

The background is a reproduction of the painting 'Loggers' Culls' by Emily Carr, 1935. It depicts a rugged, mountainous landscape with a large, dark, jagged tree stump in the foreground. Several tall, thin evergreen trees stand in the middle ground, some appearing to be culls or stumps. The sky is a vibrant, textured blue with white clouds. The overall style is expressive and characteristic of the Group of Seven Canadian painters.

INDEPENDENT STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY  
FOR GRADES 4–12

# Clearcutting

*through the art of*

# Emily Carr

**WRITE A RESPONSE TO  
EMILY CARR'S PAINTING  
*LOGGERS' CULLS*, 1935**

## TEACHER INTRODUCTION

Using Emily Carr's art as a starting point, this independent activity will examine the concept of clearcutting and allow students to build a deeper understanding of our collective responsibility to be careful stewards of nature. This activity has been written to complement the Art Canada Institute online art book [Emily Carr: Life & Work](#) by Lisa Baldissera and adapted from the Teacher Resource Guide titled "Learn about Clearcutting through the art of Emily Carr." For additional learning materials, please see the Art Canada Institute collection of [Teacher Resource Guides](#).

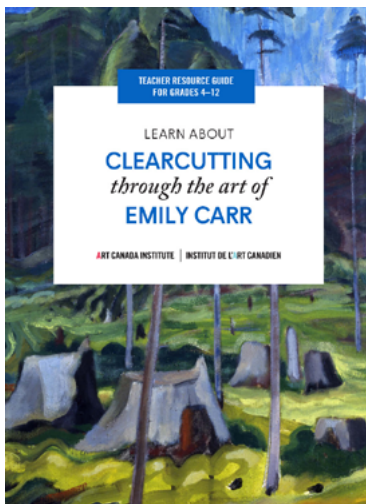
Please note that if you ask students to write poetry, they should have studied a number of poetic and sound devices, poetic forms, and poems. Students could choose to write a sonnet, haiku, lyric, or other form of poem, and they should strive to incorporate various poetic devices, such as simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, imagery, sound devices, rhythm, and rhyme.

Within this activity, your students will have the opportunity to engage in critical discussion. Several platforms, such as Jamboard, Parlay, and Flipgrid, may be used to help foster rich dialogue between students throughout this activity.

Students will also be given the opportunity to share their work with their peers at the end of this activity. Applications for creating a communal gallery space include CoSpaces Edu, Google Classroom, and Seesaw.

### Curriculum Connections

- Grades 4–6 Social Studies
- Grades 4–12 Visual Arts
- Grade 7 Geography
- Grade 9 Social Studies
- Grades 9–12 Geography

[DOWNLOAD GUIDE](#)

ADAPTED FROM

### Clearcutting through the art of Emily Carr

**Grades 4 to 12**

THEMES

- Clearcutting and logging
- Environmental awareness and stewardship
- Relationship with the environment



Carr's pets included several Old English sheepdogs.



EDUCATION:  
California School of Design, San Francisco;  
Westminster School of Art, London, England



As a young artist, Carr opened her own art school for children.

### GET TO KNOW THE ARTIST



BEST KNOWN FOR:  
Dramatic modern paintings of places in British Columbia



“There's a torn ridge across the stumps I call the 'screamers'.... These are the unsawn last bits, the cry of the tree's heart....It's a horrible sight to see a tree felled, even now, though the stumps are grey and rotting... They are their own tombstones and their own mourners.”



In 1933 Carr purchased a caravan, which she called “the Elephant,” so that she could live in the forest near Victoria as she worked.

# EMILY CARR

Carr regularly kept a journal, and her writings were widely admired.



BORN: December 13, 1871  
DIED: March 2, 1945  
PLACE OF BIRTH: Victoria, B.C.  
PLACE OF DEATH: Victoria, B.C.



## INDEPENDENT STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY

### WRITE A RESPONSE TO EMILY CARR'S PAINTING *LOGGERS' CULLS*, 1935

Emily Carr (1871–1945) is famous for being an artist, but she was also an extraordinary writer. She spent a great amount of time travelling within and writing about British Columbia, where she visited several First Nations communities and reflected on the landscape. In 1941 she won a Governor General's Literary Award for her first book, *Klee Wyck*, a collection of twenty-one stories about these travels. Other published story collections explored her childhood (*The Book of Small*, 1942) and her years running a boarding house in Victoria (*House of All Sorts*, 1944).

Through this exercise, you will examine the painting *Loggers' Culls*, 1935, read a short quotation from Carr's journal *Hundreds and Thousands*, and critically reflect on Carr's writing on clearcutting. You will then create your own poetic or written response addressing your point of view on the environmental impact of clearcutting.

#### Materials Needed

- Computer, iPad, etc.
- Paper
- Pencils, pencil crayons, or markers

#### Learning Goals

1. I can analyze artwork and make specific observations.
2. I can use artwork to build understanding and inspire questions about the world around me.
3. I can describe the process and effect of clearcutting.
4. I can use primary sources to understand Emily Carr's emotional response to clearcutting.
5. I can express my own response to clearcutting through writing.
6. I can work co-operatively and collaboratively with my peers.

#### Success Criteria

1. My written response is clear and well edited.
2. I use proper terminology in my written response.
3. I can show respect and cultural sensitivity when discussing Emily Carr's career and art.
4. I am respectful and use appropriate language in my responses on the discussion board.

## LEARNING PLAN

### Step 1: 5 min

Watch the Art Canada Institute learning video on Emily Carr.

<https://vimeo.com/524367634>

Think about what you found interesting about artist Emily Carr. Post your thoughts on the collaborative discussion board or share them directly with your teacher using the preferred method of communication. Treat this space as you would a class discussion. Write clearly, structuring your thoughts carefully and paying attention to proper writing conventions.



Emily Carr in her studio, 1939, photograph by Harold Mortimer-Lamb. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, gift of Claudia Beck and Andrew Gruft.

**Step 2: 5 min**

Look at the painting *Loggers' Culls*, 1935. Think about the following questions:

- What do I see in the image?
- What does it make me think of?
- What do I wonder about this image or why it was made?

These observations may be shared with your teacher if requested or posted to a collaborative discussion board.



Emily Carr, *Loggers' Culls*, 1935, oil on canvas, 69 x 112.2 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, gift of Miss I. Parkyn (VAG 39.1). Photo credit: Trevor Mills, Vancouver Art Gallery.

**Step 3: 5 min**

Read the following quotation from *Hundreds and Thousands: The Journals of Emily Carr*, published in 1966.

*There's a torn and splintered ridge across the stumps I call the "screamers."*

*These are the unsawn last bits, the cry of the tree's heart, wrenching and tearing apart just before she gives that sway and the dreadful groan of falling, that dreadful pause while her executioners step back with their saws and axes resting and watch.*

*It's a horrible sight to see a tree felled, even now, though the stumps are grey and rotting.*

*As you pass among them you see their screamers sticking up out of their own tombstones, as it were.*

*They are their own tombstones and their own mourners.*

From *Hundreds and Thousands: The Journals of Emily Carr* (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1966), 132–33.

**Step 4: 5 min**

What are your initial thoughts and reactions to this quotation? Respond to the following questions.

- How did Carr's statement make you feel? What makes you say that?
- What resonated with you?
- What do you think compelled Carr to write this statement?

These observations may be shared with your teacher if requested or posted to a collaborative discussion board.



**Step 5: 5 min**

Look again at the painting *Loggers' Culls*.

How has your perspective changed after reading Carr's words?

These observations may be shared with your teacher if requested or posted to a collaborative discussion board.

**Step 6: 10 min**

Following your teacher's guidance, review articles, videos, or other media that show the process or effect of clearcutting from a historical or modern perspective.

**Step 7: 30 min**

Like Emily Carr, you will now create a written response addressing the environmental impact of clearcutting forests. With your teacher, please review the necessary criteria for what is required in your written response before you begin.

You may choose to write a paragraph OR a piece of poetry that makes the audience appreciate specific natural features, landscapes, plants, or animals and the effect of logging on the natural world.

**Step 8: 5 min**

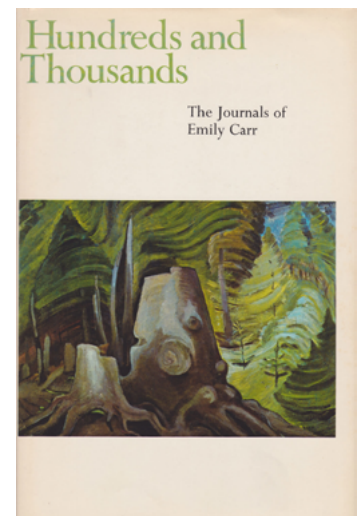
Post your poetic or written response to the collaborative gallery space that your teacher has created for this assignment. Write clearly, structuring your thoughts carefully and paying attention to proper writing conventions. Be sure to edit your work before you submit it.

**Step 9: 5 min**

Take time to explore the collaborative gallery space. Review at least two other responses and provide your peers with two stars (something they have captured well) and a wish (something you wish you had seen in their work) as feedback.



Emily Carr, *Odds and Ends*, 1939, oil on canvas, 67.4 x 109.5 cm. Collection of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.



The first edition of *Hundreds and Thousands*, published posthumously in 1966, features Carr's *Stumps*, 1936.