



OGDEN MUSEUM  
OF SOUTHERN ART

## Movement Mondays: Ephemeral Earth Art



**Earth art**, sometimes called environmental art or land art, is a style of art that uses nature as its materials. Artists began making Earth art in the 1960s and 1970s to emphasize the connections between humans and the environment. Earth artworks can range from carving huge designs in the sand that are visible from a plane (like Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*), or placing colorful leaves in a beautiful pattern (Andy Goldsworthy did plenty of this). Earth art also falls into the category of **ephemeral art**, which is art that only exists temporarily. This makes every encounter with a piece of Earth art special, because, after a while, it will only exist in the memories of the people who have seen it.

**Create a work of Earth art in your own backyard!**

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### Instructions

**Step 1:** With a parent or guardian's permission, take a walk around your backyard, neighborhood, or a nearby park. Take time to look around and explore the environment around you. When you're ready, collect natural items that you'd like to use in your artwork (ex. sticks, stones, leaves, flowers, dead bugs). Don't worry about making sure you have everything you need - you can always go back outside and get more objects.

**Step 2:** Find a spot where you'd like to make your artwork. Feel free to get creative here! Do you want to arrange your objects on a plot of grass? On the surface of a body of water? Leaning against the base of a tree? Around a design you dig in the dirt?

**Step 3:** Experiment with different arrangements of your collected objects. Don't be afraid to think outside of the box. You could make an abstract design, a depiction of something realistic, a sculpture, or anything else that comes to mind.

**Step 4:** Once you have finished arranging your objects, pat yourself on the back, because you just made your very own piece of ephemeral Earth art! Snap a picture if you'd like, and then leave your artwork outside to live the rest of its life with the nature around it.

### Vocabulary

**Earth art** - a style of art originated in the 1960s and 1970s that uses nature or land as its materials in order to show the connection between humans and the environment

**Ephemeral art** - art that is temporary

