

YEAR 1 VISUAL ARTS: ENRICHING COMPOSITIONS THROUGH SYSTEMS ICEBERG THINKING ROUTINE



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LEARNING PLAN OVERVIEW

Subject(s)	- Natural Sciences - The Arts - Environmental Education
Grade Level (s)	Lower Primary (ages 6-7)
Systems Tool(s)	Systems Iceberg
Purpose of Using Tool	- Research - Inquiry - Critical Thinking - Action Planning
Summary	Students explored composition through the Systems Iceberg model, connecting it to their classroom unit on habitats and endangered species. They first sketched an animal and its habitat based on their prior knowledge. Then, they used the Systems Iceberg model to research and reflect on their animal's behaviors, environment, and their personal connection to it. With this deeper understanding, they created a second, richer composition, and some students even chose to change their animal based on their new learning.

Learning Objectives

- Make a detailed picture that shows an animal and its habitat.
- Use the Systems Iceberg model to learn more about the animal's life.
- Find out what the animal eats and how it behaves in its habitat.
- Think about where the animal lives and how its home, weather, and plants help it survive.
- Ask yourself why you picked this animal and what you think about it.
- Make a second, better picture using everything you learned.

Material and Settings

- **Drawing & Painting Supplies:** Paper, pencils, watercolors, crayons, pastels
- **Research Materials:** Animal books, iPads (for research)
- **Thinking Tool:** Systems Iceberg system template (for guiding inquiry)
- **Additional Art Materials:** Markers, colored pencils (for added details)
- **Reference Images:** Printed or digital pictures of various animals and their habitats
- **Writing Tools:** Clipboards, notebooks, or sticky notes (for recording observations)
- **Organizational Tools:** Folders or portfolios (to track initial and final drawings)

Learning Context

The learning took place in an IB international school with six- and seven-year-old students. In their homeroom, students were exploring a unit on habitats, learning about different animals, their environments, and endangered species. In art class, they worked on a subject-specific unit about composition, using the Systems Iceberg model to deepen their understanding of habitats and create richer, more informed artwork.

Purpose of Using the Systems Thinking Tools

I chose the Systems Iceberg model because it helped students deepen their understanding of animals and habitats while also supporting them in creating richer, more detailed compositions. It connected to their classroom learning, encouraged curiosity, and gave them a structured way to translate knowledge into their artwork, making them feel more confident as artists.

Impact on Participant Learning

The Systems Iceberg model had a strong impact on students' learning by deepening their knowledge, improving their self-assessment, and increasing their motivation to create richer artwork.

Expanded Knowledge: Students became excited about learning detailed facts about their chosen animals, such as their diets, habitats, and behaviors. They wanted to include all that information in their final drawings, making their compositions more thoughtful and complex. Some students even decided to change their animal choice after learning new facts that interested them.

Improved Self-Assessment: When comparing their first and second drawings, students became more critical and reflective, recognizing how much more they could express through their artwork. This helped them assess their own progress and see how deeper thinking translates into visual improvement.

Increased Motivation: Many students were eager to continue drawing and improving their work beyond the project, realizing they had the skills to create more detailed images.

Cross-Subject Connections: Students brought their discoveries from art class back to their homeroom, sharing new insights about animals and enriching their overall understanding of the habitat unit.

Learning Plan Step-by-step Description

Introduction & First Drawing

- Students chose an animal, freely or connected to their classroom learning.
- They created a first drawing of the animal in its habitat, based on what they already knew.

Introducing the Systems Iceberg Model

- The Systems Iceberg model was introduced as a way to think more deeply about their animals.
- Students explored the four levels:
 - Event (What do we see?),
 - Patterns (What does the animal do?),
 - Systems (Why does it live this way?), and
 - Mental Models (Why did I choose this animal?)

Research & Investigation

- Using books, iPads, and discussions, students investigated their animal's food, routines, and environment.
- They recorded findings using the Systems Iceberg template, connecting behaviors to habitat conditions.

Reflection on Personal Connections

- Students considered why they chose their animal and what they believed about it.
- They discussed how their views might influence how they represent the animal in their artwork.

Creating a Second, More Detailed Drawing

- Using their new knowledge, students made a second drawing, adding more accurate details and richer composition.
- They used a variety of art materials to express textures, colors, and habitat elements.
- Some students chose a new animal based on their research, refining their artistic choices.

Self-Assessment & Discussion

- Students compared their first and second drawings, reflecting on what changed and why.
- They shared their discoveries with peers and some took their learning back to their homeroom discussions.

Reflection: Plusses

High Engagement & Interest: Students were excited to research their chosen animals, staying engaged and eager to find accurate information.

Ownership of Learning: The open-ended choice allowed students to explore their own interests, making the learning experience more meaningful.

Gateway to Research in Art: This process introduced students to the idea that research can inform and enhance their artwork, setting a foundation for future projects.

Motivation to Improve: Once students connected deeply with their learning, they were eager to refine their drawings and put their best effort into their final compositions.

Successful Use of the Systems Iceberg Model: The visual representation of the Systems Iceberg was clear and accessible for young learners, making it an effective tool for deeper thinking.

Flexibility in Learning: Some students changed their animal choice after research, showing they were open to new ideas and willing to adjust their artistic approach.

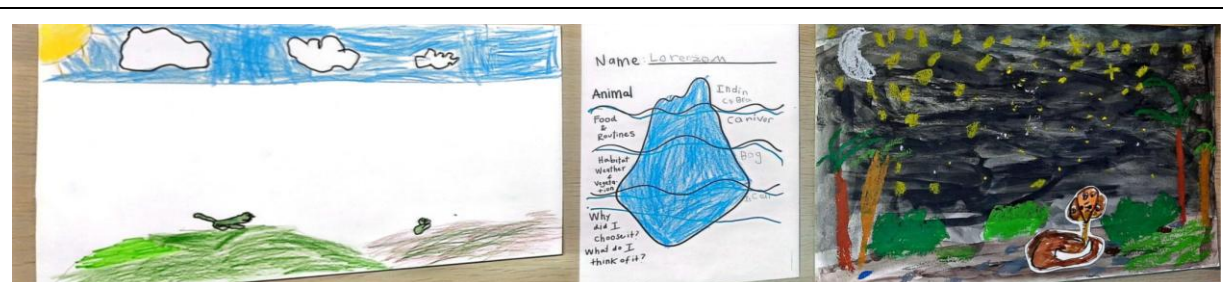
Areas for Improvement

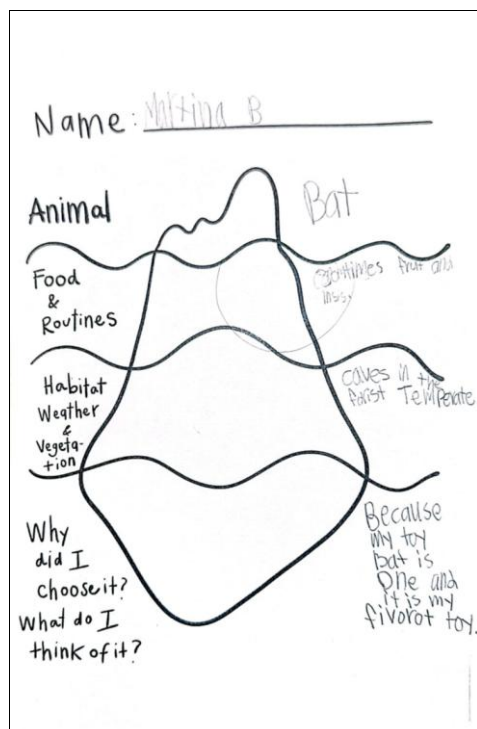
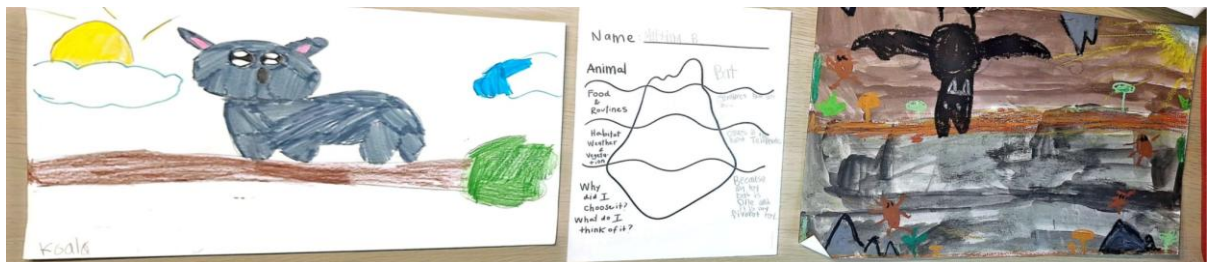
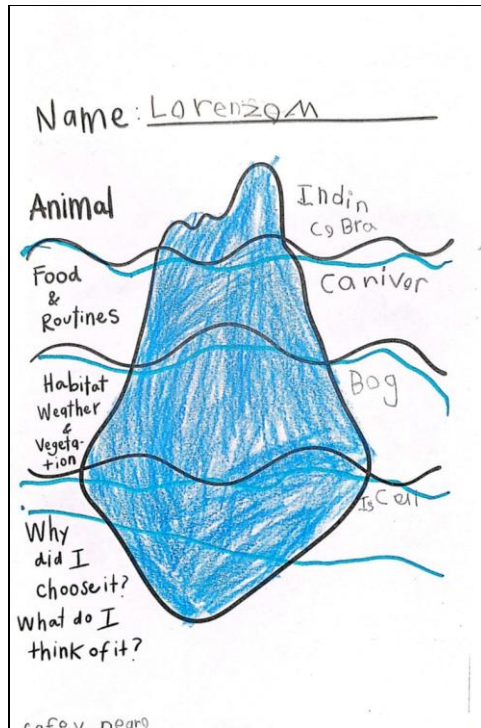
Eliminate the First Drawing: The initial sketch before using the Systems Iceberg model was unnecessary and time-consuming. Most students preferred to invest their time in research and creating their improved drawing.

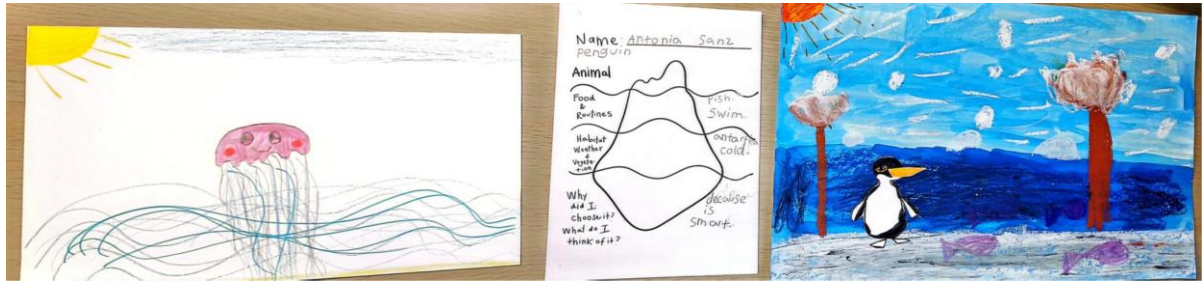
More Time for Explaining the Systems Iceberg Model: While the image itself was clear, spending a little more time introducing and discussing each section could strengthen students' connections to the learning process.

Adjust Expectations for Explanation: Initially, I thought I would need to explain the Systems Iceberg concept in depth, but it turned out to be intuitive and accessible for students, allowing for a more natural introduction.

EVIDENCE







Name: Antonia Sanz
penguin

Animal

Food & Routines: fish, Swim.

Habitat Weather & Vegetation: antarctica cold.

Why did I choose it? What do I think of it? because is smart.