

Poet's Walk Park



“A Place For Relaxation and Inspiration”

Red Hook, New York

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Overview of Poet's Walk Park

Poet's Walk dates back to 1849 when Hans Jacob Ehlers the architect decided to design the park to reflect the Romantic period (Ferrazzi). The land that houses Poets' Walk can be traced back to 1688 when it was given to Colonel Peter Schuyler of Albany in a land grant (Poets' Walk Park). The land was owned by many people and ended up with two prominent American families, the Astors and the Delanos. Since 1993, the park has been owned by The Scenic Hudson which has conserved the park's beauty (Hudsonrivervalley.com). Ehlers followed designer Andrew Jackson Downing's ideas regarding gardens allowing for natural landscapes, some irregularity, informality, and a variety of plant species. The garden's purpose was to celebrate the connections between art and nature. His design of the park was made to honor poets Washington Irving and Fitz-Green Halleck. Poet's Walk Park is a beautiful garden that is located between a country road and the Hudson River in Red Hook, New York. Poet's walk is considered to be a romantic landscape, intended to celebrate the connection between landscape and poetry. (Hudson River Heritage) Poet's Walk is 120 acres of gentle hills, creeks, woodlands, and river views that are hard to find today. "The classic wooden vistas, sunlit fields and thick forest were the main focus of the landscape architect Hans Jacob Ehlers vision for the property in 1849." (Poet's Walk Park)

Overview of Poet's Walk Park

The fauna (animals) and flora (plants) of Poet's Walk are a diverse group of organisms. The types of animals range from different insects to the occasional bear. There are over 140 different kinds of plants. They are classified through 7 categories: trees, shrubs, vines, herbs, sedges, grasses, and ferns. Poet's Walk Park was designed by Hans Jacob Ehlers, a German architect, in 1849. The design reflects both the Romantic Movement and the 19th century American landscape. In 1849, Ehlers was hired by members of the Astor and Delano families, two wealthy families in the area, to improve the grounds of their estates. Poet's Walk Park is named for the poets that have been inspired by the area, such as Washington Irving. Many people enjoy the park because of the serene atmosphere created by Ehlers. Poet's Walk is located on the scenic River Road in Red Hook, NY. Poet's Walk is just north of the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge, offering a place to hike, picnic, and cross-country ski. The location of this 120-acre park is easy to get to in Red Hook, located in the region's famous National Historic Landmark District. Poet's Walk is a recreational attraction for the town of Red Hook because of its outstanding Hudson River views. This attraction has led Red Hook to become an active participant in the Hudson River Valley's heritage tourism economy.

Lesson Plan

Topic: Poet's Walk Park

Grade: 4th grade

Duration: 90 Minutes

Materials: Mural sized paper, pencils, markers, watercolor paints & paintbrushes

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to see the connection between landscape and art.
2. Students will understand how Poet's Walk Park can be inspirational.
3. Students will be able to combine their ideas and creativity with their classmates in order to create a community garden.



Introduction: Poet's Walk Park's design reflects 19th century picturesque style of American landscape. Architect Hans Jacob Ehler used foliage as walls to create outdoor rooms. Each room brings out a different atmosphere. The park has inspired many visitors including Fitz-Greene Halleck and writers such as Washington Irving and William Cullen Bryant. Enjoy the scenic views of field and let the garden speak to the artist in you.

Procedure:

1. After the students have toured the garden they will gather together for the activity.
2. Each student will be given a section of the mural paper to work on.
3. With the art supplies provided each student will make additions to the "community garden".
4. The students will use Poet's Walk as an inspiration and replicate parts of the garden into our "community garden".
5. The class will have a discussion about Poet's Walk as well as our new garden. The following questions will be used:

Lesson Plan

Discussion:

1. What did you like best about Poet's Walk and what did you like least?
2. Each student will describe his part of the garden focusing on which aspects of Poet's Walk they used in their garden and what they left out.
3. Why did they choose what they chose to include in our new garden?
4. Do you think it is important to have relaxing, inspirational places like Poet's Walk Park? Why or why not?

Conclusion: This activity allows each student to contribute his or her ideas and creativity to our "community garden." The class will work together to create a new garden. Students will understand how the park connects to poetry and art and how Poet's Walk was an inspiration to many artists.

Guidebook for Poet's Walk Park



- Poet's Walk Park
- <http://www.hvnet.com/features/poetwalk.htm>
- (845) 473-4440, ext. 270



Hours: Poet's Walk Park is open year round, 9am-8:30pm (Spring & Summer) 9am-Dusk (Fall & Winter)

Historical Description: Poet's Walk Park was created by Hans Jacob Ehlers, a German architect, in 1849. He was hired by members of the Astor and Delano families to improve the grounds on which their estates lied. It was designed during the Romantic Movement, and many aspects of the park reflect this, as well as 19th century American landscape design. Many famous poets, such as Washington Irving, have been inspired by the Hudson River Valley, and the park was named for this. The park has also been visited by the American poets Fitz-Greene Halleck and William Cullen Bryant. Today, the park is surrounded by approximately 800 acres of land that is protected by the Scenic Hudson Land Trust.

The Site: Poet's Walk Park is located on 120 acres of land along the Hudson River in Red Hook, New York. Poet's Walk celebrates the connection between landscape and poetry. The park is designed to have many different rooms, which were created by using the natural contours of the land, stone walls, and trees. Throughout the park there are benches where a visitor can sit and take in the beautiful Hudson River Valley. Visitors are encouraged to sit on one of the benches and read or try to write their own poetry. There is an information arbor, viewing pavilion, summerhouse and many bridges.

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