

When I came to the Place - a mapping activity across the seasons

estuary

Kings Manor Farm
through the seasons

a combined arts
project 2011-2012

<i>When I came to the place...</i>
<i>where the jetty stuck out into the river like a pointing finger</i>
<i>I saw a branch floating staring up at me like an upside down statue</i>
<i>I heard the tip-tapping of rain like leaves fluttering and a curlew's sad whistle</i>
<i>I smelt the river as fresh as if it had just been cleaned</i>
<i>I touched the spot where a green spider had vanished</i>
<i>I drew a spiky branch rambling like a bramble</i>
<i>I took a piece of flowing grass</i>
<i>I left a circle of leaves to show that I was there</i>

Louella, Kian, Jack

At the heart of a cross arts project is the skill of direct observation and the development of this runs through all the activities. This mapping exercise is a way of encouraging children and adults to look closely at their immediate surroundings and particularly to notice how these change with the seasons. It was planned as a continual seasonal activity throughout the workshop programme and could result in presentation or exhibition of the maps. In this project these maps were developed by the adult groups into large batiked panels of silk which recorded the seasonal changes of the estuary.

Each group was given a piece of card and a different short route to map. They returned to the same route each season. The routes included three stopping places to be chosen by the group. Before leaving they read an observation poem.

They followed these guidelines:

- Choose one person to record each section of the route.
- Choose three stopping places and give each one a name.

- At each stopping place, record what you observe, using your observation sheet to help you.
- Notice the changes in the landscape since your last visit, paying special attention to the colours.
- Collect any material to illustrate your map.
- On return to base, transfer chosen details from observation sheets to maps. Drawings and gathered materials can be stuck to the map.

Materials

Card for map – approx 1m x 40cms

Marker pens to record route

Clipboards with A4 drawing paper

Writing and drawing implements

Plastic bags for found materials

Copies of I came to the place observation sheet

A range of art materials and glues for use in the classroom.

Adhesive labels so that written material can be transferred more legibly to the labels and then stuck on the map.

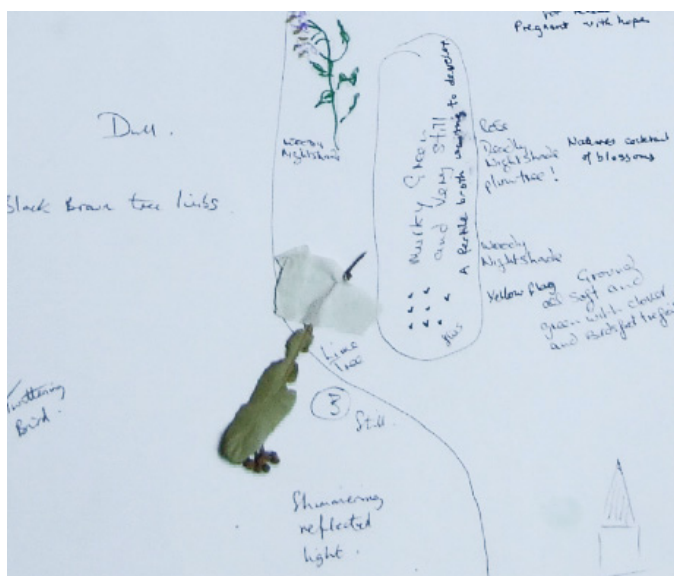
This mapping activity was first developed during the cross arts weekends held at Northcourt Manor, and devised by writer Philip Gross and artist Zelig Gross. On that occasion, we spent most of the weekend engaged in mapping. In a final session, each group presented the others with their map and read individual and collaborative poems based on their journeys.

During the Estuary project we had two hours on each visit and after the first visit we used an adapted, shorter version:

- Take a new map with the route lines already drawn as a reminder.
- Make at least one written note and one sketch at each stopping place, based on observations made with any of your senses.
- Return to base and transfer your observations to the map

Lydia Fulleylove

Resource template on next sheet



When I came to the place...

where

I saw

I heard

I smelt

I touched

I drew

I took

I left