

COLLABORATIVE IOWA PRAIRIE MURAL PAINTING BY PRE-SERVICE ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

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Abstract: Future elementary teachers hold tremendous power in their ability to engage students and spark interests in the natural world. This past semester, my colleague and I each taught a class called Art and the Child. The class is for elementary educators who want to incorporate art into their future classrooms. We collaboratively taught a lesson to our students about incorporating science and art through a mural project based on the UNI prairie. We had our students research native prairie plants, animals, and insects. The students all visited the prairie and sketched it before creating the mural. The project was well received by our students and many of them commented on how they would integrate art and prairie conservation and study in their future elementary classrooms.