

Adopt an Artwork 2025 -2026

Lotus

Lotus Beds on the St. Jones River, Ethel Pennewill Brown Leach

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8th

Visual Arts (Mixed Media)

OVERVIEW

Artists observe nature and interpret it in unique ways through color, brushwork, materials, and mood. Compare and contrast two artists whose work reflects the same subject matter in different way.

TIME REQUIRED

4-6 class periods

STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

- VA:Cr1 – “Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.”
- VA:Cr2 – “Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.”
- VA:Cr3 – “Refine and complete artistic work.”
- VA:Re7 – “Perceive and analyze artistic work.”
- VA:Re8 – “Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.”
- VA:Cn10 – “Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.”
- VA:Cn11 – “Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.”

STUDENT “I CAN STATEMENTS”

- I can generate original artistic ideas inspired by nature and two different artists.
- I can develop my idea by planning a sketch and choosing a brush-style (soft vs bold).
- I can use color, brushwork, and composition to express mood in my artwork.
- I can analyze how artists use water and plants in their paintings and explain differences.
- I can connect my artwork to the natural environment and my own experiences.
- I can present my work and reflect on my choices and the work of others.

MATERIALS

- Images of: Lotus Beds on the St. Jones River — Ethel Penewill Brown Leach and Lotus — Leni Paquet-Morante
- Watercolors or acrylics or mixed media
- Watercolor paper or mixed-media paper
- Brushes (variety of sizes)
- Pencil + eraser
- Water containers, palette, paper towels
- Optional: Oil pastels for resist technique
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LESSON ACTIVITIES

Lesson 1. Engagement

- Show both artworks and ask:
 - What do you notice first?
 - How do the artists show the water and plants?
 - How do the paintings make you feel?
 - What differences do you notice in color and brushstrokes?
- Mini-context talk:
 - Leach captures calm Delaware wetlands with soft colors and gentle realism;
 - Paquet-Morante uses bold, expressive brushwork and more vibrant, modern color choices.

Lesson 2. Compare and Contrast Discussion

Feature	Leach	Paquet -Morante
Style:	Impressionistic realism	Contemporary impressionism / expressive
Brushwork:	Smooth, controlled	Bold, textured, energetic
Color:	Natural, soft greens and blues	Brighter, more saturated hues
Mood:	Peaceful, quiet river scene	Dynamic, lively water surface
Focus:	Entire landscape, broad view	Close observation of water lilies & reflections

Guiding Questions:

- How does each artist show movement in water?
- Which painting feels more calm? More energetic? Why?
- How do scale and perspective change how we view the plants?

Lesson 3. At-a-Glance Comparison:

- Time & context
 - Leach: Early 20th century, American regional artist painting local Delaware scenes; plein-air/naturalist approach. Traditional Fine Arts Organization
 - Paquet-Morante: Contemporary painter; works often explore water, light, reflections, and lotus forms in a modern way. FASO +1
- Subject
 - Leach: A river scene with lotus beds integrated into a landscape — emphasis on place (St. Jones River). Instagram
 - Paquet-Morante: Lotus forms and water as primary subject; sometimes abstracted or large-scale and focused on pattern, reflection, and surface.
- Style & technique
 - Leach: Naturalistic, representational, likely oil on canvas painted outdoors (plein air) with softer, observational brushwork. Delaware Art Museum
 - Paquet-Morante: Contemporary acrylics/ mixed approaches with bolder scale, stronger abstraction in some works, and emphasis on texture/pattern. FASO +1
- Color & mood
 - Leach: Earthy, muted coastal/river palette — calm, quiet mood that describes a real place. Traditional Fine Arts Organization
 - Paquet-Morante: Often brighter or higher-contrast palettes and layered surfaces that emphasize shimmering water and dramatic patterning. FASO
- Composition

- Leach: Horizon and landscape orientation; lotus beds part of a bigger scene (boats, banks, sky possible). Instagram
- Paquet-Morante: Compositions can isolate the lotus, zoom in on repeating shapes, or use large, flattened areas to highlight form and reflection.

Lesson 4. Similarities and Differences (Venn Diagram)

- Similarities
 - Both center around lotus/water imagery.
 - Both pay attention to how light and water interact with plant forms.
- Differences
 - Purpose: Leach documents a local place/time; Paquet-Morante explores form, surface, and contemporary expression. Delaware Art Museum+1
 - Visual language: representational vs. sometimes abstract/expressive

Lesson 5. Studio Activity (60-90 min)

- Sketch
 - Draw a water scene with either lotus or lilies
 - Include water reflections & plant shapes
- Underpainting (background wash)
 - Light watery wash for sky and water
- Add Plants
 - Layer greens
 - Practice petal and leaf shapes
- Brushstroke Study
 - Try both artists' styles
 - Smooth, blended strokes (Leach)
 - Bold, textured dabs/strokes (Paquet-Morante)
- Final Details
 - Highlights, ripples, flower centers
 - Optional: pastel resist for flowers

Lesson 6. Studio Activity (90 min)

- Sketch
 - Draw a water scene with either lotus or lilies
 - Include water reflections & plant shapes
- Underpainting (background wash)
 - Light watery wash for sky and water
- Add Plants
 - Layer greens
 - Practice petal and leaf shapes
- Brushstroke Study
 - Try both artists' styles
 - Smooth, blended strokes (Leach)
 - Bold, textured dabs/strokes (Paquet-Morante)
- Final Details
 - Highlights, ripples, flower centers
 - Optional: pastel resist for flowers

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

- Formative
 - Art vocabulary: Uses terms like brushstroke, mood, impressionism
 - Observation: Captures plant and water features
 - Technique: Shows layering, color choices, brushwork practice
 - Reflection: Thoughtful critique and self-evaluation
- Summative
 - Assessment Sheet:
 - Observation and Effort
 - Creativity
 - Reflection and Explanation
 - Student Reflection

VOCABULARY

- Impressionism: a 19th-century art movement that started in France. Painters showed everyday life and nature using fast brush strokes and bright, unmixed colors
- Perspective: an art technique that shows depth on a flat surface
- Composition: the arrangement of visual elements
- Brushstroke: a single mark or line left on a surface by a paintbrush
- Foreground: the parts of a picture or scene closest to the viewer
- Background: the part of a picture or scene behind the main objects
- Color palette: a set of chosen colours used together in art, design, or digital displays to create a style, mood, or visual match
- Mood: the overall feeling, atmosphere, or emotional state that a piece evokes in the viewer
- Contrast: the arrangement of opposite or different elements
- Botanical forms: the visual shapes, structures, and anatomical features of plants and fungi

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- "Ethel Pennewill Brown Leach." Works – Ethel Pennewill Brown Leach – Artists – Delaware Art Museum, emuseum.delart.org/people/256/ethel-pennewill-brown-leach/objects.
- "Contemporary Landscape Painting." Leni Paquet Morante, <https://lenimorante.com/>