

A photograph of two children, a girl on the left and a boy on the right, sitting at a rustic wooden table outdoors. They are both focused on painting small pieces of paper with watercolor paints. The girl has dark hair tied back, and the boy has light brown hair. They are using brushes and dipping them into white bowls of water. A palette with various colors of paint is on the table. The background is a lush green garden with trees and foliage.

LEIGHTON ART CENTRE

ART & NATURE

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING GUIDE

OUR MISSION

A vibrant and open space for creativity, Leighton Art Centre inspires you to explore, appreciate, and create.

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WHY ART & NATURE?

At Leighton Art Centre we believe that understanding the relationship between humans and nature is one of the most important lessons of our time. We want to give kids a head start by fostering the creativity they need to flourish and become future stewards of nature. We also know that art is an ideal platform for making connections and creating deeper understanding.

How? Leighton Art Centre's Art & Nature programs focus on the following philosophies and values:

- **Exploration:** Art projects are a great way to try new things and risk making "mistakes" in a fun and supportive atmosphere. This makes us more resilient! We're excited about the process as much as the end result.
- **Creativity:** Let's take this opportunity to see the natural world in a new light! Students will have the chance to discover the wonder of nature and express their learning through art making. We also know that students learn in many different ways, so let's give them lots of tools for expressing themselves creatively!
- **Sustainability:** Nature walks are a great way to discuss human impact in the natural world. We also use recycled, upcycled, and donated materials in our art projects!

Background: Leighton Art Centre is situated within the traditional territory of Treaty 7. Located near Calgary on 80 acres of grassland, Leighton Art Centre has dramatic views of the Foothills and Rocky Mountains. Leighton Art Centre was established in the 1970s by Barbara Leighton who believed everyone could be an artist because everyone has the inherent need to create. Today we honour her legacy by planting seeds of creativity. The artistic history and unique landscape of Leighton Art Centre make it the perfect place to explore the relationship between art and nature! Leighton Art Centre's dedicated Art & Nature educators offer inspiring educational experiences to students. These experiences are also great for community groups such as Girl Guides, Scouts, clubs, and homeschooling groups.

BOOK TODAY!

leightoncentre.org/educators/art-nature-field-trips

Art & Nature School Field trip Includes:

- 4 hour on site guided experience
- Your choice of art project (supplies and materials included)
- Nature walk
- Museum and gallery tour
- Take-home sketchbook for each student

Rates:

\$640 per studio (bursaries available)
2 studios available: 32 students per studio

More Options:

Art to Go in your classroom (January)
Virtual Art & Nature Program

Accessibility: We want everyone to have the chance to participate in Art & Nature programs at Leighton Art Centre. Contact Coreen Thornhill, Public Programs Manager to discuss your group's accessibility needs. We're also aware of the financial barriers faced by many schools, community groups, and individuals. With the support of generous donors and foundations we offer financial assistance to remove one significant barrier to access.

Can't make it out to Leighton Art Centre? We'll bring Leighton Art Centre to you!

Email Coreen Thornhill at education@leightoncentre.org to discuss Art to Go or Virtual Art & Nature programs.

Art To Go offered in January only (bursaries available)

\$640 per class includes:

- 2.5 hour in-class program
- Introduction to Leighton Art Centre
- Hands-on exploration of art and nature artifacts
- Your choice of art project (supplies and materials included)
- Take-home sketchbook for each student

Virtual Art & Nature Program includes: (email Coreen for pricing)

- 90 minute online program
 - Introduction to Leighton Art Centre
 - Drawing and sketching game
 - Your choice of art project (supplies and materials will be dropped off at your location)
 - Take-home sketchbook for each student
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STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Email Coreen Thornhill, Manager of Public Programs: education@leightoncentre.org

Ask about our bursary program! Leighton Art Centre will provide financial assistance while funds last. Email Coreen at education@leightoncentre.org to access the bursary. Bursary funds are made available thanks to generous donors and foundations. If you'd like to make a donation to the bursary program and provide kids with transformative experiences with art and nature, contact Christina Cuthbertson, Executive Director: christinac@leightoncentre.org.

ART & NATURE FIELD TRIP

Your 4-hour on-site program will explore the Foothills on our 80-acre facility and tour the galleries and museum at Leighton Art Centre. With your choice of art project, your field trip will be guided by an artist-instructor who will promote visual literacy, thoughtful observation, and critical thinking. Lessons will be tailored to your students' age and ability. Our wide range of art projects allows you to make important curriculum connections to the learning presented in our programs.

ITINERARY

Itinerary is subject to change at instructor's discretion.



Arrival and Introduction

See your studio, meet your instructor, and have a morning snack.

Sketchbook Warm-Up

Sketching warm up and discussion of fundamentals of art making. We'll introduce ideas related to our chosen art project.

Nature Walk

Enjoy the spectacular views and native plants on a scenic walking tour of Leighton Art Centre's trails.



Antler Station

Learn about local fauna and lifecycles using our collection of biological artifacts and specimen.

Lunch Break

Students can enjoy their lunch in the studios or in our outdoor picnic area.

Echo Hill & Viewpoint

Explore the science of echoes and the idea of listening to the land with an incredible view of the Foothills and Rocky Mountains.



Museum and Gallery Tour

Tour Barbara and A.C. Leighton's historic house, including the museum and art galleries.

Michelle Atkinson, *Human Sprawl*

Michelle Atkinson's site specific installation, *Human Sprawl* uses recycled glass to talk about endangered species and habitat loss.



Art Project

We love this part of the day when students get a chance to explore their creativity and craftsmanship through hands-on artmaking activities! You can choose from a wide range of projects.

Departure

Pack up your art projects and load back onto the bus for your journey back to school.

ART PROJECTS

Clay: Clay is a natural material that has been used by humans for millennia to make practical and artistic creations such as bricks, pots, and mosaics. Clay also features in many mythologies and creation stories from around the world. Hands-on clay lessons will give your students the opportunity to sculpt a unique project and learn techniques such as folding, imprinting, scoring, molding, and applying additive/subtractive effects using their hands and tools! Each lesson includes a sketchbook activity developing skills and understanding that will be applied to their clay creation.



Curious Clay Owl

Grade Level: K+

Fascinating facts about local owl species will inspire students to sculpt a curious clay owl, one of many feathered friends that frequent the Centre. A perfect opportunity to learn about the diversity of life and the dynamics between predator and prey.



Under the Sea

Grade Level: K+

Students will do a “deep dive” into their imagination and create a unique seascape scene using clay. This is an excellent way to engage students in understanding how essential the oceans - and water in general - are for sustaining life and how we can contribute to keeping them clean!



Sculpted Clay Landscape

Grade Level: Gr 1+

Using the natural world outside the studio as inspiration, students will create a landscape in clay and pay tribute to the origins and location of Leighton Art Centre. Each element of the landscape, including mountains, trees, sun, and clouds, are identified for their physical characteristics and role they play in our environment.



Patterned Pinch Pot

Grade Level: Gr 2+

Using a hand-building technique that is centuries old, students will learn basic pinch pot methods to create a small, patterned clay pot. A fantastic example of human creativity, progress, and the evolution of tools in modern society.



Sculpted Clay Habitat

Grade Level: Gr 2+

Pulling inspiration from local animals, students will craft a small-scale version of these creatures and their natural homes. Understanding habitats and animal species allows us to form symbiotic relationships with nature based on mutual respect. Habitats and animals will be created using a variety of hand and tool techniques including carving, coiling, and free-form sculpting.



Back in your classroom: We won't have time to paint your clay projects on site, but here are some tips for embellishing your project back in your classroom. **Supplies:** Paint brushes, acrylic or tempera paint, paint mixing trays, water, paper towel. **Time required:** 20 minutes for set up, 30 minutes for painting, 15 minutes for clean up, 60 minutes for full drying. **Tips:** Use the primary colours - red, blue, yellow - and discuss the colour wheel to make secondary colours, analogous colours, and complementary contrasts. Seal your final painted with Mod Podge or a 50/50 solution of white glue and water.

Printmaking: Printmaking is an artistic process that involves creating multiple copies of an image or design. Artists use various techniques, such as relief, intaglio, lithography, or screen printing, to transfer their image onto paper or another surface. Printmaking allows for the production of multiples, making this artform accessible to a wider audience. Barbara Leighton was a skilled woodblock printer, and these project take inspiration from her. While the most popular forms of printmaking involve making multiple images from one source, we have chosen to feature two projects that have contrasting outcomes and templates, but an overlap in equipment and theory.



Monoprinting

Grade Level: Gr 1+

Your students will be guided to make one of a kind prints that recreate cloud formations and landforms using fingers, brayers, and stencils. No two clouds are the same and neither are these stunning prints!



Printmaking*

Grade Level: Gr 5+

Students will learn linocut techniques to create their own stamp block! These can be used to replicate a trademark, logo, or symbol on posters or documents.

***Due to carving tools being used, it is requested that teachers and adult volunteers are actively engaged with this lesson to support students and maintain good classroom control.**

Textiles and Fibre: Leighton Art Centre founder, Barbara Leighton, was a talented fibre and textile artist! Taking inspiration from Barbara, we offer weaving and felting programs. The unique sensory qualities of working with natural fibres will fascinate your students and help them connect to the source of the materials and processes as well as the tools and industries associated with them. Each lesson will include a sketchbook activity to design the finished product.

ALLERGY ALERT Fibre Art activities may involve the use of natural fibres such as wool. Before booking, please consider any allergies your students have.



Willow Loom Weaving*

Grade Level: Gr 2+

Working on a natural, hand-shaped willow loom, students will create a wall hanging weaving using colours and textures to delight the eye! This heritage activity will present unique learning opportunities for your students to understand the origins and history of the materials used. ***Quantities of this activity are limited and subject to availability.**



Nature Inspired Needle Felting **

Grade Level: Gr 4+

In this active, hands-on lesson students will use wool fibres to create a needle felted landscape or nature inspired picture. Seasonal colours and textures will be used. Throughout the lesson, students will learn interesting facts about the natural materials and their origin and history. **** This project requires teachers and volunteers to be actively engaged to support students and maintain good classroom control. ****



3D Needle Felting **

Grade Level: Gr 6+

We'll use wool fibres to create a three dimensional needle felted animal or ornament. Throughout the lesson, students will learn facts about the animals that live in our region that are also popular symbols in Canadian culture. **** This project requires teachers and volunteers to be actively engaged to support students and maintain good classroom control. ****



Oil Pastel Batik

Grade Level: K+

Batik is an ancient textile art form that originated in Indonesia. It involves applying wax to fabric, creating patterns and designs, and then dyeing the cloth. The wax-resist technique results in vibrant, intricate designs. Batik has a rich cultural history and is still practiced today, both traditionally and in contemporary forms. Batik was a favourite art form of Barbara Leighton's and was a popular lesson in the early days of Leighton Art Centre. This adapted version uses oil pastels on paper and is finished with a wash of black paint to give artworks a unique batik charm.

Sculpture & Monuments: Sculpture is the art of making three-dimensional representative or abstract forms. Public Art and Monuments are two important types of sculpture that occupy public space. A monument is a structure created to commemorate and honor a person, an event, or an idea of historical, cultural, or social significance. Monuments are typically large-scale and visually striking, designed to draw attention and serve as a symbol or reminder of something important. Monuments often carry symbolic meaning and represent the values, achievements, or struggles of a particular group or society. They serve as physical reminders of the past, preserving collective memory and providing a connection to history and cultural heritage. Our sculpture projects will draw on these ideas as they relate to subjects from nature. Students are encouraged to write inscriptions and artist statements for an added level of personalization.



Study for a Monument to Trees

Grade Level: Gr 1+

If nature and ecology are hot topics in your classroom, consider having your students create a whole forest of unique and colourful trees. What better way to showcase the diversity of trees and their importance for our survival?



Study for a Monument to Your Favorite Animal

Grade Level: Gr 2+

After visiting our display of animal bones and antlers during their nature walk, your students will be inspired to create some creative creatures of their own. Whether they choose to make an indigenous species or something exotic, these critters can spark a myriad of classroom discussions and projects! After all, we are all part of one larger cycle of life and food web.



Study for a Monument to Flowers

Grade Level: Gr 2+

This project encourages students to consider one of nature's most colourful gifts and to observe some of the smaller flora in our area. The flowers that grow on our property or elsewhere in the world are great discussion starters for topics surrounding how we should be treating nature. They aren't just for the bees and bouquets!



Study of a Monument to an Influential Person in your Life

Grade Level: Gr 2+

One of our most popular lessons! Students will study proportion of the human figure and sketching techniques before creating their own expressive wire sculpture of a human. A truly unique way to memorialize somebody on a personal or cultural level.

Painting: Painting is an important form of visual art, bringing in elements such as drawing, composition, gesture, narration, and abstraction. Paintings can be naturalistic and representational or abstract and gestural. Paintings can be made from observation or they can be created from memory, emotion, or instinct. They may convey a personal message or a wider political narrative.

A. C. Leighton was trained in the English landscape painting tradition of the 18th and 19th centuries, which celebrated the natural beauty of the English countryside, capturing the picturesque charm of rolling hills, meandering rivers, and tranquil landscapes. Artists in this movement employed meticulous attention to detail and a focused on capturing the changing effects of light and weather. English landscape painting emphasized an idea of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, portraying idyllic scenes that evoked a sense of nostalgia.

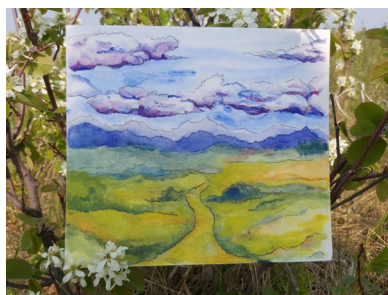
A. C. Leighton continued to practice this tradition when he moved to Canada, also employing ideas of picturesque and nostalgia. We'll take inspiration from A.C. Leighton while touring the museum and learning about the history of landscape painting in Canada. Each painting lesson begins with a sketchbook activity that develops drawing skills, as well as an understanding of composition, perspective, and landscape. Students will learn basic brush handling, colour mixing, and a variety of painting techniques. These lessons will also incorporate seasonal elements, applying colours and textures from the selected season to the finished painting.



Painted Mountain Landscape Study

Grade Level: K+

Drawing inspiration from our spectacular view and the paintings of A.C. Leighton, students will create a landscape in tribute to our favourite provincial landmarks, the Foothills and the Rocky Mountains.



Advanced Watercolour Landscape

Grade Level: 7+

This project is a more detailed and challenging approach to the mountain landscape study, using watercolor and a range of other relevant historical techniques for reference. Students will learn about the history of landscape painting and delve into ideas of representation and perspective as they relate to issues like ownership, recreation, and climate change.

FAQ

ART & NATURE FIELD TRIP

Is there a minimum number of students to attend? No, we don't have a minimum number for attendance but there is a flat rate of \$640 per studio based on 32 students per studio or 64 students for two studios. Bursaries are available.

How do I access the bursary? Is my school eligible for financial assistance? Email Coreen Thornhill, Manager of Public Programs: education@leightoncentre.org to access financial assistance. All schools are eligible. Funds are distributed first-come-first-served.

Is there a maximum number of classes our school can bring to Leighton? Our two studios have a maximum capacity of 64 students when both studios are booked. Please divide your group so that there is no more than 32 students per studio.

How many projects can we do in a day? All field trips include one art project per studio. Your day also includes a sketchbook session, nature walk, and museum and gallery tours.

Will we have time for lunch? Yes! Our itinerary allows for 30 minutes for lunch. Please bring your packed lunches and pack all garbage back to school. Play time must be supervised by teachers and/or volunteers.

Should I bring payment with me? No, invoices will be sent back to the school with you on the day of your visit. Your office can forward a cheque to the Leighton Art Centre.

Is it free for adults to attend the field trip? Yes, teachers and volunteers are free to attend. We recommend a ratio of 1 adult per 8 children.

VIRTUAL ART & NATURE

How do I book a virtual program? Email Coreen Thornhill, Manager of Public Programs at education@leightoncentre.org. All aspects of virtual programs are managed on a case-by-case basis. You'll work closely with Coreen to manage all aspects of your booking.

ART TO GO (JANUARY)

Is there a maximum number of classes you can do in one morning or afternoon? We can do two classes in the morning and/or afternoon. This program is also subject to winter driving conditions and instructor availability.

In the bursary available for Art to Go? Yes, email Coreen Thornhill, Manager of Public Programs to access financial assistance: education@leightoncentre.org

How many projects can we do in a day? All in-school field trips include one art project. Your day also includes a sketchbook session, hands-on artifacts exploration, and introduction to Leighton Art Centre.

Will we have time for a break? Yes! Please communicate with your instructor about the preferred break time.

Do I need to book any volunteers for the Art To Go Program? Yes, we recommend having one or two volunteers in class to help students when needed.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Is there a minimum number of participants that can attend the program? We don't have a minimum number for attendance but there is a flat rate of \$640 per studio based on 32 students per studio or 64 students for both studios. Email Coreen Thornhill at education@leightoncentre.org to access financial assistance.

Is it free for adults to attend the program? Yes, leaders and volunteers are free to attend. We recommend a ratio of 1 adult per 8 children.

Can you adapt your program for our group's needs? Yes! We would love to work with you to create a relevant enriching experience for your group. Email Coreen Thornhill at education@leightoncentre.org to discuss your needs.

LEIGHTON --- ART CENTRE

“Our goal is to inspire the next generation
by planting seeds of creativity and curiosity
through the exploration of new landscapes
and art.”

– Coreen Thornhill
Public Programs Manager
education@leightoncentre.org