

Street Cows

Objective

Students will read about “Cows on Parade,” an art display in Chicago, IL, of sculptures in the shapes of cows and painted in imaginative designs. Students will discuss the differences between real and imagined cows. Students will use the outline of a cow to create art.

Background

Everyone knows that real cows don’t come with sunflowers or polka dots painted on their sides, but sometimes it’s fun to imagine them that way. In 1999, a group of artists in Chicago were invited to use their imaginations to create art on fiberglass sculptures in the shape of cows that were standing, lying down or grazing. The cows were put on display all over the city, some indoors and some outdoors.

Even though cattle do not come with flowers painted on their sides, they do come in many different colors. Some have red bodies with white faces and “socks” on their feet. There is no polka dot breed of cattle, but some do have spots.

Like people, cattle come in many different colors. The color depends on the breed. The cattle you see on Oklahoma ranches come in all colors. Angus cattle are black; Herefords are red with white faces; Jerseys and Limousin are brown; Charolais are white with pink noses; Holstein cattle are white with black spots. Both male and female cows are born with horns (unless they are a polled breed). Usually the farmer has the veterinarian remove them.

Materials

- cardstock
- glue
- crayons, markers,
- glitter, sequins and other materials for decorating the outline of a cow
- ink pad

Procedures

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary. Many towns in Oklahoma have similar displays of animals painted with artistic designs. Discuss what other animals they have seen in your town or other towns and cities.
2. Students will read the passage, “Street Cows,” included with this lesson.
—Students will identify the main idea and supporting details in

Oklahoma Academic Standards

GRADE 2

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3,4.
Reading and Writing Process: R.3;
W.1
Life Science: 2-1

GRADE 3

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3,4.
Reading and Writing Process: R.3
Life Science: 1-1

GRADE 4

Speaking and Listening: R.1,2,3,4.
Reading and Writing Process: R.3
Life Science: 1-1

Vocabulary

art—the use of skill and creativity especially in the making of things that are beautiful to look at, listen to, or read

breed— a group of animals or plants usually found only under human care and different from related kinds

imagination—the act, process, or power of forming a mental picture of something not present and especially of something one has not known or experienced

real—agreeing with known facts.

- the passage.
3. Bring books from the library with pictures of real cows and imaginative cows. Students will separate the realistic pictures from the imaginative.
 - Students will list characteristics of real cows and cartoon cows.
 - Draw a Venn diagram on the chalkboard, and use the lists to show how the two are different and how they are the same.
 4. Students will write two paragraphs about cows—one about a real cow and one about a make-believe cow.
 5. Many of the Chicago cow sculptures had names that were made up words based on words related to cow. As a class, students will list all the words they can think of that rhyme with the words “cow” or “moo” and make up as many words as they can think of from those words (“COWch,” “MOOvie,” etc.)
 6. On cardstock, copy the outline of a cow included with this lesson.
 - Provide one copy for each student.
 - Students will design and create their own art cows.
 - Create your own public art gallery by hanging students’ drawings in the hallway.
 - Students will write or dictate stories about their cows and share their stories with the class.
 7. Cut a large outline of a cow from butcher paper or cut several cow outlines from foam board or poster board. Students will create a class cow for display or several art cows to display in various locations around the school.
 8. Holstein cattle are the most common kind of dairy cattle found in Oklahoma. Holstein cattle are white, with black spots. Each cow’s spots are unique, just as each person’s thumbprints are unique.
 - Provide students with copies of the cow outline included with this lesson.
 - Provide a black or purple stamp pad for students to use to make spots on their cows, using their own thumbprints.
 - Students will color in the cow’s ears, face, tail and udder.

Extra Reading

Carle, Eric, and Laura Whipple, *Animals Animals*, Puffin, 1999.

Cronin, Doreen, and Betsy Lewin, *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Laden, Nina, *When Pigasso Met Mootisse*, Chronicle, 1998.

Simon, Carly, and David Delamare, *Midnight Farm*, Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1997.

Wheeler, Lisa, and Ponder Goembel, *Sailor Moo: Cow at Sea*, Atheneum, 2002.

Wolfman, Judy, and David Lorenz Winston, *Life on a Cattle Farm*, Lerner, 2002

Street Cows

Usually you don't see cows grazing in city parks, climbing up the sides of buildings or hanging from the ceiling in a public library. But in the summer of 1999, dozens of colorful cows began to appear in just such places in the city of Chicago. The cows were life-sized sculptures made of fiberglass. Some were standing; some were lying down and some were grazing. All were painted in bright, beautiful colors. One sculpture was called "Day and Night Cow" because it had daytime scenes painted on one side and nighttime scenes on the other. The "Spring Flower Cow" was painted with big beautiful flowers. "HANDsome" was a white cow with hand prints in many different colors. "Lady Bug Cow" was painted to look like a lady bug and attached to the side of a building, and "The Cow That Jumped Over the Moon" was hanging from a library ceiling. Some of the cows had polka dots. Some had stripes. Some were decorated with photos of children or painted to look like the Chicago skyline or a farm scene or the night sky. Many had clever names. MOOnet (pronounced moo NAY) was painted to look like a painting by the French painter, Claude Monet, and PiCOWso looked like something created by the Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso. ChiCowgo had the Chicago skyline painted on its side. Cowch Potato was a cow reclining on a couch covered with grass. Empty milk bottles were strewn about on the ground in front of the couch.

The cows were placed all around the city for an exhibit called "Cows on Parade." Peter Honig, a Chicago businessman, got the idea from a similar exhibit he saw in Zurich, Switzerland. Honig tracked down the sculptor who created the Swiss cows, Pascal Knapp, and asked him to produce more cows for an exhibit in Chicago.

For the Chicago exhibit, the city's Department of Cultural Affairs purchased 180 standing cows, 30 reclining cows, and 90 grazing cows from the Swiss sculptor. Each cow was white, produced from fiberglass, and weighed about 40 pounds. The city had a contest for local artists, who produced designs to paint on the cows. Local businesses bought the cows and sponsored the artists. At the end of the show, the cows were auctioned off to raise money for charity. The next year cows showed up in New York City, Stamford, Connecticut, and West Orange, New Jersey. The year after that there were cows in Houston, Texas, and Kansas City, Missouri.

Name _____

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