

eva
ELEMENTARY VISUAL ARTS
Park City Education Foundation • Kimball Art Center

LESSON
1
Charley Harper
Nature Illustration

Verbal Directions

LESSON OVERVIEW

Charley Harper (1922 - 2007) was an American artist known for his illustrations of wildlife. Students will learn about his unique style. Using simple shapes and colors, they will explore local wildlife to create a collage.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the life of Charlie Harper
- Study local wildlife
- Practice recognizing simple shapes in complex forms
- Explore cutting out shapes and making a collage

SUPPLIES

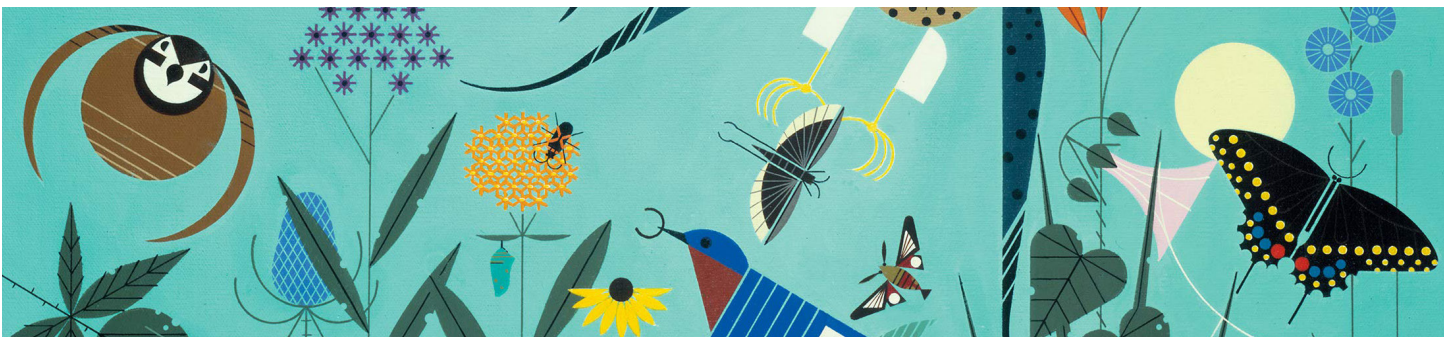
- Cardstock
- Constructions paper
- Patterned paper
- Basic shape stencils
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Images of Harper's artwork

CHARLEY HARPER



Charley Harper (1922 - 2007) was an American artist known for his illustrations of wildlife. He was raised on a farm in West Virginia. There, Harper developed an early appreciation and love of animals as well as design. He studied at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and served in the army. His art is focused on nature and he has created his own unique style that he calls "minimal realism". In addition to his many acrylic paintings on canvas, Charley has designed over 50 "bio" posters for non-profit conservation groups, nature centers and zoos, United States national parks and monuments, and international wildlife sanctuaries and biosphere preserves.

In his illustrations Charley Harper simplifies his subject to the most important parts with bold colors, shapes and textures. [Learn More](#)



LESSON PLAN

1. Show students the illustrations of Charley Harper and talk about his childhood. With students, create a list of words to describe his unique style. Consider color, texture, line, and shapes.

- What makes his style unique ?
- Why do you think he represents animals this way and not in a more realistic way?

Minimalism is a way of making modern art or music that uses simple ideas, sounds or shapes. It was most popular in America in the 1960s and 1970s. There are many different kinds of minimalism. Sometimes a simple thing is repeated many times until it seems very complicated. Today minimalism can be used to talk about many things such as design, architecture, poetry, and movies.

2. Share with students the work that Charley Harper created for non-profit conservation groups, nature centers and zoos. Think out loud about how artists can help with nature conservation.

People who care about conservation try to preserve natural resources so they will still be around in the future. They also try to keep the environment clean and healthy.

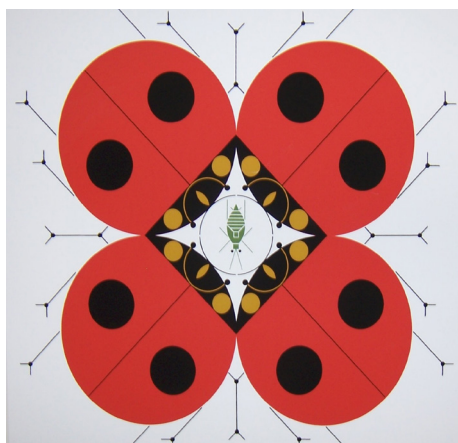
- What local wildlife do we have/see in park City
- How can art be a tool for conservationists?

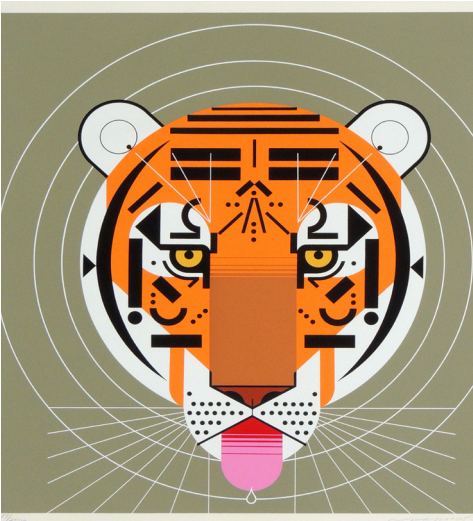
3. Using images of local birds or wildlife practice seeing and drawing basic shapes. Pass out scissors and paper and demonstrate cutting out basic shapes of a bird: body, head, wings, beak. Encourage students to make their collage unique using different color paper and patterns. * Choose different local animals for each grade level. Demonstrate how to refine a shape with scissors.

4. Students can decide on a color for the background and then glue their shapes to create an illustration of an animal. Add design elements in the background to suggest an environment.

6. Use a fine line marker to add detail. For clean-up, ask students to pick up paper scraps and recycle for the next group. Finally, have students share their own interpretation of their animal illustrations.

EVA+: Draw a favorite animal using only basic shapes. Fill each shape in with pattern and color using markers. Or create a poster that promotes environmental protection.





KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS: Based on National Core Arts Standards visual Arts Requirements (Kindergarten).

VA:Cr1.1.Ka:

Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.

VA:Cr2.3.Ka:

Create art that represents natural and constructed environments.

VA:Cn11.1.Ka:

Identify a purpose of an artwork.

VA:Re8.1.Ka:

Interpret art by identifying subject matter and describing relevant details.

STUDIO HABITS OF THE MIND:



ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Click on links to learn more.

- <https://www.charleyharperartstudio.com/about-charley/about-charley.html>
- <https://www.ohiomagazine.com/arts/article/the-art-of-charley-harper>
- <https://www.juxtapoz.com/news/illustration/master-of-the-month-charley-harper/>
- <https://www.nps.gov/people/charley-harper.htm>

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