lines?
  - Where do you see those shapes and forms?
  - How are they grouped?
- + How do these elements of art work together?

## Interpretation

Students now use the visual evidence they (and their classmates) have been gathering to support their answers during the interpretation phase. Their responses will depend on what they have identified during the observation and analysis phase. Offer relevant contextual information within the conversation as it flows.

- + What do you think is happening?
- + What makes you say that?
- + What do you think the artist's message is? What is this artwork about?
- + Why do you think that?

## Notes about the process of Artful Thinking and Close Looking

- + The stages in this process can happen simultaneously rather than in discrete phases as outlined above. For example, your line of questioning could go from observation to analysis and back to observation. Here is a sample conversation with Kindergarten or First Grade students.
  - You: What do you notice and see?
  - Student 1: A house. (Note: most often, students will initially and naturally jump immediately to interpretation – it's what we're used to doing – to make meaning immediately. Slow them down by asking follow-up questions. Ask for evidence.)
  - You: What makes you say that it's a house? What do you notice? What lines do you see?
  - Student 1: It looks like my grandma's house. I see tall lines

and the color brown. I notice people inside the windows.

- Student 2: The lines make a triangle. It looks like a roof.
  - Student 1: I see a street, and a house lives on a street.
  - You: What do you notice that makes you say that? What lines do you see? Student 1: The lines are flat and long, right next to each other. And the lines that make a square (the house) are next to the lines that make the street.
  - Your role becomes to question and prompt so that the students give the detail and evidence that supports their observations. The direction of questioning depends on how the class responds, so be adaptive, responsive, and flexible to the flow of the conversation.
- + Artful thinking requires a level of active listening:
    - Be open to asking questions unique to the responses to help facilitate the conversation.
    - Be open to a multitude of interpretations, because students are forming their own connections and meanings.
  - + Artful thinking encourages not only close observation but also helps students practice slowing down their looking and seeing.



## **VOCABULARY**

### **ANIMAL**

A living organism that feeds on organic matter; a mammal

### **FLORA**

The plants of a particular region, habitat, or geological period

### **GALLERY**

A room or building devoted to displaying works of art

### **GARDENS**

A plot of land specifically decorated with plants, trees, and shrubs for people to enjoy; also a plot of ground used to cultivate flowers, vegetables, fruits, and herbs

### **HUMANS**

A human being, especially a person as distinguished from an animal

### **INSECT**

A small arthropod that has six legs and generally one or two pairs of wings; a small invertebrate animal

### **LANDSCAPE**

A picture or painting representing a view of natural scenery

### **NATURE**

The physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations

### **WEATHER**

The state of the atmosphere with respect to heat or cold, wetness or dryness, calm or storm, clearness or cloudiness



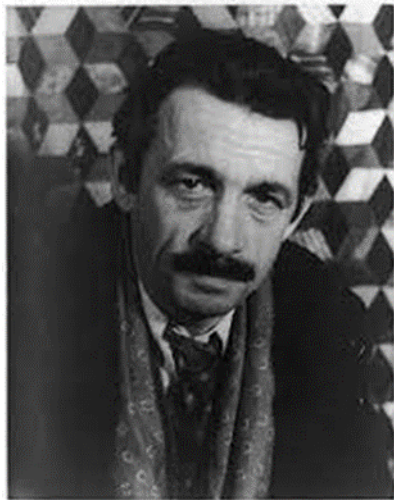
## WORKS OF ART & ACTIVITIES

### *June Morning*



Thomas Hart Benton (American, 1889 - 1975), *June Morning*, 1945, oil on masonite, 42 x 48 in., Purchased with funds from the Cummer Council, the Morton R. Hirschberg Bequest, and the Mae W. Schultz Charitable Lead Trust, AP.1994.2.1. Art © T.H. Benton and R.P. Benton Testamentary Trusts/UMB Bank Trustee/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

### About the Artist



Benton was born in the small Missouri town of Neosho to a family of politicians. His father was a congressman and his great uncle was the first United States senator west of the Mississippi and the longest-serving senator to date. Benton pursued an

art career despite the disapproval of his family, first attending the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and then studying in Paris.

Benton was the central figure in the Regionalist movement and used his art to strive to elevate the experiences of everyday people and ordinary events. He discovered deeper meaning in seemingly straightforward experiences in the rural Midwest.

### About the Painting

This work depicts a view from his mother's house on Martha's Vineyard and is characteristic of Benton's mature style.

In the foreground, the vibrant, twining foliage parts to reveal their neighbor, Henry Look, milking a cow. Also visible is the Atlantic Ocean in the distance.

This work is Benton's patriotic testament to the strength of the American spirit in the face of the destructive powers of war and was painted one month after Germany's surrender in World War II.

Henry Look symbolizes Benton's vision of the American way of life, while the departing storm clouds suggest the passing threat of war.

The cycle of life is represented by the bountiful new growth that dominates the foreground and the broken, dead tree in the distance.

## Questions to Explore with your Students:

- + What colors do you see?
- + Are the colors bright or dull?
- + What nature objects do you see?
- + What man-made objects do you see?
- + Look at the sky, what seems to be happening?
- + Close your eyes. Open them and look at the painting. What do you notice first? Where does your eye go next?

## ACTIVITIES

### 1. Environments

Activate students' knowledge of the world by asking them to share what they know about various types of environments like forests, rivers, oceans, or mountains. Ask them to name animals and plants that live in these different environments. Use props, photographs, magazines, and art reproductions to spur discussion.

### 2. Postcards

Select an image of a natural setting. Ask your students if they have ever visited a place that looked like the image. Is it a real place, or imaginary? If you could enter the painting, what sounds would you hear? How would it smell? What would the weather be like? How would you describe the scene to someone who has never seen this place?

Ask students to write, or dictate to you, a description of the place in the form of a postcard to send to a friend or family member. This can be done individually, or as a group.

Have students paint or draw a front for the postcard. (Postcards can be as large or small as you like). Display the postcards in the classroom. If you choose a traditional size format, you can address the cards for mailing.

### 3. Create Your Own Landscape

Have students use their imagination to create their landscape drawing. Make sure to include plants, animals, and even people. Encourage students to share their drawing with others.

Are people interacting with land and nature in their artwork? What kinds of animals and plants live in their landscape?

## Meissen Porcelain



Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, Soup Plate with "Bee" Pattern, ca. 1740, 8 5/8 inches, Gift of Miss Constance I. and Mr. Ralph H. Wark, AG.2000.2.382. Photograph courtesy of Brian Shrum.

### About the Object

The Wark Collection of early Meissen is one of the finest in the world. Named after the German town on the Elbe River near Dresden, Meissen was the first true porcelain manufactured in Europe. Marco Polo returned to Europe with the first Chinese porcelain at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. However, European potters were unable to actually produce their own porcelain until the early 1700s.

This plate is an example of the new style of floral decoration that was introduced in the Meissen factory around 1740. The decoration on this plate includes insects and flowers.

### Questions to Explore with your Students:

- + What do you notice first about the object? Why do you think it drew your attention there?

- + What insects do you see?
- + How many insects do you see?
- + What other natural items do you notice?
- + What do you think this work is made out of?
- + What would this object be used for?

### ACTIVITY

#### 1. Story Time

Looking at the image, have the class write a story about a butterfly or insect flying through a garden. Have your students illustrate the story.

#### 2. Nature Reading

Read and discuss books related to insects and butterflies. Encourage students to share their knowledge of the characteristics of the animals in the story, and of other animals that might live in the same environment.

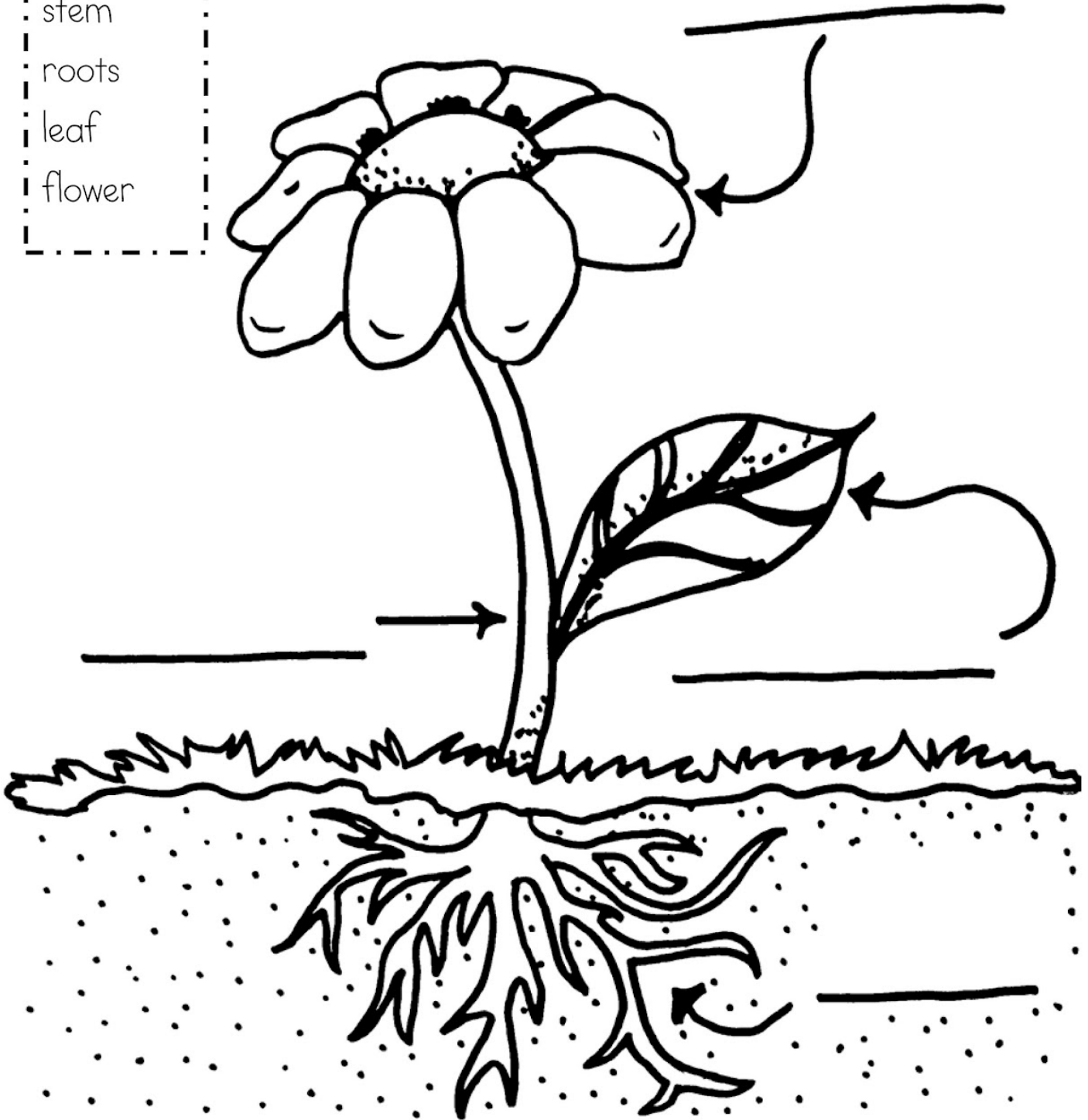
#### 3. Plant a Garden

Research different plants and flowers and have the class pick their favorite to grow in the classroom. Have students take turn watering the plants and reporting to the class the changes through the school year. Review with your students what plants need to grow. Learn about the parts of a plant by using the diagram on the next page.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Label the Flower

Word Bank:  
stem  
roots  
leaf  
flower



<http://kindergartensimplicity.blogspot.com>

## RESOURCES

### Reading Resources

- + *The Tiny Seed*, Eric Carle
- + *A Picture Book of Underwater Life*, Theresa Grace
- + *The Giving Tree*, Shel Silverstein
- + *Fish is Fish*, Leo Lionni
- + *The Great Race of the Birds and Animals*, Paul Goble
- + *Scrabble Creek*, Patricia Wittmann
- + *The Rainbow Fish*, Marcus Pfister
- + *Where the Wild Things Are*, Maurice Sendak
- + *In the Swim*, Douglas Florian
- + *The Big Storm*, Dave and Julie Saunders
- + *Cloud Dance*, Thomas Locker
- + *The Cloud Book*, Tomie dePaola
- + *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*, Verna Aardema

### Music Resources

- + *Old Folks at Home (Swanee River)*, Stephen Foster
- + *Moon River*, Henry Mancini
- + *Blue Danube*, Richard Strauss
- + *Deep River* (spiritual)

- + *America the Beautiful*

### Visual Resources

- + Winslow Homer's images of the St. John's River and people working on rivers
- + *The Haywain*, John Constable
- + *The Oxbow*, Thomas Cole
- + Claude Monet's paintings of his gardens at Giverny and the Thames River in London
- + Japanese woodblock prints of landscapes and rivers
- + Roman floor mosaics of animals

### Internet Resources

- + Interactive Parts of a Plant - [www.softschools.com/science/plants/plant\\_parts/](http://www.softschools.com/science/plants/plant_parts/)
- + Butterfly video - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUybrJmFv0c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUybrJmFv0c)
- + Animal Habitat Interactives - [www.sheppardsoftware.com/preschool/animals.htm](http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/preschool/animals.htm)

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