

LIVING IN NATURE

The folk artist has been commonly identified as that person who has had no formal art training and who creates from an inner passion and drive. Often materials are those found in the artist's environment- wood, recycled objects, salvaged tin, shells, natural vines and limbs-virtually anything the artist can find to help express his or her ideas. The folk artist makes a personal statement about his or her culture, religion, beliefs, family, or any subject which has deep meaning. The collection at Hickory Museum of Art features a diversity of artists and subject matter.

GRADE LEVEL: 4

North Carolina Essential Standards: Science

Estimated time: 35 minutes

The student will observe and compare two animals.

The student will apply characteristics of animals to adaptation in its environment.

MATERIALS:

- Visuals of Q.J. Stephenson's **T-Rex** and Tim Lewis's stone **Alligator**
- Recycled materials, (wood, cardboard, tissue tubes, stones, etc.)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Q.J. Stephenson was born in Garysburg, N.C. in 1920 and died in 1997. As a child during the depression, he learned about the natural world through experience and observation in the woods while trapping animals for food and for skins to sell. Stephenson was a self-taught naturalist with a passion for fossils and other artifacts, such as stones, bones, and Indian relics, found in his environment. He created an environment in a small building and covered the walls with embedded fossils, stones, and shells which he found around him. In the 1980s he began making sculptures of imaginary creatures, using concrete, sawdust, glue, and incorporating shells and rocks.

Tim Lewis, born in Kentucky in 1952, came from a family of artists. His brother is a furniture maker and his cousin, a carver. After being injured in a logging truck accident, Lewis began carving and painting walking sticks. He later focused on stone carving from chimney stones found in his environment. These sandstone carvings, made with a hammer and chisels, often portray Biblical themes or animals. In 1996, Lewis was commissioned to create a carving for the Atlanta Olympic games.

LESSON ACTIVITIES:

Introduction:

- Discuss characteristics of animals that enable them to survive and to adapt to certain environments.
- Discuss behaviors of animals that enable survival

Discussion:

- What do you see in each picture?
- What animal is represented?
- Compare the body parts of the animals.
- How do these help the animal to survive?
- What type of environment would each animal live in?
- How are the animals alike?
- How are they different?
- How would you describe the behaviors of these animals?
- How do their behaviors help them survive?
- What foods would these animals eat? How does their body structure enable them to get food?
- Discuss the time period for these animals.
- Why do you think one is no longer alive?
- How might their environment have changed to cause extinction?

Activity:

Review animal adaptations and behaviors. Using the recycled materials, create an animal. Explain the body structure and how it helps the animal survive in its environment. Write a paragraph or story about the animal.

POST ACTIVITIES

- Visit the Hickory Museum of Art to observe other animal sculptures.
- Find pictures in magazines of various animals and how they adapt to the environment.
- Choose an animal for a written report after researching it.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

- Students expressed understanding of body structures and how they help the animal adapt.
- Students were able to articulate similarities and differences among animals.
- Students were able to apply learning to other types of animals.