



TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE  
FOR GRADES 7–12

LEARN ABOUT

**TOPOGRAPHY**  
*through the art of*  
**TAKAO TANABE**

ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

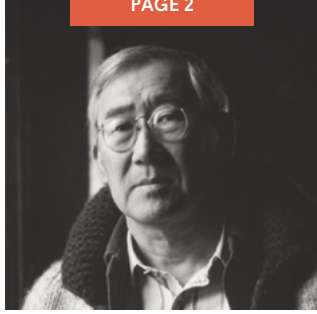
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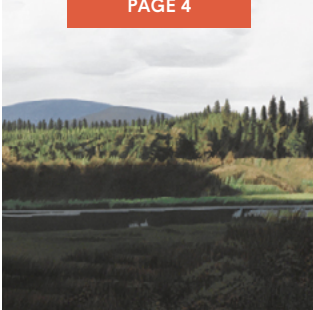
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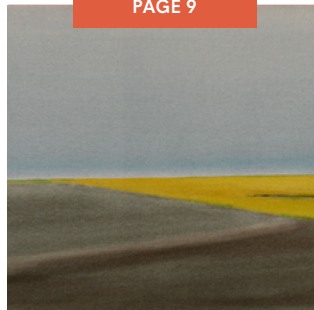
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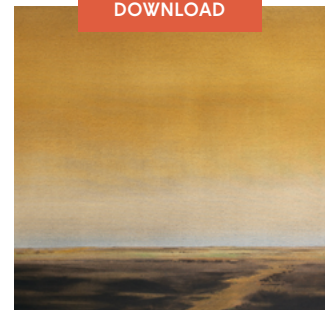
**ADDITIONAL  
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READ ONLINE



**TAKAO TANABE:  
LIFE & WORK BY  
IAN THOM**

DOWNLOAD



**TAKAO TANABE  
IMAGE FILE**



## RESOURCE OVERVIEW

This teacher resource guide has been designed to complement the Art Canada Institute online art book [Takao Tanabe: Life & Work](#) by Ian Thom. The artworks within this guide and images required for the learning activities and culminating task can be found in the [Takao Tanabe Image File](#) provided.

Takao Tanabe (b.1926) is revered for his ability to create landscape works of great depth and subtlety that reflect the country's diverse topography. Although Tanabe initially focused on abstraction during his early career, he would soon take the techniques and methods of non-representational painting and apply them to produce atmospheric and evocative landscapes that have challenged the ways Canadians view the natural world, inviting introspection on familiar environments and regions such as the Prairies and the West Coast. With a career that spans more than seven decades, Tanabe's work is a reflection of both his skill as an artist and the beauty of Canada's natural geography. Through a close consideration of Tanabe's work, the learning activities in this guide invite students to deepen their understanding of landscape, geological forces, topographic mapping, and human uses of the land.

### Curriculum Connections

- Grades 7–9 Geography
- Grade 11 Regional Geography
- Grades 11–12 Humanities
- Grade 12 Environment and Resource Management
- Grade 12 Physical Geography

### Themes

- Landscapes
- Topographic features
- Human uses of the land

### Teaching Exercises

The exercises in this guide explore the theme of “Topography” as represented in artworks by Takao Tanabe.

- Learning Activity #1: Geological History ([page 4](#))
- Learning Activity #2: Topographic Mapping ([page 6](#))
- Culminating Task: Humans and Topography ([page 9](#))

### A Note on Using This Guide

In this guide, students are asked to connect with and examine the landscape and topography of Canada. In any discussion of land it is important to acknowledge the original and continued presence of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples in the regions portrayed and examined.



Fig 1. Takao Tanabe, *Peace River 27/99*, 1999. Since the 1980s, Takao Tanabe has been revered for his monumental paintings capturing British Columbia's landscapes, including the province's river systems.

## WHO IS TAKAO TANABE?



Fig 2. Takao Tanabe in his Vancouver Island studio, 1987.

The fifth of seven children, Takao Tanabe was born in 1926 in the tiny coastal village of Seal Cove, British Columbia. Now part of Prince Rupert, Seal Cove was a small community where most residents made their living as fishers. Tanabe's father, Naojiro Izumi, operated a commercial fishing boat and his mother, Tomie, worked in the local cannery. In 1937, the family moved to Vancouver, where the then eleven-year-old Takao continued his schooling.

Tanabe was partially through high school when, on December 7, 1941, Japanese airplanes bombed the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii—a turning point in the Second World War and an event that drastically altered Tanabe's life.

The Canadian government responded by immediately declaring war on Japan.

In early 1942, the government declared that all Japanese Canadians residing within 160 kilometres of the B.C. coast would be relocated and their properties and businesses seized. Framed as a matter of national security and authorized by the War Measures Act, between 1942 and 1949 approximately 22,000 men, women, and children were displaced from their homes and sent to incarceration sites across Canada. Members of the Tanabe family, including Takao, were sent to an internment camp in Lemon Creek in southeastern B.C.

Near the end of the Second World War, Tanabe joined some of his older siblings in Winnipeg. Aware that his career prospects were limited as he had not completed high school, Tanabe began to investigate how to finish his education and was steered in the direction of a commercial art program with an evening course in sign-painting at the Winnipeg School of Art. With no exposure to the arts as a child, Tanabe became interested in drawing and painting, and he was accepted into the three-year program. He graduated in 1949 and gave himself five years to become a working artist.

Travel was key to Tanabe's early career development. The artist's extended stays in New York and Europe enabled him to absorb emerging trends in painting, such as [Abstract Expressionism](#) and [hard-edge](#) abstraction, styles he employed in works such as *Fragment 41*, 1951, and *Kitselas*, 1970. Upon receiving a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts in 1959, Tanabe made his first trip to Japan to study *sumi-e*, a style of ink painting that requires bodily discipline and mental acuity. Tanabe applied techniques of *sumi-e* in the production of the two series of landscape paintings that he is best known for: one depicting the prairies and foothills of Alberta, and one that captured the misty vistas of the Pacific coast.

Throughout his more-than-seventy-year career, the artist has continued to expand his focus on landscape, producing increasingly larger canvases that capture the essence of the places through which he has traveled. Along with painting, Tanabe has continued to work in several media, including printmaking and graphic design, and has received public commissions for large-scale murals and banners. In 1999, Tanabe received the Order of Canada and a Governor General's Award in the Visual and Media Arts in 2003. He remains one of Canada's most beloved landscape painters.



Fig 3. Takao Tanabe, *West of Winnipeg*, 1949. This watercolour painting showcases Tanabe's early engagement with the landscape genre.



Fig 4. Takao Tanabe, *Kitselas*, 1970. By the 1970s, Tanabe emphasized a flattening of pictorial space achieved through strong lines and vibrant colour.

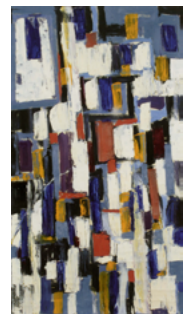


Fig 5. Takao Tanabe, *Fragment 41*, 1951. Produced during a trip to New York in 1951, this work illustrates emerging trends in abstraction.

## NATIONAL & WORLD EVENTS



Fig 6. Geological map of Canada and adjacent regions, 1864.

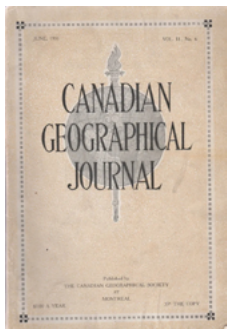


Fig 7. Cover of *Canadian Geographical Journal*, June 1931. In 1978, the journal was retitled *Canadian Geographic*.



Fig 8. Jackson Pollock at work on a painting in his barn studio at Springs, NY, 1950.



Fig 9. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Art Miki, the president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, signing the agreement of redress in 1988.

Canada's oldest scientific agency, The Geological Survey of Canada, is established to study the nation's natural resources.

1842

The Royal Canadian Geographical Society (RCGS) is founded with the aims of promoting geographical knowledge and education.

1926

1929

In the middle of the Second World War, shortly after declaring war on Japan, the Canadian government begins the process of displacing approximately 22,000 Japanese Canadian men, women, and children from their homes, sending them to incarceration sites across Canada.

1937

1942

1946

Late 1940s

Abstract Expressionism, championed by critic Clement Greenberg, takes the contemporary art world by storm.

1959–1961

The Geological Survey of Canada publishes a milestone report about Canada's groundwater resources.

1967

1972

1980

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney issues a formal apology and reparations to the Japanese Canadian community.

1988

1999

## TAKAO TANABE'S LIFE

Takao Tanabe is born in Seal Cove, B.C.



Fig 10. Seal Cove showing Canadian Fish & Cold Storage in Prince Rupert, B.C., c.1930.

The Tanabe family relocates to Vancouver, where the eleven-year-old Takao continues his schooling.

Members of the Tanabe family, including Takao, are sent to Lemon Creek internment camp in the interior of B.C.



Fig 11. Takao Tanabe at Lemon Creek Japanese Internment Camp, B.C., 1943.

After relocating to join some of his siblings in Winnipeg, Tanabe enrolls in a three-year program at the Winnipeg School of Art.

Tanabe receives a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts and uses it to visit Japan to study ink painting and calligraphy.



Fig 12. Takao Tanabe with his graduating class from the Winnipeg School of Art, 1949.

Tanabe accepts a position as Head of the Painting Division at the Banff School of Fine Arts, where he creates some of his most well-known landscapes depicting the Canadian prairies.

Tanabe moves to Vancouver Island, where the artist begins painting his iconic works depicting the weather and topography of the West Coast.

Tanabe receives the Order of Canada.



Fig 13. Takao Tanabe in his studio, n.d.

## LEARNING ACTIVITY #1

# GEOLOGICAL HISTORY

In addition to his abstract work, Takao Tanabe gained critical attention for two bodies of landscape paintings. The first is a series of more than two hundred canvases depicting the Canadian prairies at an almost abstract level, capturing what the artist regards as “an enormously simple-looking space,” further noting, “within all that simplicity it’s very, very rich, very subtle.” The second is a series of works depicting the misty, grey environments of the Pacific coast. In this activity, students will examine landscapes seen in Tanabe’s paintings and in geological survey photographs to discuss the features observed and the geological forces that have led to their creation. Students will then find evidence for the historical action related to specific geological forces.

### Big Idea

Forces of geology

#### Learning Goals

1. I can identify specific topographic features from images.
2. I can identify the geological forces that create landscape features.
3. I can support my thinking using evidence and reasoning.
4. I can use correct terminology when describing topography and geological forces.

### Materials

- Takao Tanabe biographical information sheet ([page 2](#))
- [Takao Tanabe Image File](#)
- [Government of Canada NRCan Photo Database](#)
- Method for printing or projecting images for class discussion

### Process

1. Introduce students to Takao Tanabe using the biographical information sheet.



Fig 14. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 20*, 1977. Despite their formal simplicity, Tanabe’s prairie landscapes are thoughtfully planned from reference photographs the artist shoots, crops, and compiles.



Fig 15. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 3/75*, 1975. Most of Tanabe’s prairie landscapes were produced while the artist was living and teaching in Banff, Alberta.



Learning Activity #1 continued

2. Examine a selection of Tanabe's landscapes, including:

- *The Land 3/75, 1975*
- *Prairie Hills 10/78, 1978*
- *Strait of Georgia 1/90: Raza Pass, 1990*
- *Rivers 2/00: Crooked River, 2000*
- *Cormorant Island, Looking South, 2015*

3. As you show each painting, ask students to analyze and discuss the geological evidence seen in the works. Questions to prompt discussion might include:

- What topographical/geological features do you see?
- What type of water is shown in this painting?
- What kind of rock or soil do you think exists here and what evidence do you notice?
- What types of vegetation or evidence of soil quality do you see?
- How has Takao Tanabe captured and represented this specific topography in his painting?

4. As a class, review the forces of geology that can create a specific landscape, and how geologic actions can influence topography. This may involve a discussion of key concepts such as plate tectonics, volcanic activity, sedimentation, weathering, glaciation, and landslides.

5. Choose a selection of geological survey images from the [NRCan Photo Database](#) picturing areas local to the school environment, or locations in the Prairies or on the Pacific coast (as inspired by Tanabe's paintings).

6. Assign students to small groups to analyze their given landscapes, and have them identify at least two specific pieces of evidence of a geological force that contributed to the creation of the landscape being shown.

7. Have students present and discuss their thinking to the rest of the class, discussing any differences of opinion and the evidence supporting their views.



Fig 16. Takao Tanabe, *Prairie Hills 10/78, 1978*. Here, Tanabe uses black wash, a technique he learned from his study of ink painting, to conjure the atmospheric effects of a prairie storm.



Fig 17. Takao Tanabe, *Strait of Georgia 1/90: Raza Pass, 1990*. An image wreathed in mist, this painting depicts Raza Passage, a stretch of water located at the northern end of the Strait of Georgia.



Fig 18. Takao Tanabe, *Rivers 2/00: Crooked River, 2000*. This painting is part of a series of six paintings depicting the rivers of British Columbia that the artist produced from 2000 to 2001.



Fig 19. Takao Tanabe, *Cormorant Island, Looking South, 2015*. This painting is a good illustration of Tanabe's ability to capture the quality of light and its ability to permeate the foggy atmosphere of the West Coast.

## LEARNING ACTIVITY #2

# TOPOGRAPHIC MAPPING

After a period of roughly twenty years experimenting with various styles of abstract painting, Takao Tanabe turned to the landscape, trying different approaches to this subject matter. Some of the artist's early landscape works on paper resemble topographical maps, with bands and shapes of bold colour evoking the natural forms the artist observed during his travels. In this activity, students will be inspired by the artist's paintings and works on paper to demonstrate their understanding of topographic mapping. They will show their ability to understand features from these maps by creating their own landscape artwork based on a specific position and viewpoint.

### Big Idea

Map reading

#### Learning Goals

1. I can identify specific features from topographic maps.
2. I can demonstrate my understanding of topographic features by recreating landscapes.

### Materials

- [Takao Tanabe Image File](#)
- Topographic maps of the local area or a region of interest
- Rulers, protractors
- Art-making supplies (pencil and paper, or other media if preferred)

### Process

1. Begin with an examination of paintings and works on paper by Takao Tanabe. Suggested works include:

- *Landscape Study #4*, 1972
- *The Land 22/77*, 1977
- *Foothills Looking West 3/83*, 1983
- *Westcoast 6/86, Late Afternoon*, 1986
- *Inside Passage 1/04: Malacca Strait*, 2004

2. As students examine the paintings, consider as a class what topography is shown. Based on what appears in the paintings, review what is known about the landforms, soil/rock of the region, and its relationship to water. Questions to prompt discussion might include:

- How might these features be shown in a topographic map?
- How would you recognize these features by colour, symbols, and contour lines?



Fig 20. Takao Tanabe, *Landscape Study #4*, 1972. Despite being rarely exhibited, Tanabe's studies on paper reflect the innovative ways in which he was beginning to approach the landscape in the early 1970s.



*Learning Activity #2 continued*

3. Review prior learning about topographic maps, discussing scales, symbols, and colour lines and their meaning.
4. Provide students with a selection of topographic maps (digital or printed), either from the local region or from a chosen area of interest. Students will choose a topographic map to work on individually or in groups.
5. Each student will choose a position on the topographic map from which they will “view” a landscape, and a direction on the map they will be “looking” in. Ask students to find interesting features that they might like to include in their landscape.
6. Using their understanding of scale on maps, students will draw a 5 kilometre circle around their chosen position on the map (physically or with digital tools) to show where the horizon of a landscape viewed from this position would be.
7. Students will then choose the direction on their map that they will “view” their landscape from, and draw a line from their chosen position in this direction.
8. Next, have students draw two lines (one on either side of the direction line) at 30° from the direction line to represent the field of view of their landscape.



Fig 21. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 22/77*, 1977. This work subtly communicates the feeling of vast space associated with the Canadian Prairies.



Fig 22. Takao Tanabe, *Foothills Looking West 3/83*, 1983. This painting illustrates the foothills of Alberta—a series of forested and gently undulating slopes adjacent to the Rocky Mountains.



Fig 23. Takao Tanabe, *Westcoast 6/86, Late Afternoon*, 1986. Tanabe’s paintings of the rain-soaked vistas of the West Coast necessitate many layers of paint that are applied methodically over time.

*Learning Activity #2 continued*

9. When this is complete, have students examine the outlined wedge of the topographic map and identify the major geographic features of this area, such as hills and valleys—including their peaks and positions, their elevation, and the steepness of their features—and the presence of water.
10. Next, students will imagine what a viewer would see when looking at the scene. Using the provided drawing/sketching materials, have students begin to lightly draw each feature they have identified, starting with those most distant from the viewer (at the edge of the circle) and working inwards, sketching over more distant features. Note that the edges of the wedge drawn should define the left and right edges of the drawing.
11. As time allows, have students add colour, over-drawing, inking, or painting to their landscapes to make them more realistic.
12. Lastly, have students display their landscape along with their annotated topographic map and a short explanation of the major features they see, encouraging them to explain how the features were identified in their landscape.



Fig 24. Takao Tanabe, *Inside Passage 1/04: Malacca Strait*, 2004. In this painting, Tanabe has taken great care to render variegated ripples on the surface of the water.

## CULMINATING TASK

# HUMANS AND TOPOGRAPHY

At various times in his life, Takao Tanabe hitchhiked across the Canadian Prairies, stopping along the way to sketch and photograph the vistas that caught his attention. While the artist's paintings of this region appear to be rendered very simply (and with little to no reference to human activity), a significant amount of planning is necessary to achieve his desired effect of effortlessness. Tanabe's preparatory documents—photographs that have been cropped, enlarged, and collaged together, and annotated sketches noting weather conditions and topographic features—are compelling records for imaging possible human uses and interventions in an environment. Inspired by Tanabe's creative process, in this activity students will use their understanding of topography to propose infrastructures that reflect uses of the land and its features.

### Big Idea

Human uses of land

#### Learning Goals

1. I can identify how topographic features inform human activities and land use.
2. I can use my understanding of topography to propose specific human uses that take advantage of landscape features.
3. I can identify topographic features from images and maps.
4. I can use terminology consistently and correctly to explain my thinking.
5. I can communicate my ideas through writing, images, and maps.

#### Success Criteria

To be added to, reduced, or changed in collaboration with students.

1. Specific topographic features have been correctly identified from maps and images.
2. Specific human uses of land have been identified and linked to topographic features.
3. Design of buildings/structures reflects understanding of both topography and human uses of land.
4. Reasoning behind decisions has been clearly communicated through sketching and annotation.
5. Terminology learned about topography and human uses is used correctly and consistently.

### Materials

- [Takao Tanabe Image File](#)
- Cameras
- Sketching materials such as paper, pens, and/or pencils
- Access to topographic maps of chosen regions
- Access to printer or digital tools to reproduce images/maps for annotation

### Process

1. Begin by sharing the following preparatory documents Takao Tanabe has used to plan compositions for his landscape paintings of the Canadian prairies:
  - Reference photographs of a prairie landscape enlarged and taped together, n.d.
  - Reference photographs of foothills in Alberta enlarged and taped together, n.d.
  - *Landscape sketch in pencil*, 1976



Fig 25. Takao Tanabe, *The Land #6*, 1974. Between 1972 and 1984, Takao Tanabe produced more than two hundred paintings of the prairies, exploring the lines between abstraction and representation.



*Culminating Task continued*

2. Lead a class discussion about the artist's creative process by asking students to examine the preparatory documents. Questions to prompt discussion could include:

- Which physical features of the land has the artist recorded? (Student observations may include descriptions of plant life, geographical features such as mountains and foothills, and human presence in the form of buildings and other infrastructure.)
- Has the artist paid particular attention to environmental elements, such as climate and lighting? How has he documented these intangible features of the landscape?

3. To extend the discussion, share one of Tanabe's prairie landscapes, such as *The Land 4/75 – East of Calgary*, 1975, and ask students to compare this final composition with his preparatory documents. How has the artist translated such considerations of physical features and environmental elements into a finished work?

4. After engaging with Tanabe's creative process, guide the class in a follow-up discussion about the relationship between appreciation of the landscape, topography, and the use of land for human needs. Ask students to reflect upon the following questions:

- What makes a place desirable to live?
- What sorts of activities are allowed by a given topography?
- What topographic features would you want to live near?

5. Introduce students to their culminating activity, where they will be documenting and analyzing a specific location and, based on its topography, proposing a building or small settlement to take advantage of the topography of this location.

6. Prompt students to find a location currently without human settlement or structures in their local region. Have students visit their selected location to sketch and/or photograph physical features of the land and document environmental elements. Students should produce a series of sketches and/or photographs from different points of view and during different times of the day. Provide enough time for students to make multiple visits to thoroughly document their selected location.



Fig 26. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 4/75 – East of Calgary*, 1975. In this painting, Tanabe has removed virtually all traces of human intervention in the landscape, creating an image that expresses an essential quality of place.



Fig 27. Reference photographs of a prairie landscape enlarged and taped together, n.d., photographs by Takao Tanabe.

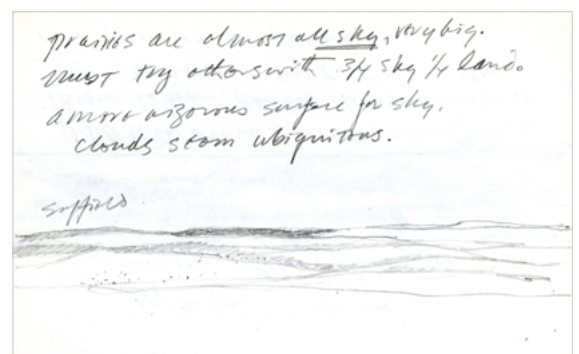


Fig 28. Takao Tanabe, *Landscape sketch in pencil*, 1976. Tanabe has annotated this sketch, noting how prairies are "almost all sky" and that "clouds seem ubiquitous."

*Culminating Task continued*

7. Have students use Google Maps to find the specific latitude and longitude coordinates for their selected location. Instruct students to use these coordinates to access a topographic map of the region using an online database or copies of paper maps.
8. Next, guide students to examine both the topographic map and their photographs/sketches to fully understand the topography of the region and to identify specific features that would be significant for human uses.
9. Based on their observations—both in the field and through maps—students will then decide what settlement and/or buildings would be best suited for this location and what their purpose(s) should be.
10. Students will then sketch their proposed buildings over their photographs/field sketches, showing the structures within the landscape. They will do the same with the footprint of the buildings on their topographic map.
11. Have students annotate both the proposed settlement and the topographic map, outlining their specific building design decisions, and how these decisions relate to the topography of the region.
12. Students will present their annotated images and topographic maps as a diptych to share and celebrate their learning.



Fig 29. Reference photographs of foothills in Alberta enlarged and taped together, n.d., photographs by Takao Tanabe.

## HOW TAKAO TANABE MAKES ART: STYLE & TECHNIQUE

Here are a few of the important artistic concepts that characterize the art of Takao Tanabe. For more information see the [Style & Technique chapter](#) of [Takao Tanabe: Life & Work](#) by Ian Thom.

### EXPERIMENTS IN ABSTRACTION

In the 1950s and 1960s, as Takao Tanabe was launching his career in art, he explored abstract painting through two approaches. The first was a painterly approach influenced by Abstract Expressionism and its emphasis on spontaneous, gestural forms. The second approach was a hard-edged, geometric style of painting, in which the artist applied flat applications of bold colour to play with the viewer's perceptions of the pictorial space. Both approaches enabled the artist to experiment with the limits of non-representational art, as he produced works that were not entirely landscapes, but that hinted at forms that could evoke the idea of the land.

### ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF LANDSCAPE

After many years of travel throughout Europe, the United States, Canada, and Japan, Tanabe accepted a position as the Head of the Painting Division at the Banff School of Fine Arts in 1972. In his studio in Banff, he developed painting techniques that would enable him to draw out the essential formal qualities of his subject matter. Stripped of all human elements, Tanabe's landscapes reduce topographical features to an almost abstract level. He uses little to no impasto (in fact, the surfaces of his paintings are often so thin that you can almost see the material grain of the canvas). The result is an image that invites deeper contemplation.

### WORKS ON PAPER

Though Tanabe is known primarily for his large-scale paintings on canvas, he has also produced a large body of works on paper throughout his seventy-year career. While travelling across Europe in the 1950s, he produced drawings inspired by architecture and natural landscapes, and in Japan, he produced a large body of ink works on paper. Tanabe also continued to explore the properties of acrylics with small works on paper like *Marsh, Magenta*, 1964, which was produced during the transition away from the influence of Abstract Expressionism.

### PRINTMAKING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Beginning at art school in the 1940s, Tanabe has worked in various media, including prints, throughout his distinguished career. In 1953, Tanabe, along with printer and graphic designer Robert Reid (1927–2022), formed his own press—Periwinkle Press—through which he developed a series of poetry chapbooks, broadsides, and prints of his work. As a printmaker, Tanabe works collaboratively. His most important collaboration to date is with master block cutter and printer Masato Arikushi, with whom he worked to translate some of his paintings of the West Coast into woodblock prints.



Fig 30. Takao Tanabe and Masato Arikushi (printer), *Gogit Passage, Queen Charlotte Islands*, 1988. This print is based on a series of paintings of Haida Gwaii, and was produced in collaboration with Masato Arikushi.



Fig 31. Takao Tanabe, *Marsh, Magenta*, 1964. This work on paper marks a transitional moment when Tanabe moved away from the influence of Abstract Expressionism.

Fig 32. Takao Tanabe, *A Region of Landlocked Lakes*, 1958. An example of the artist's painterly approach to abstraction, in this work Tanabe hints at forms that seem as though they could have been derived from nature.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Supplementary Materials Provided by the Art Canada Institute

- The online art book *Takao Tanabe: Life & Work* by Ian Thom: <https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/takao-tanabe/>
- [Takao Tanabe Image File](#) with artworks and images related to this lesson
- “Who is Takao Tanabe?” biographical information sheet ([page 2](#))
- Timelines of national and world events and Takao Tanabe’s life ([page 3](#))
- “How Takao Tanabe Makes Art: Style & Technique” information sheet ([page 13](#))

### GLOSSARY

Here is a list of terms that appear in this resource guide and are relevant to the learning activities and culminating task. For a comprehensive list of art-related terms, visit the Art Canada Institute’s ever-growing [Glossary of Canadian Art History](#).

#### Abstract art

Also called nonfigurative or nonrepresentational art, abstract art uses form, colour, line, and gestural marks in compositions that do not attempt to represent images of real things. It may interpret reality in an altered form, or depart from it entirely.

#### Abstract Expressionism

A style that flourished in New York in the 1940s and 1950s, Abstract Expressionism is defined by its combination of formal abstraction and self-conscious expression. The term describes a wide variety of work; among the most famous Abstract Expressionists are Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, and Willem de Kooning.

#### Hard-edge painting

A technical term coined in 1958 by the art critic Jules Langsner, referring to paintings marked by well-defined areas of colour. It is widely associated with geometric abstraction and the works of artists such as Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland.

#### Sumi-e

A form of Japanese-style painting, *sumi-e* was developed from ink-based techniques that derive from fifth-century China. It is monochromatic and typically involves the use of a brush and black *sumi* ink, which is made from organic pine soot. The aim of *sumi-e* is to capture the essential quality of a subject, rather than simply producing an image that strongly resembles the source material.



Fig 33. Takao Tanabe, *Storm*, 1960. This highly abstracted landscape was produced during Tanabe’s trip to Japan, during which he learned techniques associated with *sumi-e*.

## EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following external resources can be used to augment the learning activities and materials provided by the Art Canada Institute. They are to be used at the teacher's own discretion.

### The Atlas of Canada - Toporama

<https://atlas.gc.ca/toporama/en/index.html>

### Make A Topographic Map, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ontario

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/topographic-maps>

### Ontario GeoHub

<https://geohub.lio.gov.on.ca/>

### British Columbia, Topographic Maps

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/topographic-data/raster-base-maps>

### Government of Canada, Topographic Maps

<https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8dc04c10-708e-4afa-813e-acb96c3101a1>

### Canadian Geographic Education, Educator Resources

<https://cangeoeducation.ca/en/resources/>

### Native Land

<https://native-land.ca/>

### The Outdoor Learning Store

<https://outdoorlearningstore.com/>



Fig 34. Takao Tanabe, *Shuttleworth Sunset*, 1993. This print depicts a sunset near Shuttleworth Bight, a remote beach located on the northern edge of Vancouver Island.

## FIGURE LIST

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Cover Image: Takao Tanabe, *Inside Passage 1/04: Malacca Strait*, 2004, acrylic on canvas, 132 x 304.8 cm. Private collection, Vancouver. Photo credit: Ward Bastian.

Fig 1. Takao Tanabe, *Peace River 27/99*, 1999, acrylic on canvas, 12.7 x 21.5 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of Mira Godard Gallery, Toronto.

Fig 2. Takao Tanabe in his Vancouver Island studio, 1987. Photograph by Eliza Massey. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the artist and Rachel Topham Photography.

Fig 3. Takao Tanabe, *West of Winnipeg*, 1949, watercolour on paper, 29.8 x 45.6 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of the Burnaby Art Gallery. Photo credit: Scott Massey, SITE Photography.

Fig 4. Takao Tanabe, *Kitselas*, 1970, acrylic on canvas, 86 x 85.6 cm. Collection of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Gift of the artist, Errington, British Columbia, 2005 (2005.407). Courtesy of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

Fig 5. Takao Tanabe, *Fragment 41*, 1951, oil on canvas, 110.5 x 61 cm. Private collection.

Fig 6. Geological map of Canada and the adjacent regions including parts of other British provinces and of the United States, 1864. Map by W. E. Logan, Geological Survey of Canada, Multicoloured Geological Map 53. Courtesy of Natural Resources Canada.

Fig 7. Cover of *Canadian Geographical Journal* 11, no. 6, June 1931, published by The Canadian Geographical Society.

Fig 8. Jackson Pollock at work on a painting in his barn studio at Springs, NY, 1950. Photograph by Rudy Burckhardt. Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner papers c.1914–1984, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. (DSI-AAA 3908). Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

Fig 9. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Art Miki, the president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, signing the agreement of redress in 1988. Photograph by Gordon King. Collection of the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, Burnaby (2010.32.27). Courtesy of the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre.

Fig 10. Seal Cove showing Canadian Fish & Cold Storage in Prince Rupert, B.C., c.1930. Photograph by Jack R. Wrathall. Collection of Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa (3308277). Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada / The Brechin Group Inc.

Fig 11. Takao Tanabe at Lemon Creek Japanese Internment Camp, B.C., 1943. Photographer unknown. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the artist and Rachel Topham Photography.

Fig 12. Takao Tanabe with his graduating class from the Winnipeg School of Art, 1949. Photographer unknown. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the artist and Anona Thorne.

Fig 13. Takao Tanabe in his studio, n.d. Photograph by Equinox Gallery, Vancouver. Courtesy of Equinox Gallery.

Fig 14. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 20*, 1977, acrylic on canvas, 121.9 x 142.2 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of J. Ron Longstaffe (82.82). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 15. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 3/75*, 1975, acrylic on canvas, 66 x 111.8 cm. University of Lethbridge Art Collection, Gift of Canaccord Capital Corporation, 1995 (1995.30). Courtesy of the University of Lethbridge Art Collection.

Fig 16. Takao Tanabe, *Prairie Hills 10/78*, 1978, acrylic on canvas, 106.7 x 182.9 cm. Collection of Carol and John Beckel, Calgary. Courtesy of TrépanierBaer, Calgary.

Fig 17. Takao Tanabe, *Strait of Georgia 1/90: Raza Pass*, 1990, acrylic on canvas, 142.7 x 186 cm. Collection of the Audain Art Museum, Whistler, Gift of Michael Audain and Yoshiko Karasawa (2018.069). Courtesy of the Audain Art Museum. Photo credit: Rachel Topham Photography.

Fig 18. Takao Tanabe, *Rivers 2/00: Crooked River*, 2000, acrylic on canvas, 114.3 x 304.8 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisitions Fund with the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance Program (2001.29). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 19. Takao Tanabe, *Cormorant Island, Looking South*, 2015, acrylic on canvas, 102 x 185 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig 20. Takao Tanabe, *Landscape Study #4*, 1972, acrylic and watercolour on paper, 59.5 x 80 cm. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa (ABBA 72/3-0812). Courtesy of the Canada Council Art Bank.

Fig 21. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 22/77*, 1977, acrylic on canvas, 140.3 x 229.9 cm. University of Lethbridge Art Collection, Purchased 1978 (1978.25). Courtesy of the University of Lethbridge Art Collection.

Fig 22. Takao Tanabe, *Foothills Looking West 3/83*, 1983, acrylic on canvas, 50.5 x 152 cm. Collection of the Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Gift of the artist (2015.3.4). Courtesy of the Art Gallery of Alberta.

Fig 23. Takao Tanabe, *Westcoast 6/86, Late Afternoon*, 1986, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 122 cm. Collection of Museum London, Gift of the artist, Errington, British Columbia, 2006 (ML 006.A.041). Courtesy of Museum London.

Fig 24. Takao Tanabe, *Inside Passage 1/04: Malacca Strait*, 2004, acrylic on canvas, 132 x 304.8 cm. Private collection, Vancouver. Photo credit: Ward Bastian.

Fig 25. Takao Tanabe, *The Land #6*, 1974, acrylic wash on canvas, 84 x 142.5 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Permanent Collection Fund (74.40). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 26. Takao Tanabe, *The Land 4/75 – East of Calgary*, 1975, acrylic on canvas, 66 x 112 cm. Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa (ABBA 75/6-0203). Courtesy of the Canada Council Art Bank.

Fig 27. Reference photographs of a prairie landscape enlarged and taped together, n.d. Photographs by Takao Tanabe.

Fig 28. Takao Tanabe, *Landscape sketch in pencil*, 1976. Takao Tanabe sketchbook, Prairies, Morocco, Peru 1976, Takao Tanabe fonds, Collection of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, Ottawa. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada. Photo credit: NGC.

Fig 29. Reference photographs of foothills in Alberta enlarged and taped together, n.d. Photographs by Takao Tanabe.

Fig 30. Takao Tanabe and Masato Arikushi (printer), *Gogit Passage, Queen Charlotte Islands*, 1988, woodcut on paper, 60 x 90 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery Acquisition Fund (92.31.42). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 31. Takao Tanabe, *Marsh, Magenta*, 1964, acrylic on paper, 78.1 x 58.4 cm. Courtesy of Mira Godard Gallery, Toronto.

Fig 32. Takao Tanabe, *A Region of Landlocked Lakes*, 1958, oil on canvas, 127 x 68.5 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the artist (94.12.2). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 33. Takao Tanabe, *Storm*, 1960, sumi ink, watercolour on washi paper, 67 x 34.5 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the artist (2002.28.16). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Fig 34. Takao Tanabe, *Shuttleworth Sunset*, 1993, woodcut on paper, 42.5 x 61.2 cm. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Gift of the artist (95.10.1). Courtesy of the Vancouver Art Gallery.