



ICA Watershed: Youth Group Discussion Guide

The ICA Watershed is the ICA's seasonal space in East Boston. First opened for the summer season in 2018, the Watershed is located in the Boston Harbor Shipyard and Marina in a historic 15,000-square-foot building that formerly housed a copper and sheet metal manufacturer. In 2019 the Watershed features the U.S. premiere of *Purple*, an immersive video installation by British artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah. The introductory Shipyard Gallery includes a video with a brief history of the shipyard, including interviews with historians and local East Boston residents. In the back of the Watershed, in a space called the Harbor Room, is *A Community in Focus: East Boston*, an exhibition by local teens participating in ICA digital photography classes. Also in the Harbor Room is *Aquí y allá: juntos a la mesa (Here and There: Together at the Table)*, a project by artist Evelyn Rydz in collaboration with Kannan Thiruvengadam of Eastie Farm. Throughout the Watershed, themes include: place, community, past and present, food, home, and the environment.

Discuss

- The video installation by John Akomfrah is titled "Purple." What associations do you have with the color purple? Why might the artist have chosen this as the title for his work?
- A voice during *Purple* asks "Are you brave enough and wise enough to cross this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?" What does this question mean to you? In what ways is this question relevant to current environmental concerns, including climate change?
- Water is a recurring theme – both visually and audibly – throughout *Purple*. What can water symbolize? Why is water so important to the overall message of the artwork?
- Artist Evelyn Rydz says, "Sharing intimate, meaningful stories requires trust and generosity."¹ Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? In what way does Rydz's [Comida Casera](#) project include elements of trust and generosity?
- *A Community in Focus: East Boston* features photographs of people and places in East Boston. If you were assigned to photograph a person or place of significance in your community, who or what would you photograph? What about this person or place is significant to you?

Read, Watch, + Listen

Carson Ellis: *Home*. Candlewick, 2015.

Gail Herman: *What is Climate Change?* Penguin Workshop, 2018.

Kathryn Kellogg: *101 Ways to Go Zero Waste*. Countryman Press, 2019.

Todd Parr: *The Earth Book*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2010.

Julia Rothman: *Food Anatomy: The Curious Parts & Pieces of Our Edible World*. Storey Publishing, 2016.

Nancy S. Seasholes: *Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston*. The MIT Press, 2018.

Mark Shapiro: *Seeds of Resistance: The Fight to Save Our Food Supply*. Hot Books, 2018.

Mary McKenna Siddals: *Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth*. Dragonfly Books, 2014.

[Climate Ready Boston](#)

www.eastiefarm.com

www.evelynrydz.com

[ICA Watershed: From Condemned to Contemporary Art Space](#)

[John Akomfrah on Creating Purple](#)

[National Geographic Kids: What is Climate Change?](#)

[National Geographic: Talking to Your Kids about Climate Change](#)

[New York Times: Climate Change](#)

[United Nations: Climate Change](#)

¹ <https://www.wbur.org/artery/2018/09/12/comida-casera-boston-dinner-party>