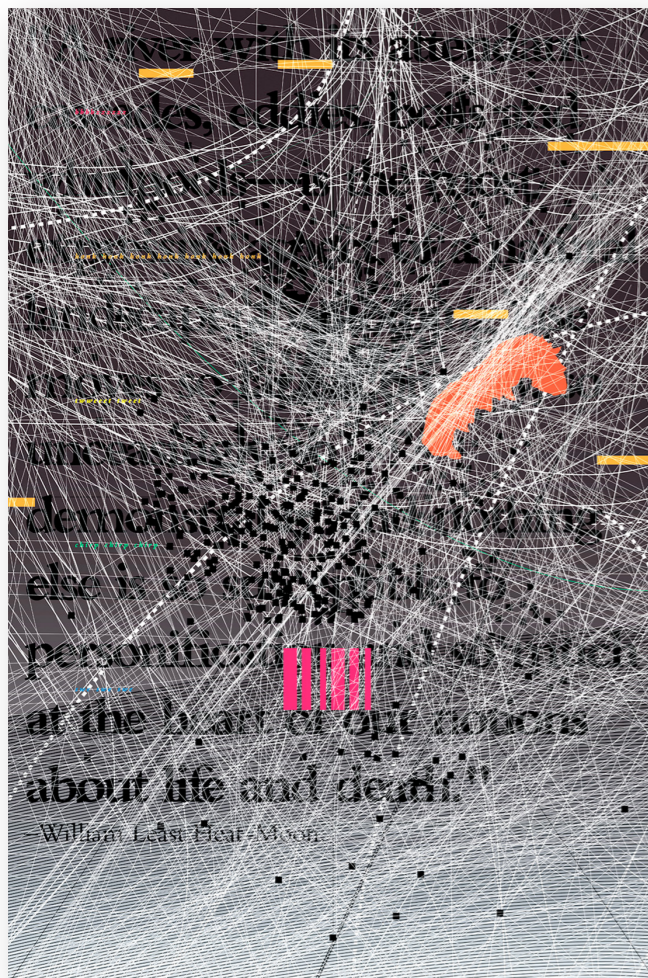


# FUNDAMENTALS IN NATURE

This project explores **innovative methodologies** in **design pedagogy**. It is an investigation of teaching **design fundamentals** in an **outdoor classroom**. To accomplish this, a **card-based system** was developed to aid the instructor teaching outdoors.



Above is the final result from a student's experience with the soundscape task. During his experience he happened to observe caterpillars spinning a cocoon. This observation became a point of wonder and inspiration in this work. From sketches to final composition, theories from the cards were applied to guide development of communication of the experience.

To begin, students are given a task card. The task card sends the students into a natural setting to record observations and experiences in nature. As the students progress through the steps of the task, other cards are shared with them to introduce design fundamentals such as: elements of design, aspects of composition and the Gestalt Principles of Perception.

- 1** In this example the soundscape task is used. With the first task card for the soundscape task the student is instructed to create a sketch of sound while sitting near a moving body of water.
- 2** After completing their soundscape sketch, students share their work with the class. At this point, the elements, composition and Gestalt Perception cards are distributed. (Samples of a selection of these cards can be seen to the right.) Together, the class discusses ways to apply the theories they have learned from the cards to strengthen their soundscape sketches.
- 3** Next, students apply selected elements, aspects of composition and Gestalt Principles of Perception to their initial soundscape sketch. These theories were introduced through the cards. The students may either improve their existing work or create a new one. To complete this step, the students again review one another's work.
- 4** In the third and final step, students demonstrate what they have learned from steps 1 and 2 in an applied graphic design project. For example, in the soundscape task, students create a poster promoting the body of water they visited, visualizing their experience.



## THIS CARD SYSTEM CONTAINS FOUR CARD CATEGORIES:

**TASKS:** Cards in this category provide the students with a task to perform in a natural area. Task cards contain an assignment, supply list and precedent related to the assigned task.

**ELEMENTS:** Cards in this category are used to define the fundamental elements of design. The front of these cards contain the name of the element, its definition and a visual representation. On the back is an image from nature that provides context and an opportunity for environmental education.

**COMPOSITION:** Cards in this category are to define and understand aspects of composition. The front of these cards contain a composition topic (or design principle as it is often called), its definition and a visual example. On the back, is an image from nature that provides context and an opportunity for environmental education.

**GESTALT PERCEPTION:** Cards in this category introduce students to the Gestalt Principles of Perception. The front of these cards list a Perception Principle, defines it and gives a visual example. On the back is an image from nature that provides context and an opportunity for environmental education.

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