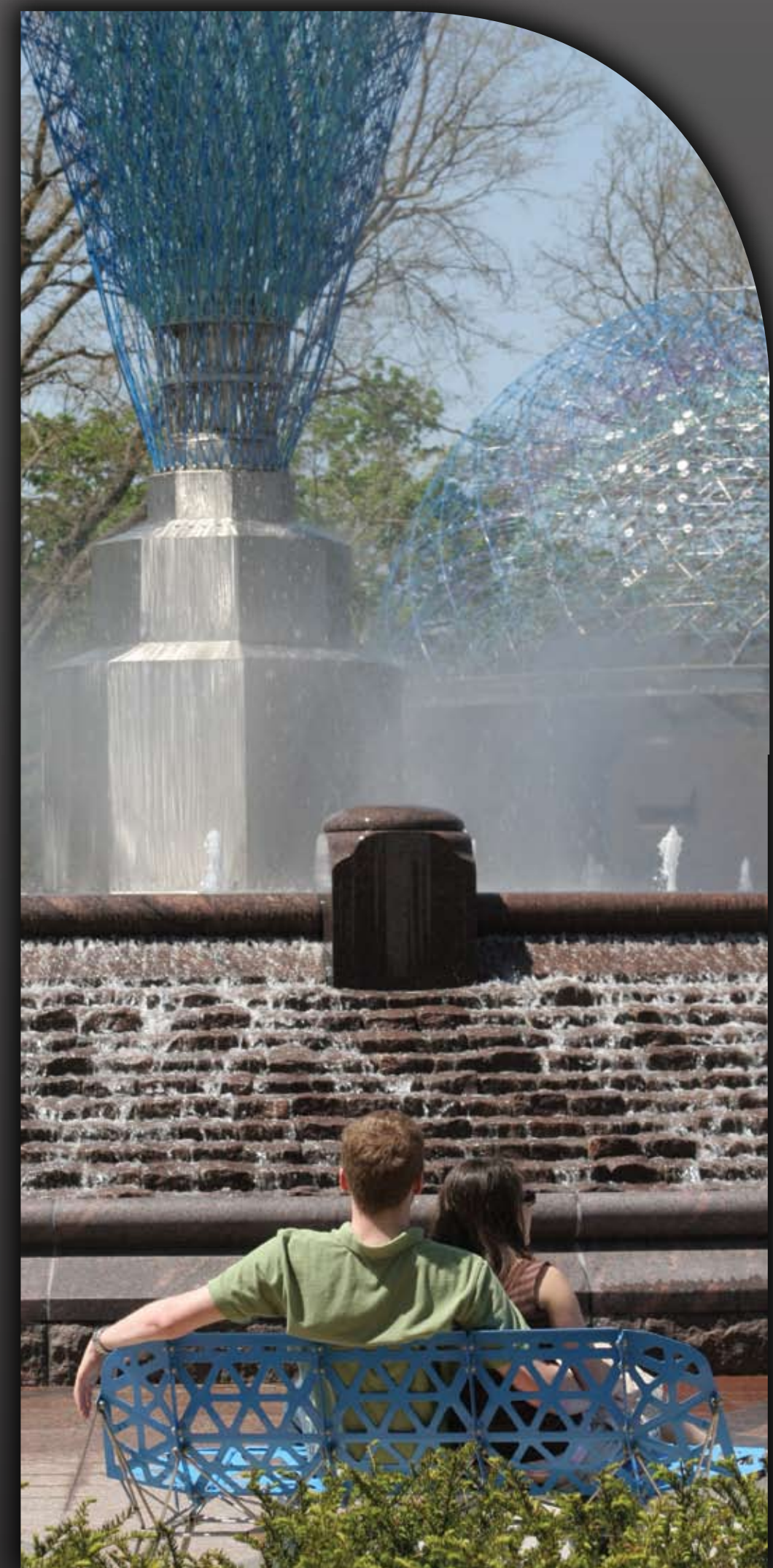
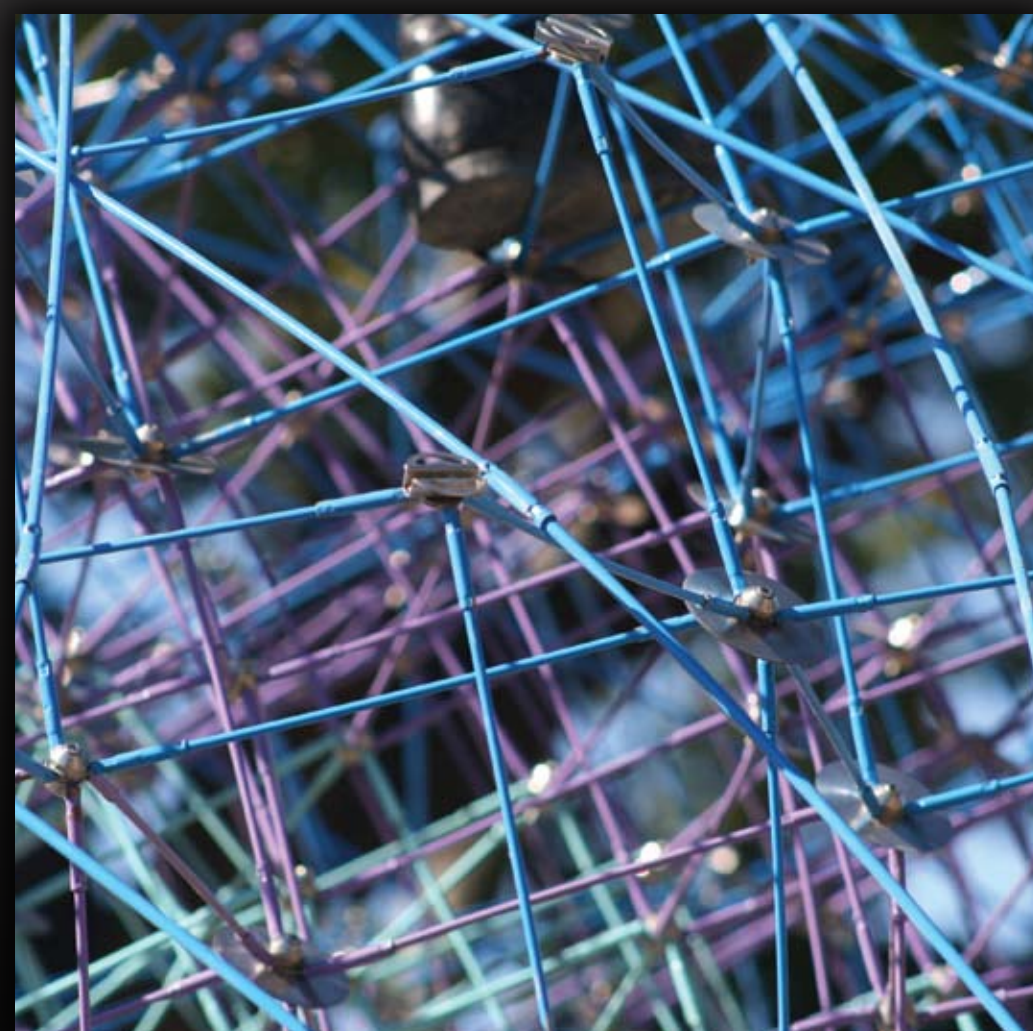




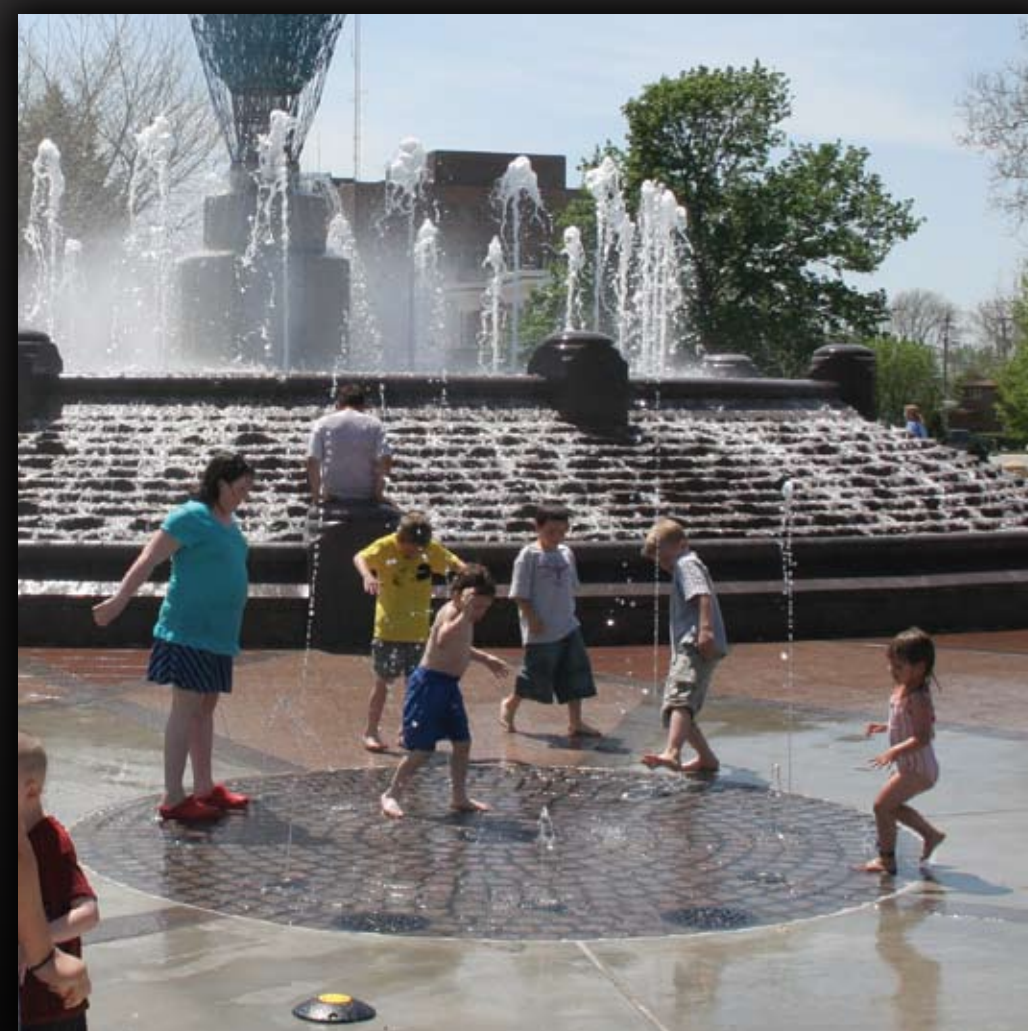
WELLSPRING AND OCULUS, BAYLISS PARK



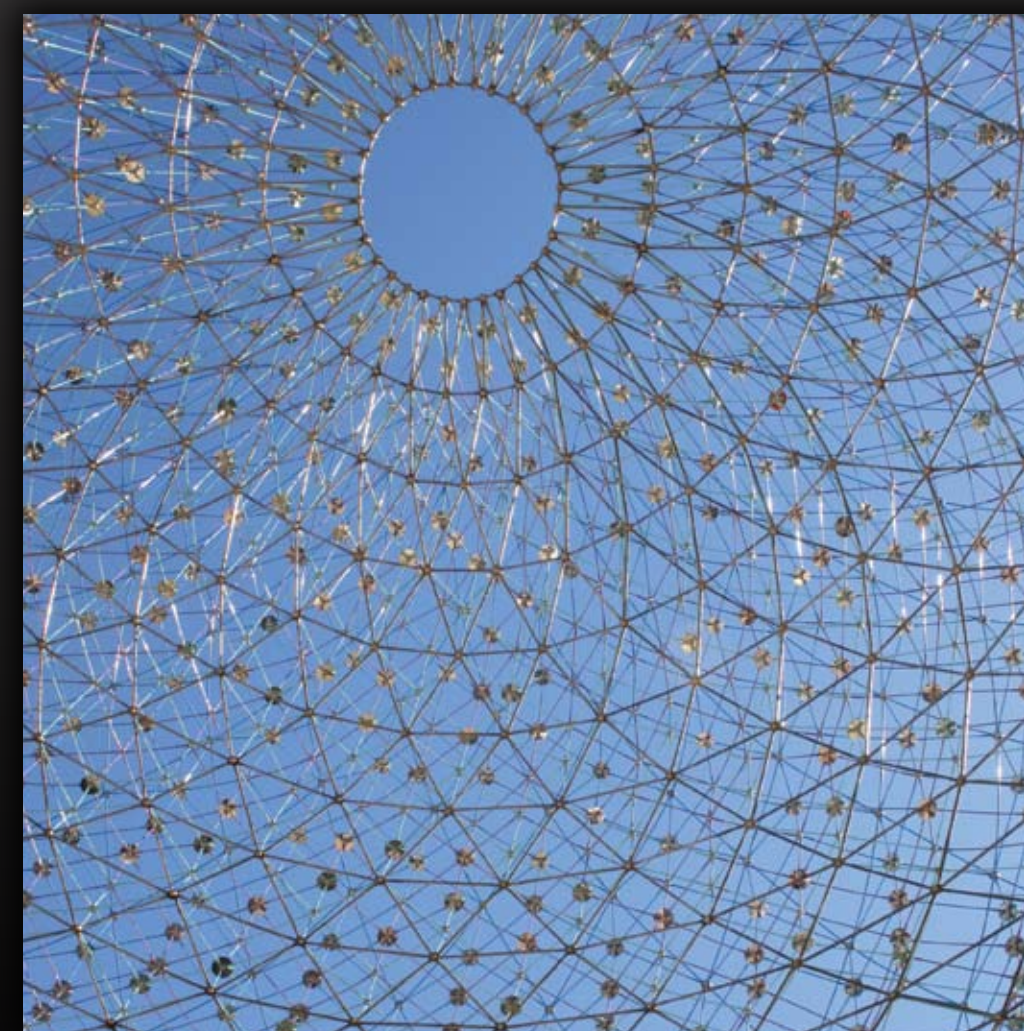
WELLSPRING



STAINLESS STEEL RODS



CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA



EYE OF OCULUS

# IOWA

Iowa West Public Art

BROWER HATCHER  
**BAYLISS PARK**  
WELLSPRING  
AND OCULUS  
IOWAWESTPUBLICART.ORG

# BROWER HATCHER BAYLISS PARK OCULUS AND WELLSPRING

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Brower Hatcher** was born in Atlanta, Georgia. As a young man, he "loved to build and make things and clearly had a talent." Because he was interested in building and also curious about many other things he studied a variety of subjects. He studied engineering at Vanderbilt University and received a degree in industrial design from New York's Pratt Institute. Brower Hatcher claims, "I didn't understand my talent originally other than being able to make sense out of stuff and build. I am lucky to have had a good education. I read a lot about everything – art, science, literature, music, philosophy. I am very curious and like knowing about things." When Brower Hatcher went to London, England, to study sculpture he found his lifelong career.

Brower Hatcher taught sculpture for 13 years and for the past 20 years has earned his living creating over 35 large-scale public art projects. Almost everything he builds is a site-specific public art work built on a commission basis. Brower Hatcher says, "I like working publicly because it seems more democratic. It is for the common man...and involves approval by committees."

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Brower Hatcher says that he wants to evoke the original form of the fountain. Look at his fountain, *Wellspring*, and compare it to the 19th-century fountain. How are they similar?

*Wellspring* is also meant to be an image of the future. What makes it look futuristic?

Brower Hatcher uses the word "wellspring" as his title. Look at the definition of the word below. Do you think this is a good title? How does this title make a reference to the location and history of the city of Council Bluffs?

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All these architectural features, dome, column and oculus, make reference to ancient cultures and their architectural engineering. The ancient Romans used these features to shape large public spaces. One existing example of such a building is the Pantheon in Rome built in its present form in the second century. The interior of the building is a huge circular space covered with a dome which is 142 feet in diameter and is pierced by a large oculus. When it rains the water falls down through the oculus to the floor below where there is a drain. The Pantheon's dome is made of heavy concrete and is held up by walls of brick and concrete that are almost 20 feet thick. Inside the building the circular wall which holds up the dome is decorated with niches and columns. In Roman times many people gathered in this large space for religious ceremonies. Today large groups of people still visit as it serves as one of Rome's major tourist attractions.

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Consider everything that makes up Bayliss Park. What things in the park refer to the history of Council Bluffs? (Think about Council Bluff's location on the Missouri River, its place in history, its people, and its natural environment.)

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**Site-specific - created, designed, or selected for a specific place or location**

**Three-dimensional - having length, breadth, and depth - existing in real space**

**Wellspring - the head or source of a spring, stream, river; fountainhead; a source or supply of anything, especially when considered inexhaustible**

## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### EXPLORE BIG IDEAS:

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**Connect With Other Art, Artists And Cultures**

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**Student discussion questions:**

What are the visual similarities and differences among these works?

What kinds of materials and shapes does Brower Hatcher reuse in these works?

Do you see any similarities in these works to *Wellspring*?

We have seen references to ancient cultures, to modern buildings, and to astronomy in *Oculus* from Bayliss Park. Do any of the other sculptures make reference to these ideas?

Brower Hatcher says that "nature is a strong inspiration" in his works and he tries "to incorporate aspects of the natural environment into the work itself." How do these works incorporate elements of nature and their environments?

**Experiment With Art Making**

When Brower Hatcher made *El Arbol de Esperanza* for Thomas Jefferson Park in New York City, he invited students to create small clay figures of common sights they saw in the park. These objects were cast in bronze and added to the tree's branches. When he created *Prophecy of the Ancients* he added objects representing past and present cultures to the dome structure.

Imagine that you are underneath the dome of *Oculus* in Bayliss Park looking up through the "eye." What might you see? Think of as many things as you can. Imagine yourself in different seasons, at different times of the day and in different weather. Imagine that you can see far away or that you can see tiny objects that are close by. Choose one of these objects and create a small three-dimensional sculpture to represent it. (Students may make objects out of clay, modeling medium, wire, or other found materials. Specify a maximum size, such as three inches.)

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Artists work with other people to create public spaces for communities.

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**Student discussion questions:**

Which of these public works of art relate to events that have occurred in these areas? How do they encourage people to remember these events?

Which of these public art spaces are in parks? How do they reflect the natural or man-made surroundings?

People interact with the art works in all of these spaces. One of the elements with which people interact in some of these spaces is water. How are these interactions with water similar or different? What are some other ways people interact with the works of art?

**Experiment With Art Making**

Students will work together in small groups that will function as design teams. Choose a public site at your school, in the neighborhood or in the larger community and have students research the history and significance of the site and its surroundings. Have each group make a proposal for enriching this public space with art. Proposals may include sketches, written descriptions and/or three-dimensional models. Some questions to consider:

How will your proposal reflect the history of the site?

How will the natural environment and the surroundings be considered in your ideas?

How will people be able to interact in your space and with your art?

How will your design enhance the site?

Have each design team present their proposal to the class.

Now have each small group serve as a selection committee to choose one of the designs (excluding their own) to build on the site. Have each committee explain in writing the reasons for their choice.

### CONNECT WITH OTHER SUBJECTS

The above activities and discussions address the following subject areas:

Science: astronomy and observatories, engineering and structural design, environmental science and animals

Math: geometrical shapes in webs and in architecture

Social Studies: history of Council Bluffs and other cities, the movement West, Civil Rights, history of wars

Language Arts: biographies of historical figures, written responses

### WHAT IS IWPA?

Iowa West Public Art is an initiative of the Iowa West Foundation that started in 2004. IWPA is guided by a community-driven Public Art Master Plan, which selected over fifty public art sites in the City of Council Bluffs, Iowa. IWPA's vision for the year 2015 is a community with a national and international reputation for high quality art that attracts visitors from all over the world and fuels economic development. Learn more at [iowawestpublicart.org](http://iowawestpublicart.org).

Curriculum author credits: Center for Innovation in Arts Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Shari Hofschire, Dr. Joanne Sowell



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### **Student discussion questions:**

Which of these public works of art relate to events that have occurred in these areas? How do they encourage people to remember these events?

Which of these public art spaces are in parks? How do they reflect the natural or man-made surroundings?

People interact with the art works in all of these spaces. One of the elements with which people interact in some of these spaces is water. How are these interactions with water similar or different? What are some other ways people interact with the works of art?

### **Experiment With Art Making**

Students will work together in small groups that will function as design teams. Choose a public site at your school, in the neighborhood or in the larger community and have students research the history and significance of the site and its surroundings. Have each group make a proposal for enriching this public space with art. Proposals may include sketches, written descriptions and/or three-dimensional models. Some questions to consider:

How will your proposal reflect the history of the site?

How will the natural environment and the surroundings be considered in your ideas?

How will people be able to interact in your space and with your art?

How will your design enhance the site?

Have each design team present their proposal to the class.

Now have each small group serve as a selection committee to choose one of the designs (excluding their own) to build on the site. Have each committee explain in writing the reasons for their choice.

### **CONNECT WITH OTHER SUBJECTS**

The above activities and discussions address the following subject areas:

Science: astronomy and observatories, engineering and

structural design, environmental science and animals

Math: geometrical shapes in webs and in architecture

Social Studies: history of Council Bluffs and other cities, the movement West, Civil Rights, history of wars

Language Arts: biographies of historical figures, written responses

### **WHAT IS IWPA?**

Iowa West Public Art (IWPA) is an initiative of the Iowa West Foundation that started in 2004. IWPA is guided by a community-driven Public Art Master Plan, which selected over fifty public art sites in the City of Council Bluffs, Iowa. IWPA's vision for the year 2015 is a community with a national and international reputation for high quality art that attracts visitors from all over the world and fuels economic development. Learn more at [www.iowawestpublicart.org](http://www.iowawestpublicart.org).

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