



## THE NATURAL CITY: LESSON PLAN

*Lesson Plan Prepared by Will DeNatale, IG: @tunamelt.nyc*

### GOALS

Thrive Collective provides project-based learning that teaches both art and life skills. To the extent possible, every lesson plan provides three clear goals—artistic learning, project participation and applicable life lesson. For this project, the goals include the following:

1. Artistic learning - This class will teach students to think creatively and imaginatively about how to better incorporate nature into our city. The students complete this project by creating a game with simple rules to follow.
2. Project participation - By the end of the class, students will accomplish one colorful drawing that combines two ideas—one component of city life and one of nature. They will also have a new tool/game to help them generate ideas in the future.
3. Applicable life lesson - Students will be introduced to how the art skill relates to life outside the classroom through reimagining the collective idea of city life. This idea will transcend the classroom by helping to foster confidence in the young people's own imaginative and idea generating abilities.

### MATERIALS

Paper, Scissors, Colorful drawing tool (markers, colored pencils, crayons, pastels, etc.)

### EXPECTATIONS

Begin by listing which ideas need to be clearly explained in order for the lesson to be successful. Since students have various levels of interest in art, stimulating curiosity in the topic is paramount to achieving full participation. Engaging students in the process begins by showing them the media presentation and then allowing them to have creative discussion.

In preparation, consider making a set of cards as an example for students. It may also be helpful to have a list of favorite city components and nature components to share with students to help encourage their creative thinking.

### WHAT TO SHOW

- Show photo examples of city components: stoops, trains, sidewalks, fire escapes, etc.
- Show examples of nature components: trees, lake, forest, cloud, etc.



- Show work from students who have done this exercise in the past to get them excited about the project.

## **WHAT TO TELL**

Cities are large human settlements densely populated by people like you and me. Nature exists within cities as well—trees, parks, sky, squirrels and birds—to name a few. What other components of nature do we see in our city? How can we imagine and illustrate a city that exists more harmoniously with nature?



## CLASS OUTLINE (30-50 Minutes)

### PROJECT: CREATING THE GAME

#### OBJECTIVE

Students will create a set of game cards from images of city life and nature. After choosing one card from each category, students will combine images to create a picture of nature in the city. Once students have their ideas, they will be able to do the following:

- Show how creating a game/rubric sets guidelines that can help propel imaginations and drawings
- Draw or create images associated with city life and nature
- Combine two different images into one idea
- Explore creative ways to bring nature into the city

#### STEP 1 (5-10 minutes)

##### DEMO

1. Cut pieces of paper into 10 rectangles that are the size of playing cards
2. Draw a different element from the city on 5 of the cards. It could be a building, a bridge, a train, a bench, a window—anything that is found in the city.
3. On the other 5 cards, draw 5 different elements of nature—a field, a tulip, a pond, an ocean, a cloud—whatever comes to mind that reflects nature.

*Note: Show students the cards below created by the lesson artist. The first three images are items found in a city and the next three images represent nature. Full size images of each card are at the end of the lesson.*



#### CLASS WORK

Allow students to begin drawing and creating 5 cards with elements of the city and 5 cards with elements of nature.

#### GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

As they work, discuss the following questions:

- What drawings are students putting on their cards?
- How are they visually representing the city in 5 images and nature in 5 images?
- Check in with students who may be struggling.



## STEP 2 (5-10 minutes)

### DEMO

Now that the cards are finished, it's time to begin the game. Explain to the students what they will be doing beforehand to eliminate confusion. This step can be done by the instructor while the students watch or the instructor can do it simultaneously with the students.

1. Separate the cards into two piles - city and nature - and turn each pile face down
2. Pick up one card from the city pile
3. Pick up one card from the nature pile
4. Put combinations next to each other

*Note: While working with students online, they will be limited to their own collection of cards. However, when in a group, you can shuffle the entire class's city cards and nature cards together respectively to give each student a broader option.*

### CLASS WORK

Have students pair up all the cards and then choose their favorite combination.

### GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

After they selected two cards to combine, ask a few students the following questions:

- Why did you choose those two things?
- How does combining nature into the city make you feel (ie. peaceful, happy, less anxiety, excited)?
- How can you combine the two items into one drawing?

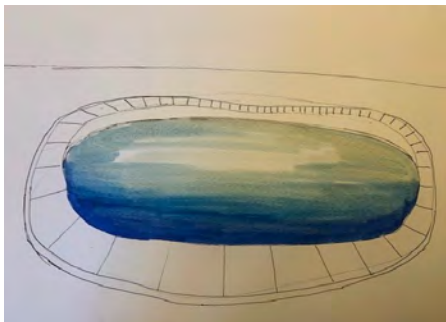
If students don't have any ideas yet, ask if anyone else in the class can think of ways to combine these elements.

## STEP 3 (15-20 minutes)

### DEMO

Take the ideas from the two cards and demonstrate how to combine them into one drawing. For example, students could make a waterfall going off the side of a building, a tree growing through the subway, or a fire escape on a cliff. The drawing can be whatever students want as long as it fuses the elements from the two cards.

*Note: Examples from the appendix can be used instead of drawing your own cards. Here's an example of a drawing from the lesson artist by combining the two cards, pond and sidewalk:*





## **CLASS WORK**

On a larger piece of plain paper, have students start drawing their combination image. Encourage them to be as fantastical or realistic as they like in their picture.

## **GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS**

Check in with students to see how they are doing. Talk to them about what they are drawing and see if they need help with anything. Half way through, begin asking how the drawings are developing. See if anyone needs help actualizing their concept. If you are not a visual/creative person, help the student by talking through ideas. What kind of exciting surrealistic outcomes can students come up with together based on the cards that they created?

## **STEP 4 (5-10 minutes)**

### **DEMO**

For the final step, demonstrate how to give positive feedback on your drawing or the example provided. Ask how this drawing can inspire other creative works of art. Discourage any form of negative comments. Remember, it's not a sales presentation, but rather a time for fun and sharing of creative ideas.

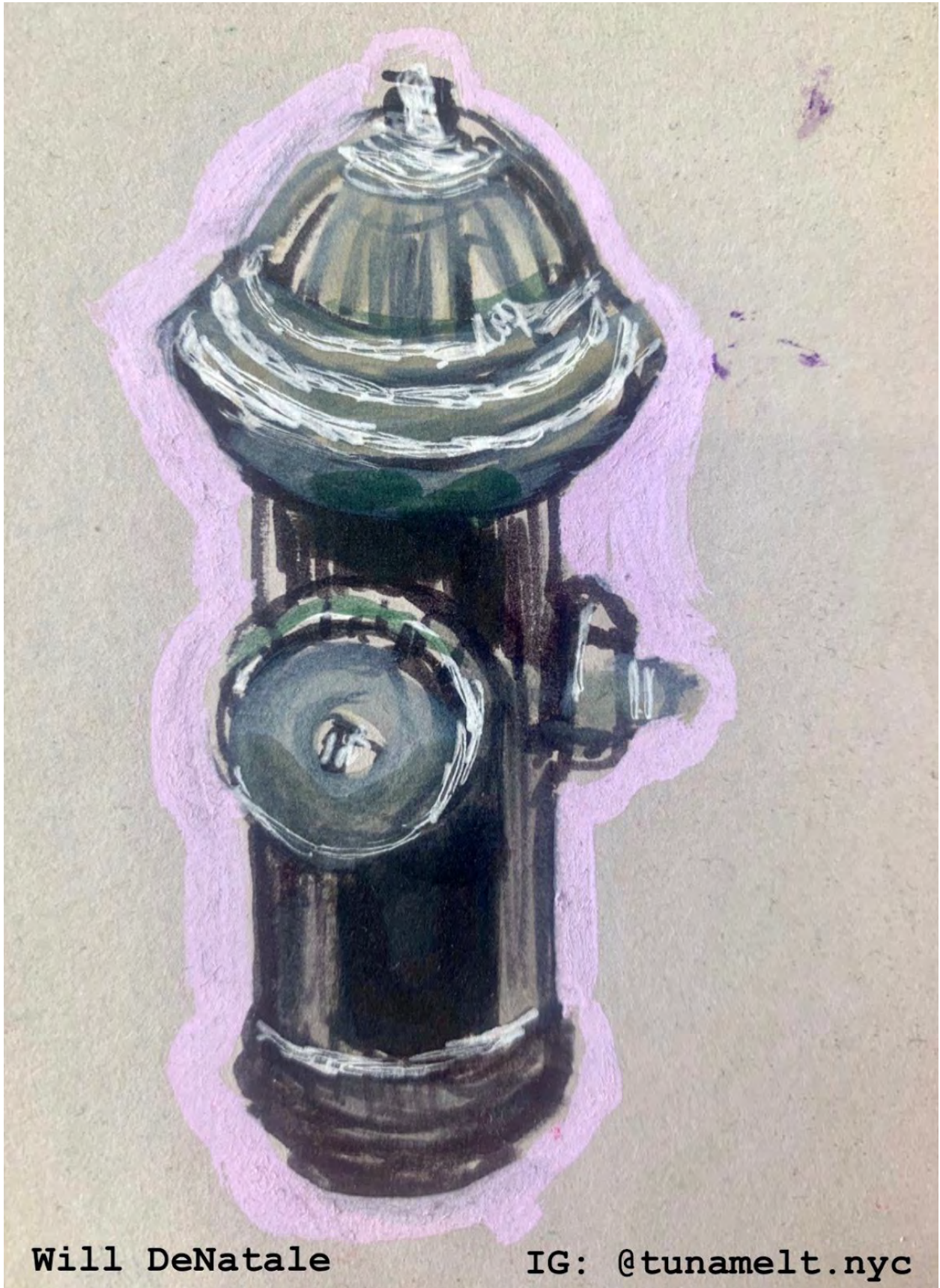
## **CLASS WORK**

Have the students share their drawings and encourage positive feedback.

## **GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS**

After all students have shared their natural city drawings, have them talk about what they enjoyed about this activity, and what they found challenging. Conclude by encouraging students to discuss how or where their community might be able to implement their collective idea for city life.





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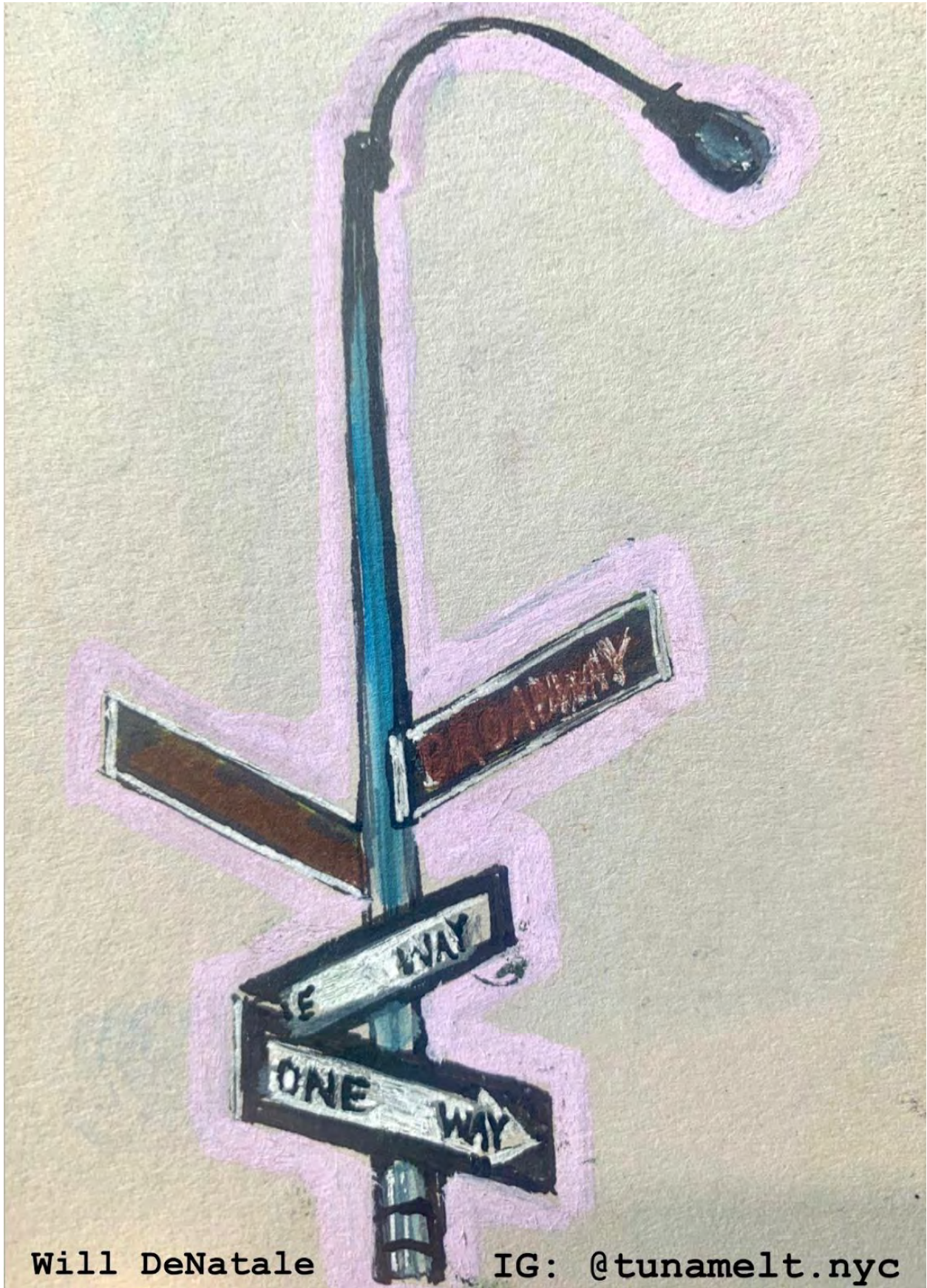




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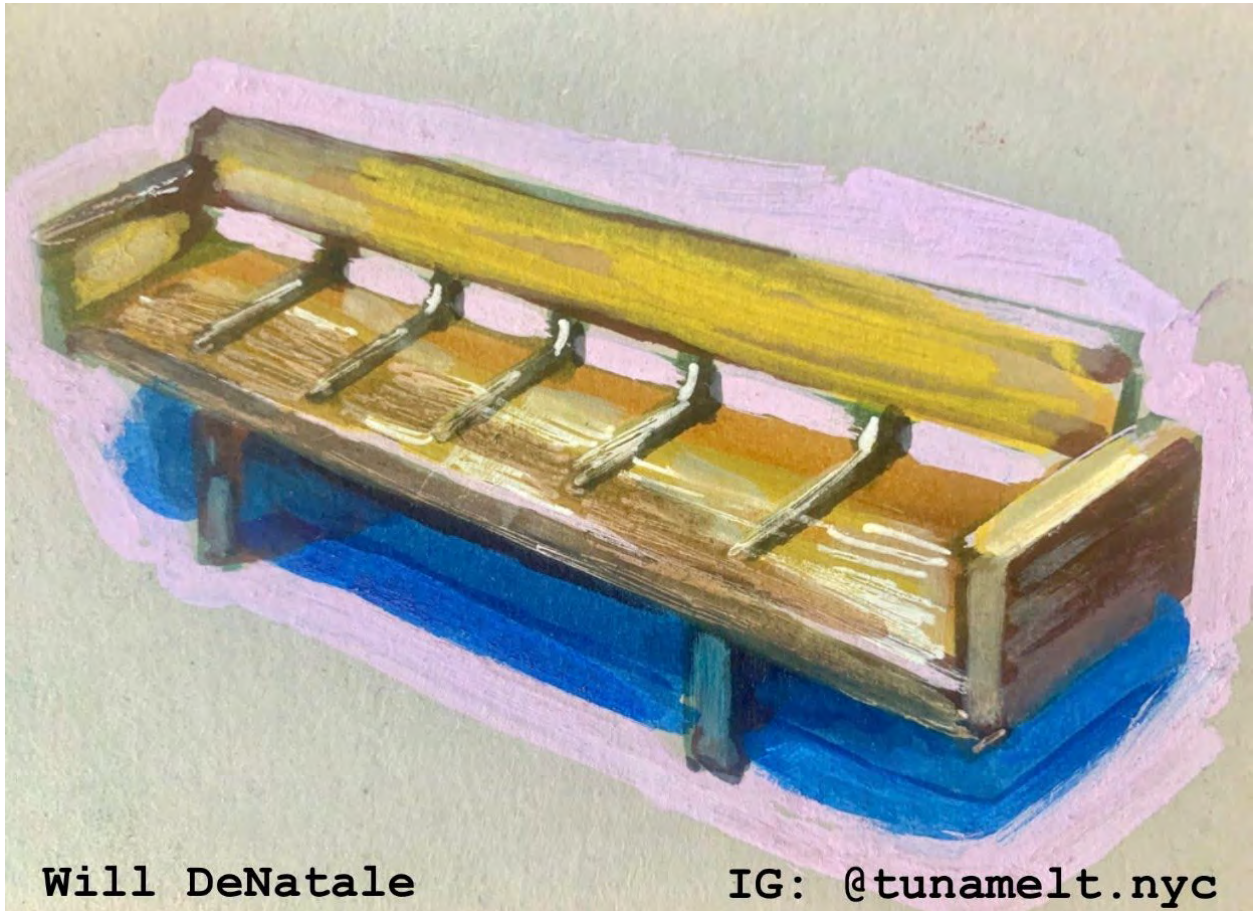




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