

Miwa Matreyek  
Virtual Visit and Workshop Offerings



2020

## **CLIMATE CHANGE, and imagining the invisible before and after**

### **Class activity to be held after seeing the video, but before Miwa's virtual visit:**

The teacher will lead a discussion about how each student feels like they play a part in an aspect of climate change.

In the past, examples that students have cited were such experiences as: being overwhelmed by trash on the beach and making an effort to pick up the garbage, encouraging their family to use reusable bottles rather than buying plastic bottles, or choosing to bike to school rather than drive or be driven.

The participants are invited to think about these moments, and make a drawing that represents themselves in the moment of this choice-making. From there, students are asked to draw a visual representation of the “before” and “after” of the objects and the situation, as well as their choice-making.

For example, the student might consider where the trash might come from that ends up on the beaches, and how massive amounts of trash can impact marine life — how a world might look like if no one takes the initiative to make cleaner choices, or envision the impact a clean ocean and beach might have for the environment and to the community. Another student might consider how plastic bottles are manufactured from oil and distributed to stores, and the afterlife of these plastics, such as ending up in oceans and landfills, and taking hundreds or thousands of years to break down — or alternatively being refused (choosing a sustainable, reusable bottle) to break this cycle of production and waste. Another student might draw an image of a road congested with cars if no one made a choice for alternate transportation methods — and what the streets would look like if people had the choice to use alternate modes of transportation, such as buses, trains, and bikes instead.

The drawings will be shared in a show-and-tell presentation as students discuss and comment/add ideas to each other's visual representations.

This exercise is meant to help students imagine the before and after of the climate change situation (the small choices that, when multiplied by orders of magnitudes, become a force that impacts climate change) and how their choice-making can have an impact.

I want to note that especially during this time of the pandemic, the landscape of our choice-making is currently a bit different – so the discussion should avoid shaming for the choices that students and their families can make based on their health and financial situations, but rather as a way to see clearer the larger image of the impacts that we can all make based on our choices.

The teacher/facilitator will guide the participants and the discussions by highlighting each student's drawing on zoom to guide the discussion. The teacher likely will also be able to identify regional trends in the student's concerns – i.e. a student in a coastal city might have more concerns around ocean plastics and sea-level rise.

### **Virtual visit:**

Miwa will give a talk for 5-10 min with slides and video clips from some of the inspirations, research, process, and idea sketches, that show her ideas developing from conception to final image in the performance.

She will then do a Q and A with students in a reflection of the video of *Ininitely Yours*, as well as the activity the class took part in.

BEFORE



NOW



AFTER



## PLASTIC AUDIT

### Virtual visit:

Miwa will give a brief artist talk with slides and video about how she used the plastics from her own recycling bin to create many of the trash scenes in *Infinately Yours*. (Recording each piece spinning in a loop to have them float in the ocean, for example.)

She will also talk about how making this piece made her more plastic-aware. As part of this process, she began collecting her recyclables for a full month to do plastic audits – making assessments about purchasing choices and how to reduce her plastic waste. Currently, this is made difficult with Covid, where one might opt not to go to multiple stores for options to reduce waste. Also, in many stores, bulk bins are currently not available for food safety reasons. Part of the research was also about looking further into what is actually recyclable in her city, and the specific locations that some items need to be taken. Miwa will talk about the process of art-making as part of a larger investigation on a topic, and how this research, done while making art, can change lifestyles as well as communicate ideas to an audience.

We will highlight the “rethink”, “refuse” and “reduce,” parts of the trash hierarchy, over the “reuse” and “recycle”.

### Class activity to be held after seeing the video, after Miwa’s virtual visit:

After Miwa’s talk, (assuming the participants are in their own homes) we will give a few moments for participants to look through their own trash/recycling and pull out an item, that they may have ideas for alternative choices.

The participant will do a show-and-tell and discussion about why they have this item (grocery bag, plastic bottle, candy wrappers), and how they might be able to make a different choice... rethink, refuse, reduce, reuse recycle.

The class will need a facilitator (a teacher) who is able to highlight each student who volunteers to talk about their items. Since city recycling programs are different, it might be a good consideration for some research to be done about local recycling restrictions (what materials can be recycled by the municipal collections, what materials need to go to specialized recyclers).

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