

LOOKING TO LEARN

June 2022



This month we looked at Maya Lin's *Imaginary Iceberg*, read the book *The Fog* by Kyo Maclear, and created field journals as we talked about the value of observation. If you missed our program or are looking to continue the discussion from home, here are the highlights!

OBSERVATION: To observe means to use your five senses to pay close attention to something. Observation can be used to document our changing world, ask questions, and even propose solutions. Observation is especially important when a change is difficult to see. By documenting what they notice, artists and scientists are able to visualize and communicate change.



IMAGINARY ICEBERG BY MAYA LIN

Lets look at the sculpture together.

What do you see?

Did you notice...

- The color?
- The shape?
- The texture?
- The size?

What do you think...

- the imaginary iceberg could be made of?
- the layers might represent?
- caused the shape of the iceberg?
- the artwork is telling us?

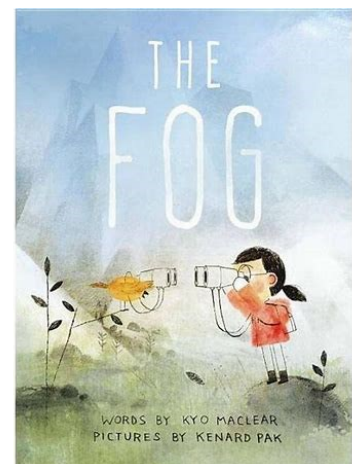
Maya Lin, *Imaginary Iceberg*, 2009. Plaster. Installation photo by Echard Wheeler.

It is hard to know what icebergs truly look like because their shapes are constantly changing. Warm and rising waters cause our polar ice caps to break apart and form icebergs that then melt away into the sea. Even though most icebergs are quite large, only the top 10% floats above the water. It is hard to notice changes when something is out of sight. Maya Lin has created this sculpture to help us observe this nearly invisible process taking place in nature.

THE FOG BY KYO MACLEAR

Kyo Maclear's witty story, told from the perspective of a curious yellow bird and brought to life with the delicate, misty artwork of Kenard Pak, is a moving yet humorous reminder of the importance of environmental awareness. Watch a read aloud of *The Fog* from the StoryTime Family [here](#).

- What causes the fog in the story? What happens when it is ignored?
- Who notices the changes happening on the island? What do they do about these changes?
- What happens to the fog when more characters begin to talk about it?
- This is a story about observation and teamwork as it relates to the natural world. What changes have *you* noticed in nature?



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ART MAKING ACTIVITY: A field journal is a research tool that is used to record observations in nature. Today we are going to create our own field journals to observe the world around us. Artists and scientists both rely on visual journaling to document and communicate their observations. As we use our field journals to seek out things in nature that may not be obvious, or that others may ignore, we should share our findings and remember to be an advocate for nature. We hope that your field journal will be a useful tool for observation and a way to start conversations with others.

SUPPLY LIST:

- 8 pieces of white paper
- 1 piece of brown cardstock
- Rubber band



INSTRUCTIONS:



1. Stack your 8 pieces of white paper and fold hamburger style to create an indent.
2. Add your piece of brown cardstock to the outside of the stack, folding them all together.



3. Slide your rubber band onto the paper until it lays along the indent you created. This will bind your field journal.
4. Go outside and find something from nature to observe! Try to look for parts of nature that you may have overlooked in the past. How do you think these might change over time? How can we protect nature from harmful changes?



5. Document what you find in your field journal. Sketch an image, write a short description, and add the date. Revisit your plant, animal or site in a couple weeks to document new changes.
6. Tell others what you find!

