

## The power of nature on colours and paper



We often associate risk with a very human emotion: fear. Decisions on how to deal with risk and climate change effects are often based on the principle that people are—or else *should* be—afraid of hazards.

Disasters have become part of the new normal in contemporary times, whether they involve wildfires, heat waves, floods, a pandemic, a technological accident or violent acts. Planning for and adapting to risk is now a much-needed skill for facing the future.

Using drawing as a visual research method, we argue that although in some cases they can be traumatic, the emotional impacts of catastrophe should be considered in disaster risk reduction. We can help students to properly manage their emotions.

The educational programs tend to include children as responsible, participatory or socially critical citizens, by the skills acquired in school. When structuring disasters preparedness educational interventions, emotional responses can provide insights into how children relate to their changing social and ecological landscapes and play a critical role on children's mobilization for action. Therefore, the expressed emotions of the students can be very important in the transition from a passive conception to the risk of children, even from fear to their expression as active citizens. And art has an essential role in expressing emotions.

### Lesson

Arts

### Grade

6

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the role of art in expressing emotions and promoting healing after natural disasters;
- ✓ Explore personal feelings and experiences through artistic creations;
- ✓ Recognize how art can bring communities together and inspire hope in challenging times.

### Duration

Two lessons (90 Minutes)

## Required Materials

- ✓ Paper, sketchbooks, or canvases
- ✓ Paints, markers, and crayons
- ✓ Visual aids (images of art related to natural disasters)
- ✓ Inspirational quotes or stories about resilience
- ✓ Whiteboard or flip chart for group discussion
- ✓ Music (optional, for creating a calming atmosphere)

## Preparation and Implementation

### Prepare Materials:

- ✓ Duplicate visual aids for each group
- ✓ Arrange an art corner with necessary supplies for the activity
- ✓ Prepare reflective prompts and a short video or slideshow showing examples of how art has been used in disaster recovery.

### Space Setup:

- ✓ Arrange tables and chairs for collaborative or individual work.
- ✓ Create a calming environment with soft music or natural sounds playing in the background.

### Guiding Questions for Students:

- ✓ How do you feel when you hear about or experience a natural disaster?
- ✓ How can art reflect hope or healing?
- ✓ What colors or images come to your mind when thinking about survival?

## PROCESS

1

### INTRODUCTION (15 Minutes):

- Start with a warm-up activity:
  - ✓ Show visual aids or play a video of art created in response to disasters (e.g., murals, sculptures).  
<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/7k-haWtT2aY?feature=share>
  - ✓ The teacher asks the role of art in emotional healing, highlighting how colors, shapes, and images can express feelings that are difficult to put into words.  
“What story does this art tell?”
- Facilitate a brief discussion:
  - ✓ "How do you think art can help people cope with difficult situations?"
  - ✓ "Can you recall a time when creating something helped you feel better?"

2

### MAIN ACTIVITY (35 Minutes)

**Step 1: Guided Reflection (10 Minutes) - the teacher is using the images from the annex.**

- Lead a mindfulness exercise:
  - Is there anyone who had previous traumas, or be knowledgeable about trauma symptoms in the classroom? Do you know such examples?

Ask students to close their eyes and imagine a natural disaster scenario;

  - Guide them to focus on emotions, colors, and shapes they associate with the event and recovery;
  - In very small group they have to change some ideas about the fear of disaster;

### Step 2: Art Creation (15 Minutes)

- Instruct students to:
  - create an artwork that represents hope and healing in the aftermath of a natural disaster;
  - Meanwhile, students are asked to reflect individually on what they created. The teacher ask them: “What emotions were you trying to express?” “How did the process of creating art help you understand your feelings?”
  - They use a specific theme (e.g., rebuilding, unity, or nature's survival).
- Offer support:
  - Encourage students to share their ideas and experiment with colors and textures.

### Step 3: Group Sharing (10 Minutes)

- Allow them to present their artwork;
- Ask them to explain:
  - What inspired their creation;
  - How they think their art can inspire others.

The students will be present and there will be a constructive exchange of ideas that will declassify the imagination of the students. They can give concrete examples lived by themselves. Teacher and students can remember the Covid crisis, the drought from Romania, the earthquakes, etc. Teacher can show some images from Romania.

### *Second lesson (50 minutes)*

#### **3 DEBRIEF AND REFLECTION (15 Minutes)**

- Conduct a reflective discussion:
  - ✓ "What emotions did you feel while creating your artwork?"
  - ✓ "How does art help us process our feelings and connect with others?"
  - ✓ "What message do you want your artwork to convey to someone affected by a disaster?"
- Summarize key points on the board:
  - ✓ Emphasize the themes of hope, survival, and community.

#### **4 COOL-DOWN AND FINISHING THEIR WORK (35 Minutes)**

- Michael Jackons – Earthsong and Yanick Noah – Aux arbres citoyens

- ✚ The students are working for 30 minutes
- ✚ The last 5 minutes the teacher gave to the students some worksheets for their parents. The teacher explain that the students and parents have to work together at home to complete these worksheets. These worksheets are **collaborative reflection tools** for parents and children to complete together. They let both share strengths, challenges, and goals, while you evaluate responses with a simple checklist (looking for detail, balance, and engagement) — not to grade, but to guide communication and support learning.
- ✚ For the next meeting with parents the teacher will present the conclusions of the work students- parents.

## EVALUATION

- Observe students during the activity to assess:
  - Engagement with the process;
  - Creativity and expression in their artwork.
- Facilitate feedback:
  - Encourage students to share one positive observation about a peer’s artwork.

Collect artworks for display or create a class gallery on the school hall to showcase their efforts to the others teachers and others students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Encourage students to exprime their emotional readiness and skill levels.
- 2 Use digital tools if available:
  - ✓ Students can create digital artwork or presentations to accompany their creations, if they choose that;
- 3 Extend the activity:
  - ✓ Organize a collaborative exhibition or group project to symbolize unity and survival.
- 4 Encourage parental involvement:
  - ✓ Send a reflection worksheet home for further exploration of the topic.

## ANNEX

### Reflection Worksheet for Parents:

**Dear Parent,**

We are working on a project where students use art to express their emotions and inspire hope in the context of natural disasters. Please assist your child in filling out the following worksheet based on their reflections and discussions at home.

- What natural disaster are you most familiar with?  
✓ How did it affect your community?  
.....
- ✓ What emotions did you feel when you learned about it?  
.....

Please, write a short message for complete your child's artwork!

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.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you for your collaboration!**

## Ressources



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8DD1c24bwk>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAi3VTSdTxU>

**Images from disasters in Romania:**



**HOPE!**