



TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR GRADES 4–12

LEARN ABOUT

**PHYSICAL REGIONS
OF CANADA**

through the art of

DORIS MCCARTHY

ART CANADA INSTITUTE | **INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN**

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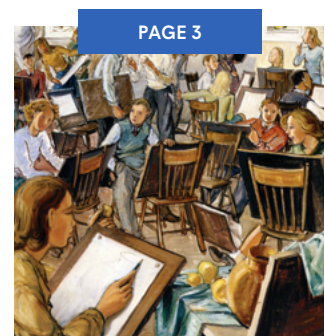
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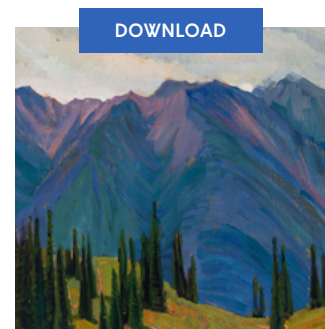
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**ADDITIONAL
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READ ONLINE

**DORIS MCCARTHY:
LIFE & WORK BY
JOHN G. HATCH**



DOWNLOAD

**DORIS MCCARTHY
IMAGE FILE**

RESOURCE OVERVIEW

This teacher resource guide has been designed to complement the Art Canada Institute online art book [Doris McCarthy: Life & Work](#) by John G. Hatch. The artworks within this guide and images required for the learning activities and culminating task can be found in the [Doris McCarthy Image File](#) provided.

Doris McCarthy (1910–2010) holds a unique place in Canadian art history. As the only known historical Canadian artist to visit and paint in every region of the country, her enchanting creations capture the visual diversity of the nation's physical regions, from vivid renderings of rock formations in the Badlands of Alberta to her beloved depictions of icebergs in the Arctic. Grounded in McCarthy's inimitable landscape works, the activities in this guide invite students to explore the connections between land, physical geography, mapmaking, flora, fauna, and human activities through the artist's prolific chronicling of Canadian geography. Through a combination of study, exploration, collaboration, and artmaking, the beauty of Canada's physical regions will come alive for students through the remarkable work of one of the country's most celebrated painters.

Curriculum Connections

- Grades 4–6 Visual Arts
- Grades 4–6 Science
- Grades 4–6 Social Studies
- Grades 9–12 Geography

Themes

- Environmental Stewardship
- Geography
- Physical Regions of Canada
- Natural Environment
- Impact of Human Activity on Environment



Fig 1. Doris McCarthy, *Iceberg Fantasy No. 9*, 1973. Icebergs became a reoccurring motif in McCarthy's work following a trip to the Arctic in 1972.

Teaching Exercises

The activities found in this guide explore the theme of “The Physical Regions of Canada” as represented in artworks by Doris McCarthy.

- Learning Activity #1: Introducing the Physical Regions of Canada ([page 4](#))
- Learning Activity #2: Chronicling Canada ([page 6](#))
- Culminating Task: Impacting Change ([page 9](#))

A Note on Using This Guide

While Doris McCarthy's work and its depictions of the country offer insights into a settler perspective of the Canadian landscape, we encourage teachers to open up opportunities to examine the land more broadly and open the door for discussions about the Indigenous Peoples of these lands.

Educators are encouraged to look to native-land.ca to gain a fuller perspective of current and historical Indigenous land ownership. Educators should look to incorporate local Indigenous voices and ways of thinking about the land and landscape within their teaching.

WHO WAS DORIS MCCARTHY?



Fig 2. Doris McCarthy, 1989.

Doris McCarthy was born in Calgary in 1910. Her family moved frequently, and by the age of three, she had lived in Vancouver, Idaho, California, and Moncton. This formative early experience may very well have shaped the love of travel that would come to define much of her career, as she became Canada's only artist to have visited and painted every region of the country.

Eventually settling in Toronto, the teenage McCarthy excelled in a weekly painting class at the Ontario college of Art (now OCAD University) taught by Arthur Lismer of the [Group of Seven](#). At the end of the term, she won a full-time scholarship to the college, where she began her formal studies in 1926. Following graduation, she taught children's art

classes at the Art Gallery of Toronto (now the Art Gallery of Ontario), and in 1931 she had one of her cityscape paintings featured in the Ontario Society of Artists' annual exhibition.

Teaching played a major part in McCarthy's life.

She was hired in 1931 at Toronto's Central Technical School, where she taught for four decades, shaping the artistic practices of some of Canada's best-known artists. While being trained for her teacher's certificate by famed Canadian [abstract](#) painter Hortense Gordon, her artistic career began to blossom in its own right. McCarthy travelled for inspiration, taking leave from teaching in 1935 to refine her drawing and [watercolour](#) techniques at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London, England, and visiting the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountains for the first time in 1937.

McCarthy exhibited frequently during the Second World War, and through the 1950s and 1960s she became a fixture of the growing commercial gallery scene in Toronto. Those decades also saw her travel extensively in Europe and Asia, honing her chameleon-like ability to capture the character of the landscapes she portrayed. In 1964, she made history as the first woman president of the Ontario Society of Artists, and she soon began to craft innovative hard-edged landscapes that blurred the line between [representational](#) and abstract art.

Journeying several times in the 1970s to Canada's North following her retirement from teaching,

McCarthy was profoundly inspired by iceberg forms, which would feature in many of her best-known works. The next decades saw the artist widely celebrated with awards—including receiving the Order of Canada (1986) and the Order of Ontario (1992)—and retrospective exhibitions at galleries including Gallery Stratford (1991) and the McMichael Canadian Art Collection (2000). She continued to paint and travel until her death at "Fool's Paradise," her name for her Scarborough home, in 2010.



Fig 3. Doris McCarthy, *Dog Team at the Berg*, 1975. Frequent trips to the Arctic provided the basis for some of McCarthy's most beloved landscape paintings.



Fig 4. Doris McCarthy, *Dhal Lake, Kashmir*, 1961. Travel was a catalyst for much of McCarthy's work.



Fig 5. Doris McCarthy, *The Drawing Class*, 1946. As an art teacher, McCarthy enjoyed teaching drawing classes like the one depicted in this lively classroom scene.



Fig 6. Doris McCarthy, *View from Toronto General Hospital*, 1931. This painting earned McCarthy a spot in the 1931 Ontario Society of Artists' Annual Exhibition.

NATIONAL & WORLD EVENTS

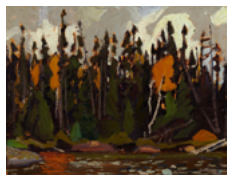


Fig 7. Arthur Lismer, *Spruce, Algoma*, 1922. Lismer was one of McCarthy's most important teachers.



Fig 8. Captain Lawren P. Harris, official war artist, sketching during World War II.

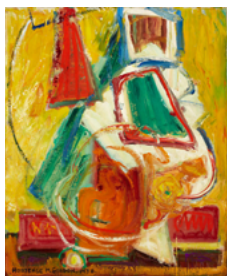


Fig 9. Hortense Gordon, *Colour Rhythm*, 1958. A founding member of Painters Eleven, Gordon's works were exhibited in the Canadian Abstract Exhibition in 1953.



Fig 10. Doris McCarthy, City of Scarborough Flag, 1968.

The Royal Canadian Academy of the Arts is founded. **1880**

1910

Arthur Lismer co-founds the Group of Seven, inaugurating a new era in Canadian art. **1920**

1925 -26

The National Museums of Canada network is established, including 9 institutions operated by the Government of Canada under the Museums Act. **1927**

Statute of Westminster grants Canada full legislative independence from Britain. **1931**

1939 -45

The Second World War sends many Canadians, including official war artists, overseas.

1950

Inuit are granted the right to vote in Canada. **1952**

The *Canadian Abstract Exhibition* is organized by painter Alexander Luke; it tours the nation in 1953, exposing many Canadians to abstract art for the first time. **1964**

1968

1972

Scarborough, a once-rural township, joins the city of Toronto. **1998**

2010

Doris Jean McCarthy is born in Calgary.

McCarthy attends a weekly painting class led by Arthur Lismer at the Ontario College of Art, leading to a full-time scholarship there.

McCarthy is hired at Toronto's Central Technical School, where she teaches for four decades.

McCarthy is elected as a member of the Ontario Society of Artists in 1944.

McCarthy and Virginia Luz embark on a year-long sabbatical in Europe.

McCarthy is elected to the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour.

McCarthy becomes the first woman elected president of the Ontario Society of Artists.

McCarthy receives the Order of Canada, nominated by artist Joyce Wieland.

McCarthy's first trip to Canada's North sparks her fascination with icebergs.

McCarthy dies at home in Scarborough.

DORIS MCCARTHY'S LIFE



Fig 11. Doris McCarthy and brothers Doug (left) and Kenneth (centre), 1913.



Fig 12. Central Technical School, Toronto, March 23, 1921, photographer unknown.



Fig 13. Portrait of Doris McCarthy for her debut as the first woman president of the Ontario Society of Artists, 1966.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1

INTRODUCING THE PHYSICAL REGIONS OF CANADA

Doris McCarthy travelled far and wide across Canada, and the diversity of the country's physical landscapes can be seen in her work—rocky terrains, open vistas, and dynamic waterways are only a few of the subjects that come to life in her colourful, modernist canvases. This activity focuses on introducing students to the seven designated physiographic regions of Canada: the Canadian Shield, the Western Cordillera, the Canadian Arctic, the Appalachian Region, the Interior Plains, the Hudson Bay Lowlands, and the St. Lawrence Lowlands. Students will study a vast selection of McCarthy's works from across the country to ground their knowledge of these regions, making connections to different maps of Canada.

Big Idea

The seven physical regions of Canada

Learning Goals

1. I can name the seven physical regions of Canada and can identify them on a map.
2. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork and make specific observations.
3. I can use proper terminology when discussing the art I see.
4. I can use artwork to build understanding and inspire questions about the world around me.

Materials

- [Doris McCarthy biographical information sheet](#)
- [Doris McCarthy Image File](#)
- Printed copies of Doris McCarthy images
- [Doris McCarthy: Life & Work](#) by John G. Hatch
- Whiteboard
- Whiteboard markers
- Tape

Process

1. Project a blank map of Canada in the classroom. Ask students to share what they know about the topics listed below as they relate to Canada, and record their responses through words and symbols on the whiteboard while the map is projected. This will act as a great diagnostic introduction to understand what knowledge and understanding students already have.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • Treaties | • Animals |
| • Indigenous communities | • Industries |
| • Names of the provinces and territories | • Political lines |
| • Languages spoken | • Natural resources |
| | • Areas with dense populations |



Fig 14. Doris McCarthy, *Rhythms of Georgian Bay*, 1966. Using simplified forms, McCarthy captures the special qualities of Georgian Bay to produce this striking and yet highly abstract painting.



Fig 15. Doris McCarthy, *Badlands Revisited*, 1989. After a trip to Alberta in 1977, McCarthy took up the Canadian Badlands as the subject matter of a series of works produced later in her career.

Learning Activity #1 continued

2. Photograph the whiteboard when complete. Please note, you can also ask students to complete this exercise individually by providing a blank map as a handout.
3. Next, introduce students to the seven physiographic regions of Canada by projecting [The Canadian Encyclopedia's Physiographic Map](#). The regions are the Canadian Shield, the Western Cordillera, the Canadian Arctic, the Appalachian Region, the Interior Plains, the Hudson Bay Lowlands, and the St. Lawrence Lowlands.
4. Talk about Canada as a vast land that differs coast-to-coast-to-coast and ask students what they notice about how the regions are displayed on the map. How does this map differ from the map completed in Step 1?
5. Introduce students to Doris McCarthy using the biographical handout included in this guide. Be sure to focus on McCarthy's love of travelling the country.
6. Show the paintings listed below, which can all be found in the downloadable [image file](#). In small groups, ask students to brainstorm what physiographic region is being represented by careful examination of what they see in each painting. Once they have decided what region they think the painting is from, have students post their image to [The Canadian Encyclopedia's Physiographic Map](#).

- *Rhythms of Georgian Bay*, 1966
- *Dark Island*, 1967
- *Hoodoos at Dinosaur Park*, 1994
- *Badlands Revisited*, 1998
- *South Saskatchewan Hillocks*, 1982
- *Rockglen, Saskatchewan*, 1983
- *Grey Spruce in the Ditch*, 1977
- *Grey Spruce, Inuvik*, 1977
- *Valley of the Bow River Above Revelstoke*, 1938
- *Neighbours, P.E.I.*, 1985
- *Okanagan Valley Near Osoyoos, B.C.*, 1989
- *Aurora and the Bergs*, 1996
- *Houses and Boats on Shore*, n.d.
- *Kicking Horse River, West of Field, B.C.*, 1974

7. As a class, discuss where each group placed their images. Did people post their images in similar places? If they did not, engage in further discussion as to where groups placed their images and their rationale.
8. End the learning activity by brainstorming together a collective response to the following question: What makes a region a region?



Fig 16. Doris McCarthy, *Dark Island*, 1967. McCarthy produced around one hundred works in the abstract style pictured in this painting between the 1960s and 1970s.



Fig 17. Doris McCarthy, *Hoodoos at Dinosaur Park*, 1994. In this work, McCarthy depicts the odd rock formations in Dinosaur Provincial Park, which were formed naturally over millions of years.



Fig 18. Doris McCarthy, *Rockglen, Saskatchewan*, 1983. This image is dominated by a vast sky—a characteristic of the Canadian Prairies.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2

CHRONICLING CANADA

Doris McCarthy liked to adapt the style of her paintings to the region that she was representing, so that she could capture the look and feel of a place. Different techniques were adopted as well: she liked to paint some regions [en plein air](#) (the practice of painting outdoors in order to observe nature) while other times, she relied on photographs to prompt her memory. As she once noted: “From the very first strokes the painting must have enough life to give some of its energy back to me, sustaining me through the whole process of development.” Inspired by McCarthy’s unique approach to representation, in this activity students will undertake research in order to create a landscape representation of a designated region of Canada, reflecting its important visual aspects in personalized and creative ways.

Big Idea

The natural environment

Learning Goals

1. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork and make specific observations.
2. I can use proper terminology when discussing the art I see.
3. I can use artwork to build understanding and inspire questions about the world around me.
4. I can use the elements and principles of design to communicate a message.
5. I can explain my artistic choices and the symbolism used in my work.
6. I understand the natural environment for a specific physical region of Canada.

Materials

- [Doris McCarthy biographical handout](#)
- [Doris McCarthy Image File](#)
- [Doris McCarthy: Life & Work](#) by John G. Hatch
- Canvases or sketchbooks
- Paint, watercolours, drawing pencils, pastels, or other art-making materials

Process

1. Introduce students to Doris McCarthy using the biographical handout.



Fig 19. Doris McCarthy, *Aurora and the Bergs*, 1996. Like much of McCarthy’s iceberg works, this painting is based on a personal interpretation of the Arctic landscape.

Learning Activity #2 continued

2. Read the “[Portraits of a Nation](#)” section of the online art book *Doris McCarthy: Life & Work* by author John G. Hatch. Summarize the key points for students, highlighting the extract below:

In Wendy Wacko’s 1983 documentary Doris McCarthy: Heart of a Painter, McCarthy states: “I want to paint Canada.” McCarthy went on to visit and paint in every province and territory, especially after she retired from teaching in 1972. Her longer journeys took her overseas, most often to England, but also around the world during her 1961–62 sabbatical year.

McCarthy credits the Group of Seven for inspiring her goal of painting the whole of the country. The specific prod appears to have been her first trip to the Arctic (Northwest Territories), prompted by her younger Central Technical School colleague Barbara Greene (1917–2008) in the summer of 1972. The paintings from this region soon triggered invitations to visit other areas of the country—Alberta and Prince Edward Island in 1974, Newfoundland and British Columbia in 1975, the Yukon in 1976, Manitoba and Saskatchewan in 1982, and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1986—with frequent returns.

McCarthy’s liking for travel, her love of the great outdoors, and her painting style made her ideally suited to become a visual chronicler of Canada. She adapted her style to the scenes she depicted so they reflected the “look” of a place as well as its character: “Painting demands a concentration and sensibility that grows into an intimacy with the country, greatly intensifying your awareness of it.” With over 5,000 works, McCarthy was able to achieve in a single person the goal of the Group of Seven and its successor the Canadian Group of Painters, to paint the whole of Canada—an achievement no other single artist has accomplished. It is fitting that she was awarded the Order of Canada in 1986 as the great painter of the Canadian landscape.



Fig 20. Doris McCarthy, *South Saskatchewan Hillocks*, 1982. In this painting, McCarthy juxtaposes the flat prairie ground with imposing hills.



Fig 21. Reference for *Houses and Boats on Shore*, n.d. McCarthy frequently took photographs of the places she visited to record changes in light and atmosphere, elements she worked to evoke in her paintings.



Fig 22. Doris McCarthy, *Houses and Boats on Shore*, n.d. This painting bears a striking resemblance to a slide of similar subject matter, showing that McCarthy used photography as a memory aid.

Learning Activity #2 continued

3. Assign students one of the seven physical regions of Canada and tell them they will create an artwork based on their assigned region. As McCarthy did, encourage students to adapt the style and technique of their works based on the region they are representing. Revisit the collective definition of what makes a region a region from Learning Activity 1.
4. Project the same McCarthy works from Learning Activity 1, and ask students to discuss what McCarthy included in her landscape works. Together, brainstorm what students could include in their own artworks (plant life, rocks, water, animals, etc.)
5. Task students with researching their physical region to best understand what the natural environment looks like. Students should also learn of and record what natural resources are included in their region. Please see the “additional resources” section of this guide, and consider also curating a selection of books from your school library to support students.
6. Provide time and space for students to create their landscape artwork. They should also create an artist statement that shares their knowledge and understanding of their physical region’s characteristics. Group final works by physical region and create a visual display.



Fig 23. Doris McCarthy, *Kicking Horse River West of Field, B.C.*, 1974. This painting of the Rockies includes McCarthy’s signature approach to composition, with a path that can be traced from the foreground to the background.



Fig 24. Doris McCarthy, *Okanagan Valley Near Osoyoos, B.C.*, 1989. McCarthy illustrates the characteristic lakes and hills of the Okanagan Valley, a region north of the Cascade Mountains.

CULMINATING TASK

IMPACTING CHANGE

While humans feature rarely in Doris McCarthy's works, the impact of population presence throughout each region of the country lingers in the artist's detailed visual passages. As she was undoubtedly aware, human intervention, both intentional and accidental, has had a serious impact on topographies and environmental ecosystems. From resource extraction to settlement to climate change, the landscape has been in constant flux. Inspired by the environmental themes inherent in McCarthy's work, students will identify and communicate a specific human-caused change that has affected the landscape of a region of Canada, and present their work in a persuasive manner.

Big Idea

Climate change and the impact of human activity on the environment

Learning Goals

1. I can use artwork to build understanding and inspire questions about the world around me.
2. I can talk about the impact of the natural environment on human activities.
3. I can talk about the impact of human activity on the environment.
4. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork.
5. I can use the elements and principles of design to communicate a message.
6. I can explain my artistic choices and the symbolism used in my work.
7. I can use proper terminology when discussing the art I see.

Success Criteria

To be added to, reduced, or changed in collaboration with students.

1. Writing: Written work is thoughtful, clear, and edited.
2. Reference material: Research is documented and organized clearly.
3. Composition: You demonstrate a thorough understanding of how to express your own identity through your final presentation medium.
4. Materials/tools: Artwork is created with care. You work slowly and submit your best work.
5. Creative process: Artist statement and documentation of creative process show specific decisions made with reference to personal design decisions and photography skills learned in class.

Materials

- [Doris McCarthy biographical handout](#)
- [Doris McCarthy Image File](#)
- [Doris McCarthy: Life & Work](#) by John G. Hatch
- Artmaking materials
- Research journal or research handouts

Process

1. Introduce students to Doris McCarthy using the biographical handout.



Fig 25. Doris McCarthy, *Valley of the Bow River Above Revelstoke*, 1938. This image of the Bow Valley hints at the slightly elevated perspective that McCarthy honed during her career.

Culminating task continued

2. Project *Grey Spruce in the Ditch*, 1977, and discuss how some art historians have theorized that McCarthy hints at the effects of climate change on the natural landscape. Ask students to look carefully at the work and identify aspects that point to this theory. Also discuss the impact of human activity on the environment. What human activities would cause some of these features to be seen in the work?
3. Using their assigned physical region of Canada from Learning Activity 2, provide students with time and space to conduct research on issues currently facing their physical region of Canada. Examples include wildfires, oil pipelines, overfishing, invasive species, infrastructure, rising temperatures, and the impact of tourism.
4. Students should become familiar with current issues and record their findings in their research journal or a handout provided by the teacher.
5. Next, ask students to reflect on their research findings regarding issues currently facing their physical region of Canada. Have them brainstorm possible solutions and changes that humans can make to reduce and eliminate some of the issues facing the region.
6. Task students with sharing their findings with the school community. Students can create an infographic, a poster display, a pamphlet, a digital presentation, or an informative website for their final creative project. Invite them to integrate the landscapes they created in Learning Activity 2 in the design of their project.
7. Students should share in depth the issues facing the region, the extent to which these issues are impacting the environment, and possible solutions.
8. Ask students to present their final product to the class.



Fig 26. Doris McCarthy, *Neighbours, P.E.I.*, 1985. McCarthy has depicted this scene in Canada's smallest province with an interest in the relationships between humans and the natural world.



Fig 27. Doris McCarthy, *Grey Spruce in the Ditch*, 1977. In this highly tactile work, McCarthy attempts to capture differing textures and details with the use of simple brushwork.



Fig 28. Doris McCarthy, *Grey Spruce, Inuvik*, 1977. Based on its title, this painting was likely produced during McCarthy's trip to the Northwest Territory community of Inuvik in June 1977.

HOW DORIS MCCARTHY MADE ART: STYLE & TECHNIQUE

Here are a few of the important artistic concepts that characterized the art of Doris McCarthy. For more information, see the [Style & Technique chapter](#) of *Doris McCarthy: Life & Work* by John G. Hatch.

THE LANDSCAPE TRADITION

McCarthy was among the most accomplished landscape painters in Canadian history, and perhaps the only one to have visited and painted every Canadian province and territory. She acknowledged the importance of the Group of Seven's landscape work in inspiring this goal, but forged a style within the tradition that was deeply her own. McCarthy felt a profound connection to the natural world, once noting that she wanted to "get to know mountains as individuals." This personal connection shines through in the subtle variations and tender treatment that she brings to each of her landscape works.

WORKING FROM PHOTOGRAPHY

McCarthy strove to capture the essence of the landscapes she painted in appearance and character. While she often spent considerable time getting a feel for a location before embarking on a painting, she also used photography as a memory aid. However, she did not paint from the photographs she took without having first interpreted the landscape on canvas, and she preferred not to reproduce images directly from photographs. Rather, she used the camera to record how changes in light and air can constantly change a landscape's appearance, finding it a useful tool to shift her approach to a scene when she felt stuck.

PLEIN AIR PAINTING

Working among the elements was a central component of McCarthy's practice. French for "in the open air," and popularized by the nineteenth-century Impressionist painters, *en plein air* is a term that refers to the practice of painting or sketching outdoors. The impact of weather on a scene's appearance influenced McCarthy's choice of medium; in general, she preferred oil in cold weather and acrylic and watercolour in hot climates. Because her time on location was limited, she prioritized recording the colours, textures, and three-dimensional space of the forms she observed in the moment.

BOLD COMPOSITIONS

Throughout McCarthy's career, composition played a crucial role in her paintings. They were carefully constructed to guide the viewer's eye through bold, original arrangements. Artist John Skeaping taught her to seek out the most telling line, the one that could encapsulate the movement of the object depicted. As McCarthy's work evolved, her use of compositional techniques became more subtle, and she favoured the term "design" over "composition." Only after establishing how her canvases would be shaped did she ever begin to paint, starting with the most challenging and complex forms.

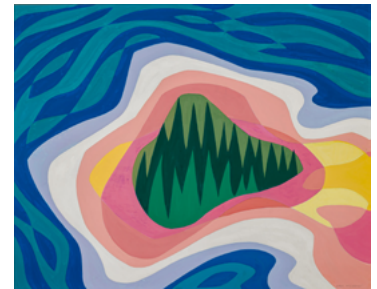


Fig 29. Doris McCarthy, *Georgian Bay from the Air*, 1966. In her hard-edged landscapes, McCarthy pushed against the boundaries between representational and abstract art.



Fig 30. Doris McCarthy, *Mal Bay with Fish Rack*, 1954. McCarthy developed her signature compositional techniques in works such as this one, which depicts a fishing village in Quebec.

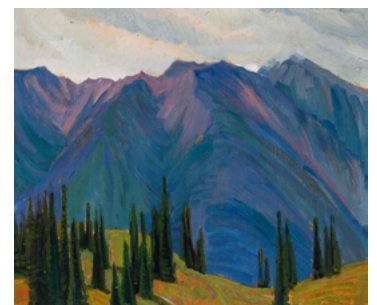


Fig 31. Doris McCarthy, *Mountains Near Revelstoke, B.C.*, 1937. This painting of the Rocky Mountains near Revelstoke was made during McCarthy's first trip to British Columbia.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Supplementary Materials Provided by the Art Canada Institute

- The online art book *Doris McCarthy: Life & Work* by John G. Hatch: <https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/DorisMcCarthy>
- [Doris McCarthy Image File](#) with artworks and images related to this lesson.
- “Who Was Doris McCarthy?” biographical handout ([page 2](#))
- Timelines of national and world events and Doris McCarthy’s life ([page 3](#))
- “How Doris McCarthy Made Art: Style & Technique” information sheet ([page 11](#))

GLOSSARY

Here is a list of terms that appear in this resource guide and are relevant to the learning activities and culminating task. For a comprehensive list of art-related terms, visit the Art Canada Institute’s ever-growing [Glossary of Canadian Art History](#).

Group of Seven

A progressive and nationalistic school of landscape painting in Canada, the Group of Seven was active between 1920 (the year of the group’s first exhibition, at the Art Gallery of Toronto, now the Art Gallery of Ontario) and 1933. Founding members were the artists Franklin Carmichael, Lawren S. Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Frank H. Johnston, Arthur Lismer, J.E.H. MacDonald, and F.H. Varley.

Abstract

Also called nonfigurative or nonrepresentational art, abstract art uses form, colour, line, and gestural marks in compositions that do not attempt to represent images of real things. It may interpret reality in an altered form, or depart from it entirely.

Watercolour

A painting medium in which pigments are suspended in a water-based solution and the term that refers to a finished work painted in that medium, watercolour has a long history both in manuscript illumination (dating to Ancient Egypt) and in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese brush or scroll painting. In Western art, it became a preferred medium for sketching in the Renaissance and grew in popularity through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially for botanical and wildlife illustrations. It continues to be used by artists and illustrators because of its transparency and the effects possible by laying washes of pure pigment.

Representational

A term used to describe art that is derived from references to real objects and images that are recognizable as depictions of what exists in the real world. A representational work may not be entirely realistic.

Plein air Painting

French for “in the open air,” *en plein air* is used to describe the practice of painting or sketching outdoors to observe nature, and in particular the changing effects of weather, atmosphere, and light.



Fig 32. Doris McCarthy, *Off to Make a Sketch*, 1932. McCarthy documented her painting trips with small sketches like this one.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following external resources can be used to augment the learning activities and materials provided by the Art Canada Institute. They are to be used at the teacher's own discretion.

Physiographic Regions | The Canadian Encyclopedia

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/physiographic-regions>

The Atlas of Canada – Physiographic Regions | Government of Canada

<https://atlas.gc.ca/phys/en/index.html>

Canada's Physiographic Regions | Canadian Geographic Education

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3fe05ab03c234744a666a330cd7cdada>

Investigating the Canadian Landscape | UNESCO

https://tumblrridgegeopark.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/TRUGG_HO-GR9-L1b.pdf

Native Land Digital

<https://native-land.ca>

GRASAC Knowledge Sharing Platform

<https://gks.artsci.utoronto.ca>



Fig 33. Doris McCarthy, *Broughton Ballet*, 1978. As McCarthy's landscape works evolved, she perfected her ability to capture the feelings of a place.

FIGURE LIST

Every effort has been made to secure permissions for all copyrighted material. The Art Canada Institute will gladly correct any errors or omissions.

Cover Image: Doris McCarthy, *Broughton Ballet*, 1978, oil on canvas, 121.9 x 152.4 cm. Private collection.

Fig 1. Doris McCarthy, *Iceberg Fantasy No. 9*, 1973, acrylic on canvas, 61 x 76.2 cm. Private collection.

Fig 2. Doris McCarthy, 1989. Photograph by Patti Gower. Collection of the Toronto Public Library, Toronto Star Archives. © Torstar Syndicate / Getty Images, 2024.

Fig 3. Doris McCarthy, *Dog Team at the Berg*, 1975, oil on canvas, 91.4 x 121.9 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House. Photo credit: Heffel Fine Art Auction House.

Fig 4. Doris McCarthy, *Dhal Lake, Kashmir*, 1961, watercolour on paper, 57.8 x 75.6 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of Wendy Wacko, Mountain Galleries, 2022 (2023.01.042). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 5. Doris McCarthy, *The Drawing Class*, 1946, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 86.4 cm. Private collection.

Fig 6. Doris McCarthy, *View from Toronto General Hospital*, 1931, oil on canvas, 61 x 68.6 cm. Private collection.

Fig 7. Arthur Lismer, *Spruce, Algoma*, 1922, oil on wood, 22.9 x 30.4 cm. Collection of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Gift of Isabel McLaughlin, 1989 (1989LA184). Courtesy of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery.

Fig 8. Captain Lawren P. Harris, official war artist, sketching during World War II. Canadian Army Overseas Photo, Department of National Defence. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa (PA-116593). Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

Fig 9. Hortense Gordon, *Colour Rhythm*, 1958, oil, charcoal, 60.8 x 50.9 cm. Collection of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Purchase, 1971 (1971GH11). Courtesy of The Robert McLaughlin Gallery.

Fig 10. Doris McCarthy, *City of Scarborough Flag*, 1968. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Fig 11. Doris McCarthy and brothers Doug (left) and Kenneth (centre), 1913. Photographer unknown. Collection of the University of Toronto Scarborough Library (61220/utsc11233). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 12. Central Technical School, Toronto, March 23, 1921. Photographer unknown. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa (PA-097055). Courtesy of Toronto Harbour Commissioners and Library and Archives Canada.

Fig 13. Portrait of Doris McCarthy for her debut as the first woman president of the Ontario Society of Artists, 1966. Photograph by Peggy Todd. Collection of the University of Toronto Scarborough Library (61220/utsc111285). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 14. Doris McCarthy, *Rhythms of Georgian Bay*, 1966, oil on board, 61 x 76.2 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of the Estate of Doris McCarthy, 2012 (2013.02.024). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 15. Doris McCarthy, *Badlands Revisited*, 1989, oil on canvas, 94.6 x 125.1 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of Wendy Wacko, Mountain Galleries, 2022 (2023.01.129). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 16. Doris McCarthy, *Dark Island*, 1967, oil on canvas, 61 x 76.2 cm. Collection of Passages Art Inc., Toronto. Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough.

Fig 17. Doris McCarthy, *Hoodooos at Dinosaur Park*, 1994, oil on canvas, 76.7 x 102.2 cm. Private collection.

Fig 18. Doris McCarthy, *Rockglen, Saskatchewan*, 1983, watercolour over graphite on paper, 57.4 x 76 cm. Private collection.

Fig 19. Doris McCarthy, *Aurora and the Bergs*, 1996, oil on canvas, 91.4 x 121.9 cm. Collection of Katia and John Bianchini. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House. Photo credit: Heffel Fine Art Auction House.

Fig 20. Doris McCarthy, *South Saskatchewan Hilllocks*, 1982, oil on panel, 48.3 x 57.8 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Scarborough, Gift of Wendy Wacko, Mountain Galleries, 2022 (2023.01.110). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 21. Reference for *Houses and Boats on Shore*, n.d., photographic slide. Photograph by Doris McCarthy. Collection of the University of Toronto Scarborough (61220/utsc11211). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 22. Doris McCarthy, *Houses and Boats on Shore*, n.d., photographic slide, 24 x 35 mm. Collection of the University of Toronto Scarborough (61220/utsc11310). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 23. Doris McCarthy, *Kicking Horse River West of Field, B.C.*, 1974, oil on Masonite, 30.5 x 40.6 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of the Estate of Doris McCarthy, 2012 (2013.02.040). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 24. Doris McCarthy, *Okanagan Valley Near Osoyoos, B.C.*, 1989, oil on canvas, 152.4 x 213.4 cm. Private collection.

Fig 25. Doris McCarthy, *Valley of the Bow River Above Revelstoke*, 1938, oil on canvas, 61 x 68.6 cm. Private collection.

Fig 26. Doris McCarthy, *Neighbours, P.E.I.*, 1985, oil on canvas, 71.1 x 91.4 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of the Estate of Doris McCarthy, 2012 (2013.02.093). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 27. Doris McCarthy, *Grey Spruce in the Ditch*, 1977, oil on wood, 30.5 x 40.6 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of the Estate of Doris McCarthy, 2012 (2013.02.045). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 28. Doris McCarthy, *Grey Spruce, Inuvik*, 1977, watercolour, 29.8 x 40 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of Cowley Abbott Fine Art, Toronto.

Fig 29. Doris McCarthy, *Georgian Bay from the Air*, 1966, oil on Masonite, 61 x 76.2 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of the Estate of Doris McCarthy, 2012 (2013.02.020). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 30. Doris McCarthy, *Mal Bay with Fish Rack*, 1954, watercolour on paper, 56 x 76 cm. Private collection.

Fig 31. Doris McCarthy, *Mountains Near Revelstoke, B.C.*, 1937, oil on panel, 29.2 x 34.3 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art Auction House. Photo credit: Heffel Fine Art Auction House.

Fig 32. Doris McCarthy, *Off to Make a Sketch*, 1932, pencil crayon and pastel on paper, 40.6 x 33 cm. Collection of the Doris McCarthy Gallery, University of Toronto Scarborough, Gift of Wendy Wacko, Mountain Galleries, 2022 (2023.01.137). Courtesy of the Doris McCarthy Gallery.

Fig 33. Doris McCarthy, *Broughton Ballet*, 1978, oil on canvas, 121.9 x 152.4 cm. Private collection.