



REMINISCENCES OF (YOU)TH

WILLIAM KURELEK, *REMINISCENCES OF YOUTH*

In this painting, artist William Kurelek has painted himself in the frame of this winter scene. It is as if we are looking at two different narratives in one artwork, one of the artist dreaming, and perhaps the dream he is having is of this winter scene. What are all the things you see happening in this scene? How do you think the artist feels about this particular memory? There are people in the foreground at the bottom of the scene; there are people in the middle ground around the hill; and there are also people far away at the horizon. In a way, they are little vignettes of activities that could have happened all at one time. They can also convey how a dream presents different things all in one swoop.

William Kurelek was born on a farm in Alberta in 1927. His family settled among the Ukranian-Albertan community but during the Great Depression, they moved north of Winnipeg. These childhood places influenced many of Kurelek's paintings. The oldest of seven siblings, Kurelek began drawing in Grade 1; as an adult, he became a very successful framer and fine artist.

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QUESTION

When is the last time you played in the snow? Did you roll a giant snowball?

Did you make snow angels by lying in the snow, waving your arms and legs up and down?

Think about your favourite memories of playing in the snow. How did this memory make you feel?

ACTIVITY

What shapes would you use to represent this feeling? A geometric shape, like a circle, triangle or square?

Or perhaps an organic shape? Select one shape and repeat it over and over across the page – you can turn the shape upside down, have shapes overlap or, if you really feel like it, include more than one shape! Now select a colour to fill in your shapes – will you use one colour or many colours to capture this feeling of being in the snow? What does your composition reveal? Are there surprising rhythms and patterns that emerge from your shapes and colours?



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