

NEWS BREAK

Article: **Artist's trolls come in from cold**

Section: **MAIN, A8**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, May 24, 2026**, of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

Feel free to adapt this lesson for your students. For instance, some educators may assign this as a homework task, while others might facilitate the reading and discussion of questions within small groups or larger class discussions.

****Please take a moment to review all NIE content before classroom use to ensure it is suitable for your students.****

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Learning Objectives:

After reading the article, students will analyze how art can inspire environmental awareness and community engagement. The article explains how artist Thomas Dambo uses recycled materials to create giant troll sculptures that encourage people to explore nature and think about sustainability. Students will also evaluate how public art and storytelling can influence people's perspectives and connect communities.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using this picture?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the meaning of the word.

The project went **viral**, drawing millions of viewers online.

Viral Guess:

Viral Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. For more than a decade, Danish recycling artist _____ has scattered wooden troll sculptures around the world.
2. He has created almost _____ in 19 countries.
3. Now the poet and former hip-hop artist is bringing a collection of fairy tale-inspired creations in from the cold for his first museum exhibit. “_____,” at the Arken Museum of Contemporary Art on the outskirts of Copenhagen, tells the story of a group of trolls who move into the museum, take it over and redesign it.
4. “They build and leave a giant human made of trash ... as a lesson for the humans to _____ and don’t put their trash where everybody else lives,” Dambo said at his studio near the Danish capital.

5. The artist and his team build about _____ new trolls annually.
6. "_____, " the tallest at 43 feet high, stands in Detroit Lakes, Minn.
7. Usually, Dambo's work is as much _____ as exhibit.
8. His _____ - _____ creations are tucked away in forests, mountains, jungles and grasslands around the world, discoverable using an online "Troll Map."
9. Several are in the _____ area. There is "Little Lisa" hidden in a German forest, and "Happy Kim" lounging in a South Korean botanical garden. Children clamber and adults gasp as they find the trolls.
10. Dambo estimates about _____ million people visit his works annually.

Class Discussion Questions:

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?

Deeper-Dive "Connect & Explain" comprehension questions for small groups, entire classes or journal entries and/ or essay prompts for extended enrichment:

1. Why do you think Thomas Dambo chooses to place his troll sculptures in forests, parks, and other natural spaces instead of traditional museums? How does the location affect people's experience of his art?
2. The article describes Dambo's sculptures as both art and a "treasure hunt." How can interactive experiences make art more meaningful or memorable for communities?
3. Dambo uses recycled materials to create his sculptures. How can art help raise awareness about environmental issues in ways that facts and statistics alone may not?
4. In what ways can public art bring people together? Can you think of examples from your own community where art has created a shared experience?
5. The trolls encourage people to visit places they might not otherwise explore. How can art help people develop a stronger connection to nature and their local environment?
6. Why do you think storytelling is an important part of Dambo's artwork? How do stories help people connect with art on a deeper level?
7. The article suggests that millions of people visit Dambo's sculptures each year. What responsibilities do artists have when their work influences so many people?
8. How can art reflect the values, concerns, or identity of a community? What message do Dambo's trolls communicate about modern society?
9. The trolls are made from discarded materials. What does this transformation from "trash" to "art" suggest about creativity, value, and second chances?

10. How might people's reactions to the trolls differ based on their age, culture, or personal experiences? Why is it important to consider multiple perspectives when interpreting art?

Extended Essay Prompt

Art has the power to shape communities, influence behavior, and inspire change. Using examples from the article about Thomas Dambo's troll sculptures, explain how public art can bring people together, promote environmental awareness, and encourage exploration. Evaluate whether you believe public art should play a larger role in communities and support your position with evidence and examples.

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