

**2019-20 Emerging Visions Program Lesson Guide**  
**Grade: 9-12<sup>th</sup>**

Lesson Title	Suggested Medium	Grade Level
<p><i>Centroid Towns: Like a Passing Shadow</i></p> <p>Artist: Nate Larson</p>	<p>Printmaking            Assemblage            Sculpture            Video Game Design            Wearable Art            Stop Motion Animation            Altered Books            Handmade Books            Photography (Analog and Digital)            Mixed-Media            Environmental Art            Graphic Novels            Collage            Installation            Performance Art            Time-Based Media            Textiles            Film            Graphic Design</p>	<p>9-12<sup>th</sup></p>
Artist Themes	FCPS Themes	
<p>Community            Culture            Traditions            Storytelling            Self-discovery            Belonging</p>	<p>Level 1: Sense of Place            Level 2: Perceptions of Self            Level 3: Social and Contemporary issues            Level 4: Themes are self developed</p>	

## Lessons

Students create artwork that reflects upon Nate Larson’s work through his themes, craft, portraits, photographs, etc.

Lessons can be open-ended and can be used with any medium. A list of suggested lessons includes:

- **Illustrative Data:** Create an artwork that responds to collected data— on a theme of personal relevance—revealing how we are changing as a society.
- **Evolving Geographies:** Create an artwork that explores the transformation of a place throughout history.

## Discussion Questions

### **Illustrative Data:**

- How can the transformation of a place be documented through the artistic interpretation of data?
- How does data help us deal with the complexities of life and where does it fall short?
- How can we find meaning in data to reflect on the condition of our humanity?
- What does the data we generate tell us about ourselves as a society and who or what is left out of the bigger picture?
- What is the purpose of a census? Why is it important?
- How do centroid towns represent the political and social transformation of America?
- How has the data taken from the geographical center of population translate to the “symbolic center” of the United States?
- What themes and commonalities does Nate Larson discover in these towns that cannot be derived from statistical figures alone?
- What is the significance of collecting data?
- How do data driven algorithms warp our perception?
- What elements of your life are collected through data?
- Are we driving the data trends, or are we being driven by the data?

### **Evolving Geographies:**

- How can the juxtaposition of physical elements of the past and present in a place reveal how we have transformed as a society?
- How does the historical significance of a place alter or influence its contemporary context?
- How does the transformation of a place reveal how we are evolving as a society?

- How can we reinterpret the stories of our past through our present?
- How can you convey an emotion through physical characteristics of a place?
- What draws us to a place?
- How can point of view, perspectives, scale and juxtaposition influence how we view a place?
- What might a specific place look like 100 years from now?

## FCPS Assessment Standards

### **Studio Art 1 & 2**

#### **COMMUNICATE**

##### **1.a.1 Explore Theme**

Investigate the theme of a sense of place through personal experiences, feelings, and memories.

#### **CREATE**

##### **2.b Methods of Representation**

The student will synthesize approaches to representational, abstract, and nonrepresentational subject matter to develop a personal voice.

#### **RESPOND**

##### **4.b Criticism**

The student will use critical analysis and reflect on artistic influences to form and refine personal voice.

#### **CONNECT**

##### **5.b Interdisciplinary Connections**

The student will exhibit knowledge of interdisciplinary connections in a body of work.

### **Digital Art & Design**

#### **COMMUNICATE**

##### **1.b Creative Process**

The student will combine multiple strategies to formulate and document ideas for solutions when planning digital artworks.

#### **CREATE**

##### **2.c.2 Elements of Art**

Refine the use of elements of art to represent subject matter and create meaning in artworks.

## **RESPOND**

### **4.b Criticism**

The student will use critical analysis and reflection to identify artistic voice in a body of work.

## **CONNECT**

### **5.a.5 Art References**

Demonstrate a functional set of artistic references by relating contemporary and historical artists and artworks with the work of peers.

## **Photography**

## **COMMUNICATE**

### **1.b Creative Process**

The student will develop a personally preferred approach to the creative process.

## **CREATE**

### **2.b Methods of Representation**

The student will synthesize approaches to representational, abstract, and non-representational imagery to develop a personal voice.

## **RESPOND**

### **4.b Criticism**

The student will use critical analysis and reflect on artistic influences to form and refine personal voice.

## **CONNECT**

### **5.a.5 Art References**

Identify, research, and document photographic works related to personal image making.

## **Images and Resources**

**Nate Larson:**

[www.natelarson.com](http://www.natelarson.com)

**Centroid Towns Project:**

[www.centroidtowns.com](http://www.centroidtowns.com)

**Waterford Foundation:**

[www.waterfordfoundation.org](http://www.waterfordfoundation.org)

**Second Street School Living History Program:**

[www.waterfordhistory.org/history/second-street-school](http://www.waterfordhistory.org/history/second-street-school)

**President Lincoln's Cottage:**

[www.lincolncottage.org](http://www.lincolncottage.org)

**Liljenquist Family Collection of Civil War Photographs at Library of Congress:**

[www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/lilj](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/lilj)

**Loudoun Museum:** [www.loudounmuseum.org](http://www.loudounmuseum.org)

***The Eye of the Sun: Nineteenth Century Photographs from the National Gallery of Art:***

[www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2019/eye-sun-nineteenth-century-photos.html](http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2019/eye-sun-nineteenth-century-photos.html)

**America Counts: Stories Behind the Numbers:** [www.census.gov/AmericaCounts](http://www.census.gov/AmericaCounts)

**BackStory Radio, Beyond Numbers: A History of the US Census:**

[www.backstoryradio.org/shows/the-meaning-of-numbers-a-history-of-the-u-s-census](http://www.backstoryradio.org/shows/the-meaning-of-numbers-a-history-of-the-u-s-census)

**U.S. Census Bureau video: What is the Center of Population of the United States?:**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWNBITyk88o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWNBITyk88o)

**Center for Spatial Research, Columbia University:** [c4sr.columbia.edu](http://c4sr.columbia.edu)

**Nate Larson Articles & Interviews:**

**American Society of Media Photographers:** [www.asmp.org/strictly-business-blog/questions-with-an-educator-2/questions-with-an-educator-nate-larson](http://www.asmp.org/strictly-business-blog/questions-with-an-educator-2/questions-with-an-educator-nate-larson)

**Lenscratch:** [lenscratch.com/2017/04/nate-larson-the-states-project-maryland](http://lenscratch.com/2017/04/nate-larson-the-states-project-maryland)

**Bmore:** [www.bmoreart.com/2018/07/sondheim-shrinkage.html](http://www.bmoreart.com/2018/07/sondheim-shrinkage.html)

**Saint Louis Public Radio:** [www.kbia.org/post/monday-photographer-nate-larson-discusses-centroid-towns-residency-north-st-louis-county#stream/0](http://www.kbia.org/post/monday-photographer-nate-larson-discusses-centroid-towns-residency-north-st-louis-county#stream/0)

**Baltimore Sun:** [www.baltimoresun.com/citypaper/bcpnews-contact-sheet-after-the-flood-20160804-photogallery.html](http://www.baltimoresun.com/citypaper/bcpnews-contact-sheet-after-the-flood-20160804-photogallery.html)

**Photo Emphasis:** [www.photo-emphasis.com/artists/nate-larson-2018](http://www.photo-emphasis.com/artists/nate-larson-2018)

**Artists to Consider and Reference**

- Eadweard Muybridge
- Marian "Clover" Hooper Adams
- Marion Post Wolcott
- Dorothea Lange
- Grant Wood
- Edward Hopper
- Jacob Lawrence

- Norman Rockwell and photographs that inspired his work:  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2009/11/rockwell.html>
- Faith Ringgold
- Dawoud Bey
- Caitlin Teal Price
- Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Pulse* series
- Nathalie Miebach, *Sibling Rivalry*
- Maya Lin, Vietnam Memorial
- Ai Wei Wei, Jacques Herzog, and Pierre de Meuron, *Hansel & Gretel*
- Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*
- Chris Jordan, *Running the Number*
- Cao Fei
- Njideka Akunyili Crosby, *Portals, Inhabiting multiple spaces.*
- William Christenberry, *Time and Texture, Photographs of the south*
- Julie Mehretu, *Black City, Art 21: Politicized landscapes*
- Shepard Fairey, *The Black Hills are not for sale*