



TOOLKIT: DOCUMENTING NATURE

THEME: NATURE / TECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT: VISUAL ART

ARTIST: DANNY BRACKEN

GRADE: recommended 5th-12th grade

OBJECTIVES

Students think critically about technology and how it shapes their interactions in the world.

Students experience nature without technology and then through the lens of technology and compare through artwork.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. How do we use technology to interact with the natural world? Does that change the experience?
2. How does our documentation of the natural world through photos, videos or social media change, enhance or alter our experiences in nature?
3. Have you had experiences in nature that were transformative? Have you had these experiences without documenting them through technology?
4. Do you think it is important to have experiences in nature?
5. Do you still want to have an experience in nature even if you have seen photographs of a place or phenomenon? What makes an in-person experience different?

VISUAL REFERENCES

1. *What Does it Mean?* (2014) by Danny Bracken
2. *Again and Again* (2014) by Danny Bracken
3. *Is Always* (2014) by Danny Bracken

ACTIVITY

Have an experience with nature. This can mean walking through a park on a rainy day, watching the sunset, hiking through a canyon, swimming in a river, smelling some fresh cut grass, anything! Be inspired by this experience. Spend 30 minutes in nature without using your phone or any sort of technology to enhance the experience. Take notes with a paper and pen, make some sketches, try to carefully notice the experience with nature. After 30 minutes take some photos or video with your phone to record the details. Create two pieces of artwork about this experience in the natural world – one that uses technology and one that does not.

BONUS

Create a piece of artwork in the natural world using only natural materials. Use a phone, camera or video camera to record this work. How does the technology change the original piece of work? How does the technology change your experience of the work?





PENNSYLVANIA CORE STANDARDS

VISUAL ARTS

(9.1.5.A-9.1.12.A)

-know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities

(9.1.5.B-9.1.12.B)

-recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts

(9.1.5.D-9.1.12.D)

-use knowledge of varied styles within each art form through a performance or exhibition of unique work

(9.1.5.E-9.1.12.E)

-demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through creation of works in the arts

