

DIGITAL AGNES

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Painting in a cold climate

Agnes Learns

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SPEAKERS

Jarah Carlson

KEYWORDS

Agnes Learns, Grades 4–6, School Resource, Children's Education, Contemporary Art, Landscape, Canadian Art

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Doris McCarthy, *Pressure Ice – Pond Inlet*, around 1976, oil on board. Gift of the Anne and Harold Taylor (Queen's '51), in memory of their beloved son John Scott (1958-2018), 2018

TRANSCRIPT

Jarah Carlson: This painting by Doris McCarthy is called *Pressure Ice - Pond Inlet*.

How does it make you feel? Can you imagine the wind [wind sound effect] blowing across this snowy landscape? Do you feel shivers up your spine?

What do you notice first? I noticed the ice and snow formations in the center. This is called pressure ice. It forms when large areas of sea ice press against each other.

If you look further back, you can see the white peaks of mountains in the distance.

Doris McCarthy's love for the frigid snowy landscapes of Northern Canada began when she started travelling around the country in the 1970s.

Do you know how many islands the territory of Nunavut has? There are so many—over 2,000! And Baffin Island is the largest. At the top of Baffin Island is a community called Pond Inlet. This is where McCarthy painted this scene.

Pond Inlet has a polar arctic climate and the temperature is well below freezing most of the year. Can you imagine painting in temperatures below -20 Celsius? Think about what that would do to your hands, body, and even your paint! How might the cold weather change how you make a painting?

Maybe you'd take frequent breaks to warm your hands, or paint a very small painting to ensure you're not outside for too long. Although this painting may seem large on your screen, it's a small piece, just slightly larger than a piece of printer paper!

What about your paints? They could freeze in these cold temperatures. So, to prevent this, McCarthy would keep the paints under her shirt to keep them warm.

Despite the frigid temperatures McCarthy would have experienced when painting *Pressure Ice - Pond Inlet*, it's a peaceful scene of the snowy, frozen landscape of Northern Canada.