

# Heart Water, Caretaker Woman

## Jeff Savage

Artist

### 1. Learning Objectives

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#### Students learn about

- Art is created to represent culture
- Art tells a story
- Art created with intention
- The characteristics of art
- Personal interpretation and reaction to visual art

### 2. Key Concepts

- Ojibwe culture influences (Anishinaabe)
- Individual view of art, artist and viewer
- Characteristics of visual art; color, line, shape, value, form, texture and space
- Principles of visual art; repetition, pattern, emphasis, contrast and balance
- Tools and techniques used to create 3-D art

### 3. Teachers Quick Reference

#### Places

Head Waters, Itasca State Park, MN  
Lake Itasca

Anishinaabe is the Ojibwe word that translates to “Original Man” It is the word in Ojibwemowin name the people (call ourselves).

Head Waters of Mississippi Rive- Itasca State park commissioned an art piece to celebrate water.

Jeff Savage, artists recognizes the unique characteristics of The Head Waters Area “Lake Itasca is like a huge container of water, help by the arms of Mother Earth. You see the water tipping out of the bowl that our Mother Earth is carrying. The hair of the sculpture is the wind”.

Jeff Savage was commissioned by Stare of Minnesota Initiative, Center for the Arts.

The sculpture is named **Heart Water, Caretaker Woman.**

Head waters is the HEART of the Anishaanaabe country.

Women are the caretakers of the water.

Water walks led by women, bringing attention to the care needed for water.

The sculpture draws a strong response from the visitors.

The artwork is a symbolic represents of Lake Itasca and the surrounding environment  
Turtle symbolize Mother Earth, Ojibwe, round, curricular like the moon, sun, earth, and seasons move in circles. Turtles feet point in the four directions, tail towards the Mother Earth and Head toward the Creator.

The turtle lives in all three levels of life; water, land and breathes the air, making the turtle the universal symbol of life.

The wind is the woman's hair, her arms are the Mother Earth holding and hugging the water.

Jeff used sculpting material. He took the completed sculpture to a foundry to cast and bronze.

It took Anishinaabe people to show where this place was to the rest of the world.

The woman and the turtles are on a drum head. The drum is the heart beat of the Anishinaabe people.

You can experience this sculpture by sight and touch, installed at a height that enable people to touch and feel it like they touch the water. The touching may slowly rub and polish the edges.

Baby turtles emerged over the site the day of installation. This is seen as a welcome by mother nature.

## 4. Content Review

- Where is Heart water, Caretaker Woman installed?
- What type of art is this?
- What material is the sculpture made of?
- What culture influenced Heart water, Caretaker Woman?
- Name three Ojibwe cultural references that that included int he creation of Heart water, Caretaker Woman.
- Explain the story this piece tells.
- What is the intention of this piece?
- List seven characteristics of art that are included in Heart water, Caretaker Woman.
- How do visitors respond to this sculpture?

- What is Jeff Savage's interpretation of this piece?

## 5. Discussion Questions

- What thoughts did Jeff Savage take into consideration when creating **Heart Water, Caretaker Woman**
- How did Mother Nature welcome the sculpture?
- List three ways visitors interact with the sculpture? Why is it important to involve the visitors to interact with the sculpture?
- **Heart Water, Caretaker Woman** is the name of this piece, why?
- Why is important for the sculpture for the headwaters be a female?
- Describe the reference to the turtles and cultural references. Include the levels of life.
- The sculpture is meant to be experienced on two levels, what are they? (sight, touch)
- How did Mother Nature celebrate the sculpture coming to the Headwaters?
- List the Characteristics and principles of visual art; color, line, shape, value, form, texture and space, repetition, pattern, emphasis, contrast and balance
- Create an analysis of this piece bases on the artists intention, cultural symbols, characteristics and principles.

## 6. References

Itasca State Park, Park Rapids, MN

[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/itasca/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/itasca/index.html)

Explore MN YouTube Video-first one minute

<http://www.mnmississippiriver.com/headwaters.cfm>