

## Cloud Exploration

I remember as a child I loved being outside. One of the things I loved to do was to try and “see” things in the clouds, but it was hard because the clouds were always moving. (Did you ever do that as a child?) So a great activity is to have children do exactly what I did on my nature walk – take pictures of the clouds. We don’t even need to try to see anything in them while taking the photos – we can just let the cosmos (or “chance” or “coincidence”) work with us and snap random photos, as I did on May 23, 2010.

Education should be spontaneous and improvisational. My suggestion is to encourage learners to photograph whatever interests them on this Nature Walk as they explore the clouds. That way, if the clouds are not in the proper formation (such as cumulus clouds) that is required to find images, there are photographs to take back and investigate further. Please feel free to use the photographs I have taken and include here and in my blog for that day.

For more information about the nature walk I took to gather these photos, along with more photos, interpretations, and some relevant YouTube videos that can be used in your instruction, please refer to my Sunday, May 23, 2010 blog, [Psyche and Eros: Lovers in the Sky](#).

Please feel free to use this document as well as my blog, including the photos for a class discussion or other activities. In cases in which a nature walk is not feasible, the photos could be projected and the class can discuss what images they see in them (everyone is likely to see different things, much in the way photographs are interpreted). These interpretation skills are valuable because they expose learners to different perspectives and help them view alternative perspectives in a more concrete way – plus, it’s a lot of fun!

As I discuss in the article below, it appears to me that the earth is undergoing some noticeable changes as predicted by prophecy. I grew up in Oregon and I certainly do not recall clouds looking so magical as they appeared on the day I took the photos. 2012 is a huge topic right now, with a lot of misconceptions and misinformation due to the media. Students can research different aspects of this controversial topic and share what they learned.

The topics from this lesson plan are infinite. Be creative and also allow learners to head in their own directions according to their unique interests. They could research the science aspect of cloud formation and weather, mythology (Eros, Psyche, Hermes, or other mythological beings), ancient prophecies and traditions, etc. After doing this cloud activity it would be a worthy exercise to have learners choose a topic or direction and conduct their own research on the Internet and in the library with the idea of sharing with the class what they found most interesting (and they can choose how they wish to share – such as creating a presentation using any media, writing a poem, putting together a play with some of their classmates, etc.) If the teacher is concerned about meeting specific educational standards during this project, then provide the students in the form of a handout or verbal request that information and request that learners address these (find the answers or read about them) during the process of their research. It is best NOT to direct them to specific websites as a requirement, although, suggested sites may be helpful for some learners.

Written for [www.JoeKincheloe.us](http://www.JoeKincheloe.us)  
by Vanessa Paradis

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Why this process? This instructional method is based on the philosophy that we all have innate abilities, interests, and knowledge. This should not be stifled through direct instruction. Allow learning to evolve for the learners. They do not all need to focus on the same thing. By sharing their knowledge with each other, social construction of knowledge is leveraged and learners are exposed to a much wider range of ideas and information. To increase rigor, continue forward by requesting the students research their topics even further, again, highlighting some of the content standards, but not overemphasizing them. Students will learn the content in context. Also, something that I utilized often in online learning and this can be done in class as well, was I traditional, but low stakes online quizzes that were devised to assist with learning specific information such as science words and concepts so that the learners would have these tools to better communicate in their work. The quizzes were online and were graded automatically. The students could take them as many times as they wished and the highest score was their grade. It amazed me how the students actually repeated the tests to score higher – this served to expose them to the terms multiple times which aided in their understanding of the terminology and how it was used.

It would be beneficial if teachers using this activity record and reflect on their observations, experiences, and the outcomes of this activity in the tradition of action research. I would be interested in hearing about your experiences, your ideas for improving or expanding on this activity, how your students reacted, etc.

Add your own ideas and extensions to this activity here:

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## Ancient traditions during the Month of May

Ancient spiritual traditions involved performing fertility rituals during the month of May. This is the time, based on Indigenous prophecies that earth and sky meet and earth is reborn. With the approach of 2012 and the entering of the Fifth World (fifth dimension) May, 2010 represents a sort of thirteen thousand year climax during which we begin to notice the changes to our Earth, if the prophecies are correct. Over the next few years, these changes will increase exponentially and more people will notice; more people will be affected.



Photographed in Oregon by Vanessa Paradis (May 22, 2010)

I call this photo ***Lovers in the Sky: Psyche and Eros***. Can you see them? Eros' lit up face (and his ear below) is toward the upper left hand corner. Psyche is kissing him and her long, dark hair streams across the sky. She is on top of him with her arms around him and her hand on his neck. Below her streaming hair is her body – and she is "with child." What a beautiful, erotic gift from the cosmos. And the funny thing was, when I first went outside to take this nature walk, for some reason I kept thinking "Beauty and the Beast," associating the flowers I was going to be taking pictures of with Beauty and the dark storm clouds with the Beast. And if you know that story, the Beast turned out to be love and it appears storm clouds are no different in that regard. They are love gifts from the cosmos. What do you see in the photo?

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Photographed in Oregon by Vanessa Paradis (May 22, 2010)

Look at the very bottom of the sky on this picture. It's **Eros and Psyche again**, and this time Eros is lying on top of - or next to - Psyche and kissing her (you can only see a portion of Psyche's lit up face). You can see the back of Eros' head on the left between the two trees and his body lies across the picture just above the trees and houses. Right above the couple is an angelic white rabbit looking down on them, a symbol of fertility.

And since, this site is to serve as a “messenger,” let’s not forget Hermes. Incidentally, Hermes is an interesting mythological character to study for many reasons. Check back for some future lesson activities that delve into the significance of Hermes for communication.

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Photographed in Oregon by Vanessa Paradis (May 22, 2010)

Isn't it easy to imagine that the image above represents Hermes running (or maybe he is on a horse) to deliver his very important messages. Can you see the large quill he's carrying – his writing instrument? Yes, indeed, the pen is much mightier than the sword. What other images can be seen in this picture?

If these are the kinds of images and messages the ancients were able to see, then it is easy to imagine how we inherited some of our legends, prophecies, and mythologies. It is exciting to know that this is just the beginning of the amazing magic we have in store as we move more rapidly toward ascension, for those of us who take this experience seriously. The day I took these photographs, I had actually gone outdoors to photograph all of the beautiful flowers in the neighborhood and to write up a curricular activity that children might enjoy based on flowers. It turned out to be quite an amazing experience and this represents only a part of it.

Something to ponder: Since we are a part of the cosmos and the cosmos is a part of us, are cloud formations simply a reflection of what we hold in our collective consciousness?

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