

## Patterns of Movement in Nature: Performance Drawing

**Patterns in Nature:** Through artmaking, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. Students will examine Jen Bervin's performance drawing *Silk Line*, and explore, analyze, and imitate patterns of movement found in nature through performance drawing.

Grades: 3-4

### Interdisciplinary Areas of Study:

- **Science:** students will learn about the structures that support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction of silkworms and develop models to describe the life stages of silkworms prior to this lesson.
  - [National Core Standard/s:](#)
  - 3-LS1-1. Develop models to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but all have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death.
  - 4-LS1-1. Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction.
- **Social Sciences:** students will have learned about the history of silk, its production, consumption, and uses over time prior to this lesson.
  - [National Core Standard/s:](#)
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> - Global Interconnections: Changing Spatial Patterns SS.G.3.3:** Show how consumption of products connects people to distant places.
  - **4<sup>th</sup> - Exchange and Markets SS.EC.2.4:** Describe how goods and services are produced using human, natural, and capital resources (e.g. tools and machines).

### [National Visual Art Standards:](#)

- **3<sup>rd</sup> VA:Cn10.1.3a** - Develop a work of art based on observations of surroundings.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> VA:Cr2.2.3a** - Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.
- **4<sup>th</sup> VA:Cr1.1.4a** - Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.
- **4<sup>th</sup> VA:Re7.1.4a** - Compare responses to a work of art before and after working in similar media and techniques.

### Lesson Objectives:

- Students will develop performance drawings based on observations of patterns of movement found in nature.
- Students will brainstorm multiple approaches to create a performance drawing inspired by a pattern of movement found in nature.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes to create a performance drawing.
- Students will compare their responses to Jen Bervin's *Silk Line* before and after working in similar media and techniques.

### Essential Questions:

- How do artists work?
- How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective?
- How does making art attune people to their surroundings?

### Key Contemporary Artist/s:

- [Jen Bervin](#)

### Key Artwork/s:

- [Silk Line](#)
- [Silk Poems](#)

### Teacher Materials Needed:

- Computer
- Projector or smartboard
- Web link to Jen Bervin's *Silk Line* performance
- Video of a silkworm creating its cocoon
- Visual examples of patterns of movement in nature

### Student Materials Needed:

- Sketchbook
- Large sheets of butcher paper (hung on a smooth section of wall)
- Pencils, crayons, markers, oil pastels, or other dry media
- iPads or Chromebooks

### Vocabulary:

- **Pattern** – repeated lines, shapes, and/or colors
- **Performance Drawing** – a drawing made by recording the movement of an artist
- **Movement** – a principle of design used to lead a viewer's eye through an artwork
- **Mimic** – to imitate or copy the actions of someone or something
- **Medium** – art making material

### Lesson Sequence:

1. As a class, discuss Jen Bervin's *Silk Line*. Ask students what they think the image is of. Follow up answers by asking students what they see that makes them say that.
2. Share that Jen Bervin is an artist who has studied silkworms extensively, and this artwork is a **performance drawing** that the artist created by mimicking the movement silkworms make when creating their cocoons. She has documented this movement by drawing with a white grease pencil on a glass surface.
3. Watch the *Silk Line* performance video-clip: <http://jenbervin.com/projects/silk-line>. Then watch a video-clip of a silk worm creating its cocoon.
4. As a class, discuss how Jen Bervin has imitated the silkworm in her performance drawing. Ask students if Bervin's drawing is an exact replica of the movement of the silkworm and to explain their answers. Ask students why they think the artist chose to use a white grease pencil, and why on glass? Then ask students why they think the artist chose to create her artwork through a performance drawing instead of creating a traditional drawing of the pattern.

5. Demonstrate drawing the motion of a silkworm on the board and ask students to follow along by drawing this motion in their sketchbook. Then ask students to stand and make the motion of the silkworm in the air using their whole arm, not just their wrist. Ask students how drawing in the air feels compared to drawing the pattern on paper.
6. Ask students what other patterns of movement can be found in nature and write down student responses on the board. Consider starting by providing an example with an image. Possible examples could include: the movement of snakes, rivers, tides, bees flying from one flower to the next, the sun, the weaving of a spider's web.
7. Demonstrate safety precautions and proper use of media and techniques.
8. Provide students time to explore patterns of movement using different dry media in their sketchbooks. Ask students to think about the differences between the different media, how they feel when drawing, how they work for documenting different patterns of movement.
9. Instruct students to choose a pattern of movement to mimic and using the drawing material of their choice, to create a performance drawing of their pattern of movement on the butcher paper hung on the wall.
10. After students create their performance drawings and clean up, discuss how they feel about Jen Bervin's work *Silk Line* and if they have a better understanding of her process after working with similar materials and techniques. Ask students if they have a better understanding of their pattern of movement in nature after creating this work, if they could imagine drawing in this way for sustained periods of time like the artist did, and how a sustained drawing relates to the process silkworms go through to create their cocoons. Consider providing students with a reflection handout to write about their process, what they learned, and how they relate to Jen Bervin's work after creating their own performance drawings.

**Accommodations and Modifications:**

- Provide a printed list of instructions
- Provide captions on all videos
- Provide pencil grips or low-tech assistive technologies for drawing
- Use smaller pieces of paper at a desk or on the floor
- Use a drawing app on an iPad or Chromebook
- Provide patterns of movement in nature templates for students to trace or transfer

**Extension Activity:**

- Read and analyze developmentally appropriate selections from *Silk Poems*. Consider selecting passages that reference the developmental stages and life cycle of the silkworm.
  - [National Core Standard/s:](#)
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> ELA:** RI2 - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea
  - **4<sup>th</sup> ELA:** RI5 - Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
- Write a narrative poem with a clear event sequence inspired by their chosen pattern of movement in nature.
  - [National Core Standard/s:](#)
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> ELA:** W3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

**Lesson Resources:**

- [Jen Bervin](#)
- [Silk Line, Silk Poems](#)

**References:**

- Bervin, J. (2020). Jen Bervin. Retrieved August 22, 2020, from <http://jenbervin.com/>

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