

# YOUTH ACTIVITY GUIDE

This Guide belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_

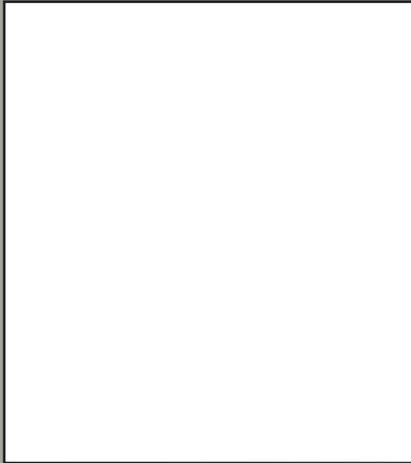
## Talk About It

What do James Castle's artworks make you think of?

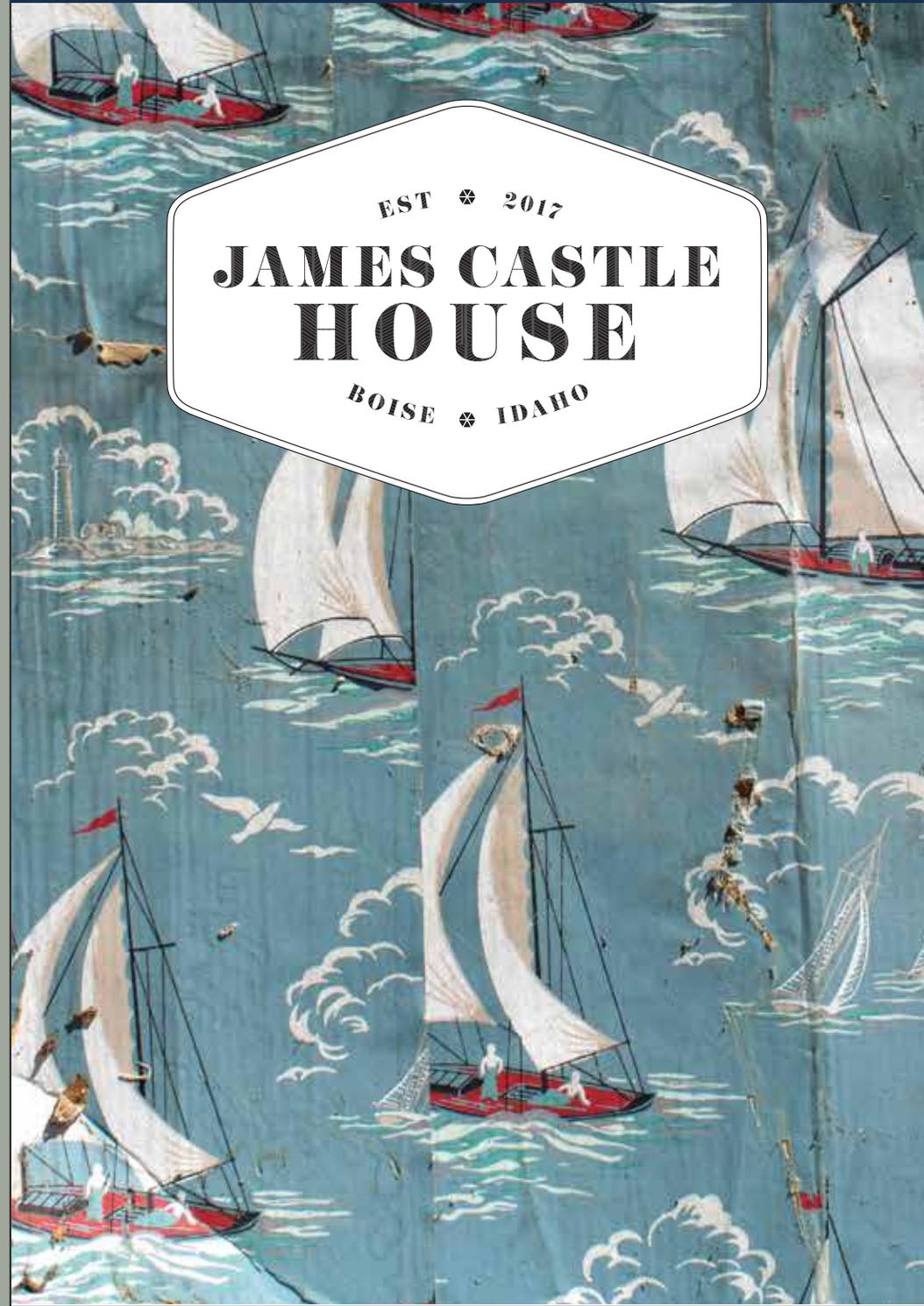
In what ways are James Castle's artworks the same?  
In what ways are they different?

What question would you want to ask James Castle? Why?

**Use this space to sketch your own self portrait! It can look just like you or be silly and fun!**

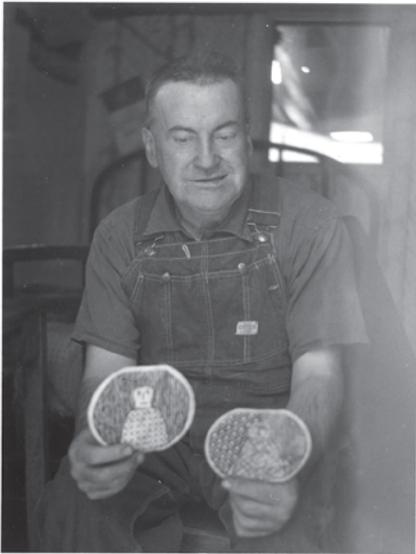


Cover Page: James Castle (1899 – 1977), Untitled, n.d., © 2019 James Castle Collection and Archive, all rights reserved | Page 1: James Castle in Cozy Cottage Trailer, Tom Trusky Papers, Special Collections and Archives, Boise State University | Page 3: James Castle (1899 – 1977), Untitled, n.d., © 2019 James Castle Collection and Archive, all rights reserved | Page 3: James Castle (1899 – 1977), Untitled, n.d., © 2019 James Castle Collection and Archive, all rights reserved | Page 4: James Castle (1899 – 1977), Untitled, n.d., © 2019 James Castle Collection and Archive, all rights reserved | Page 4: James Castle (1899 – 1977), Untitled, n.d., © 2019 James Castle Collection and Archive, all rights reserved | Page 5: Eugene Street House, circa 1970, Image courtesy of James Castle Collection and Archive L.P. | Page 5: James Castle Shed, Tom Trusky Papers, Special Collections and Archives, Boise State University



EST ✦ 2017  
**JAMES CASTLE  
HOUSE**  
BOISE ✦ IDAHO

## Who was James Castle?



James Castle was born on a farm in Garden Valley, Idaho. James was born deaf and started drawing when he was five or six years old. He spent hours sketching what he saw in the world around him. James taught himself how to make art.

Every day James searched for things to make his art. He collected things like paper, string, and soot. James spent the rest of his time creating many different types of artwork.

At first, only James' family and friends knew about his art and how he worked on making it. One day, James' nephew shared some of James' drawings with teachers at an art school in Oregon. Soon his art was displayed in galleries in Oregon and Idaho.

Now people from all over the world can see and enjoy James' art! The James Castle House stands today to honor his talent and creativity.

## The Castle Family



James came from a big family! He had a mother, father, one brother, and six sisters. James lived with his family his whole life. James' family was happy that he spent his days creating art.

**Imagine you are writing a letter to a friend. Fill in the blanks with words to describe your family.**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,  
(name)

Hello from \_\_\_\_\_! I am writing to tell you all about  
(location)

my family. There are \_\_\_\_\_ people in my family. We live in a  
(number)  
\_\_\_\_\_ and often eat \_\_\_\_\_ for dinner and  
(type of building) (food)

like to play \_\_\_\_\_ together. I have the most fun with them  
(game)  
when we \_\_\_\_\_!  
(activity)

Sincerely, \_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

## The Art

James was well known for trying new ways to make art. There are four types of his artwork at the James Castle House. How many of each can you find? Which type is your favorite?

### Soot & Spit



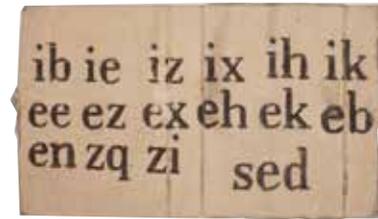
James is most famous for his soot & spit technique! He would take soot from the wood burning stove and mix in different amounts of his own saliva. James used a sharp stick or wad of fabric to put this homemade mixture on paper.

### Color



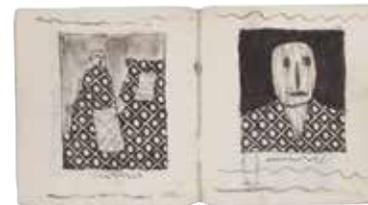
James' more colorful artworks are sometimes described as "soft and dreamy". Can you guess why when you look at them? To make this kind of art, James rubbed crayons, wet crepe paper, or watercolor paints on to roughed up pieces of paper.

### Text



James was very curious about written language even though he could not read. He used both real and made-up letters in his artwork. Can you find any drawings that have invented letters in them?

### Books



James likely learned how to make books at the Gooding School for the Deaf and Blind. Each book is hand sewn. Some books are filled with patterns. Others have page after page of calendar-like grids. There are even books full of cartoons James copied from the newspaper!

# The Homes

## House



James lived in and round this house for most of his life. He lived here with his mom, his sister and her husband, and his nieces and nephews. Many of James' drawings are of the rooms and furniture found in his family's home.

## Shed



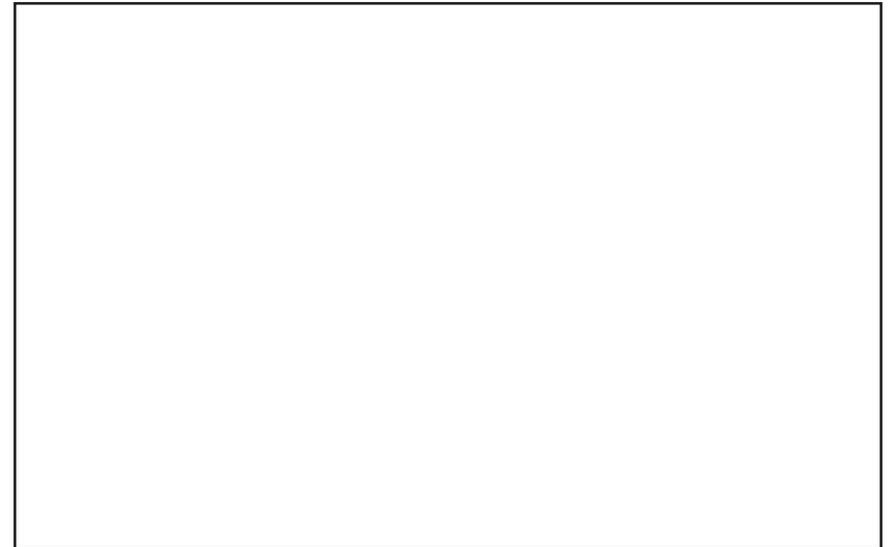
James also lived and made art in the shed. The shed is over 100 years old. It was built before James' family moved to Boise. James had his bed, desk, clothes, and art supplies with him inside the shed.

## Trailer



Later, James' family bought the Cozy Cottage Trailer. James had often expressed through his drawings that he wanted a home of his own.

**What does the exterior (outside) of your home look like? Draw below!**



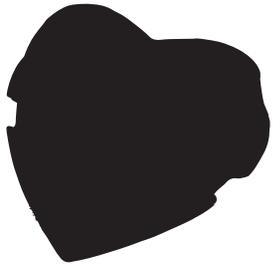
**Now draw the interior (inside) of your dream house!**



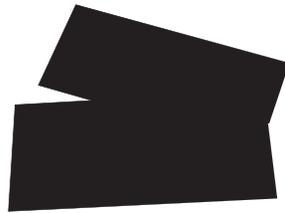
## Material Life Scavenger Hunt

Enter the room at the back of the gallery. In 2016 this room was a place of discovery! Eleven pieces of James' art were found hidden inside the walls.

Can you find all the items listed below?



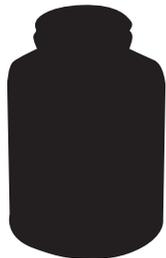
A heart shaped box



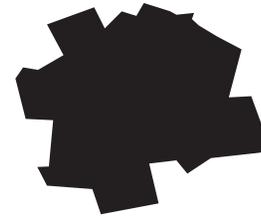
A mailed letter



Beaver Board



A jar of soot



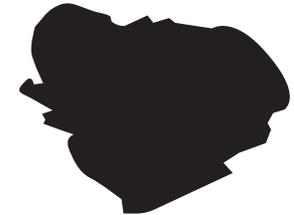
Matchbooks



Mrs. Stewart's



Crayons



A bundle



A figure with a patterned skirt

**Bonus!**

How much did two  
cans of pineapple  
cost? \_\_\_\_\_

## The Public Art

Did you notice those two tall statues on the lawn? Meet *Kith & Kin*! *Kith & Kin* are made of concrete and steel. This artwork was designed by artist Troy Passey. Troy was inspired to create *Kith & Kin* after noticing similar shapes in many of James' drawings.

*Kith* (a word for friends) & *Kin* (a word for family) have a secret! Artworks from elementary school students are hidden inside each sculpture.



Place this blank page over the symbols on *Kith & Kin*. Gently rub a pencil or crayon over the paper to reveal the image!