

# *Personal Geography*



*“Me in my island, my island in me”*



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# Personal Geography

- *“A map has no vocabulary, no lexicon of precise meanings. It communicates in lines, hues, tones, coded symbols, and empty spaces, much like music [...] A map provides no answers. It only suggests where to look: Discover this, re-examine that, put one thing in relation to another, orient yourself, begin here ... Sometimes a map speaks in terms of physical geography, but just as often it muses on the jagged terrain of the heart, the distant vistas of memory, or the fantastic landscapes of dreams.”*

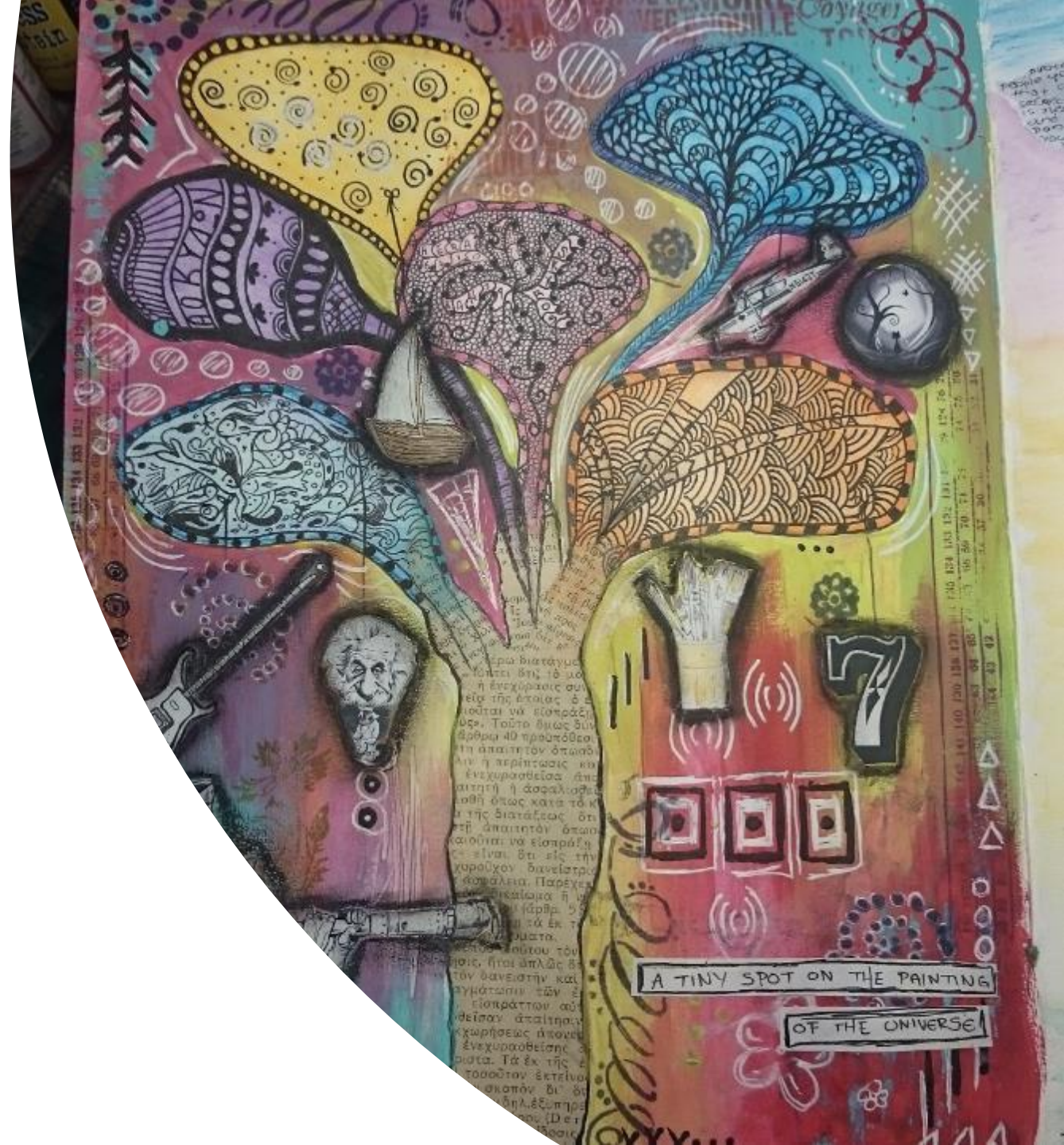
Miles Harvey, *The Island of Lost Maps*



# What is Personal Geography?

It is an artistic expression of one's thoughts, feelings, dreams, fears, opinions, etc.

It is a map into one's mind and can express a journey or a moment in time.

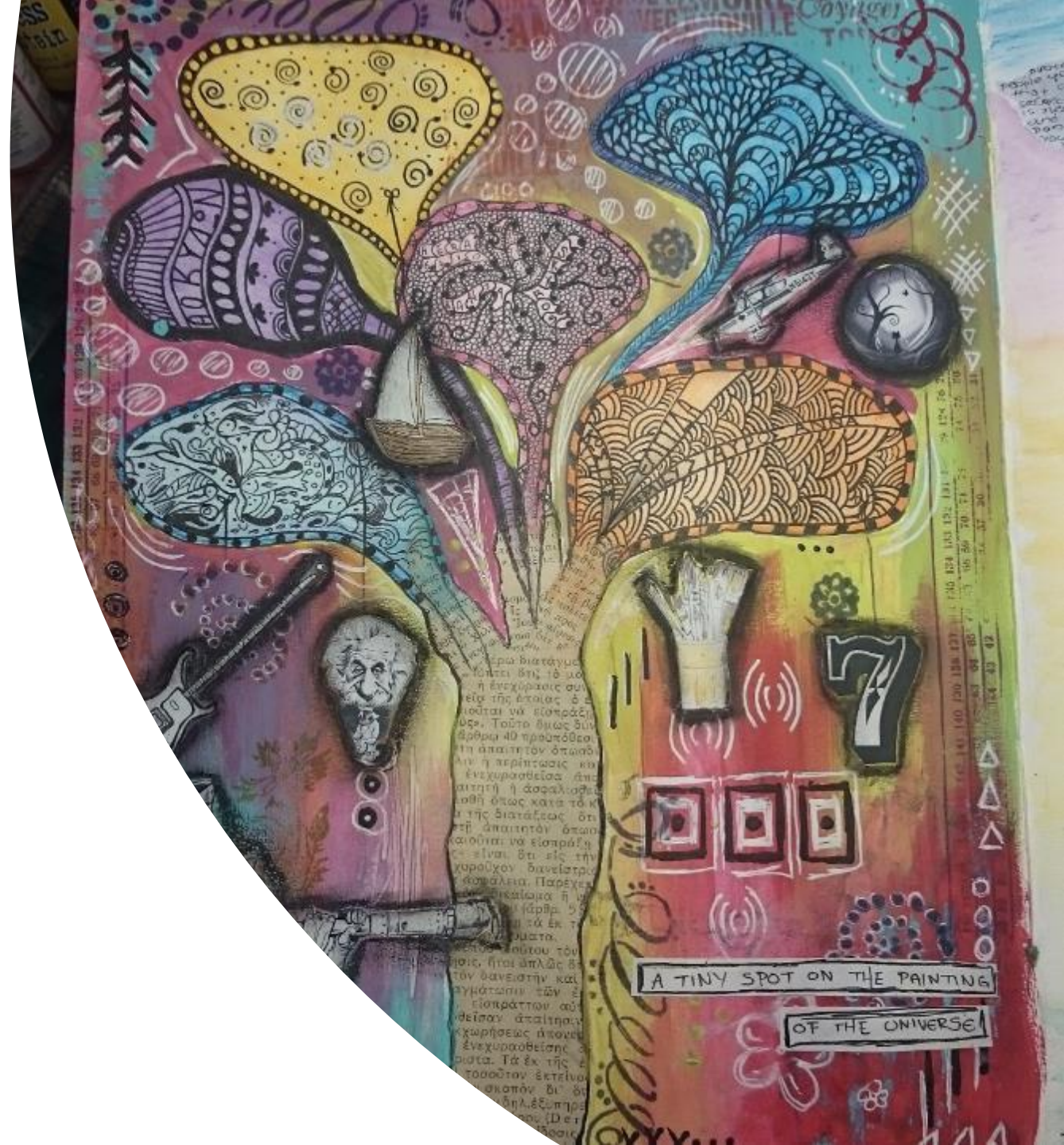




# Why use Personal Geography?

Personal Geography helps students discover the value of their cultural heritage through an artistic expression while it also helps them **self-reflect** and gain a better understanding of the **added values** of every learning experience.

It allows students to think about themselves for a moment and reflect about who they are and where they want to go.

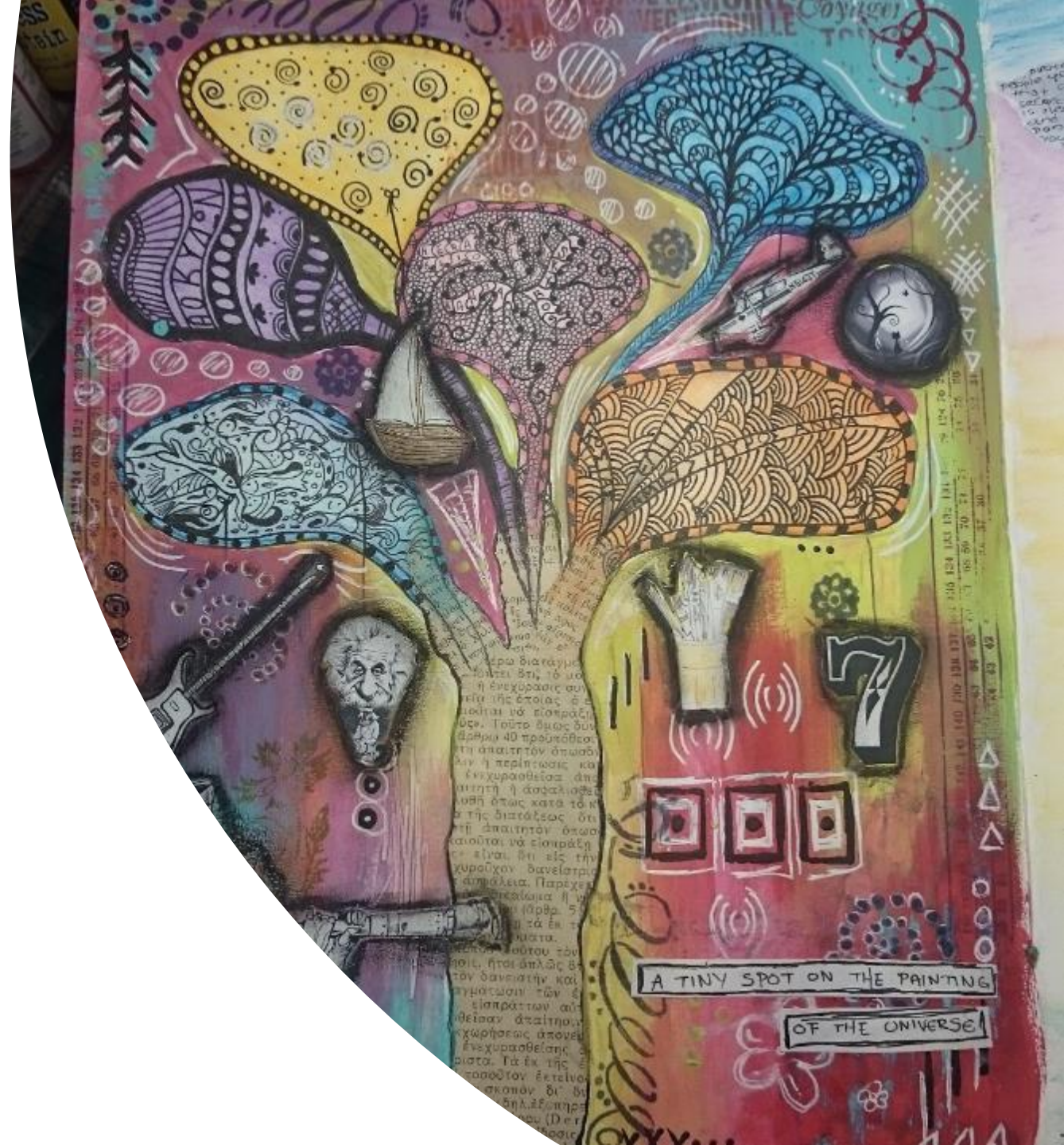




# Why Personal Geography in class?

By using personal geography, students are invited to create connections between new and older knowledge as well as between new knowledge and themselves through memories and experiences.

Thus their ability to recall knowledge is strengthened and knowledge retention is increased.



# How to use Personal Geography in IDiverSE?

- Students make their personal geography mapping as the first step of their involvement in the project – to promote the discussion about what topics will be explored.
- Throughout the implementation of the activities, students regularly add components to their drawing, reflecting their new knowledge and their feelings about the experience.
- Students take pictures of their drawing regularly
- By the end, students make a compilation with the first, last and two in the middle pictures of their personal geography drawing and, if they want, add it to their portfolios.

# 1. Warm up

Begin by challenging your students to create a  
mind-map

(you can find a template in the end of this presentation)

Write the first thing that comes to your mind, don't overthink it

*Me in my island, my island in me*



There are no wrong/right answers



2.

After your students have their minds activated,  
proceed to the drawing:

*Me in my island, my island in me*

## *My island in one picture*

- Don't try to make a detailed drawing
- Your drawing doesn't have to be realistic (play with the dimensions and analogies if you wish to stress something)
- Use symbolisms (e.g. A traditional guitar can symbolize an important musical or cultural event in the history of the island)
- Use elements in your drawing that have multiple meanings for you (e.g. a specific traditional guitar may symbolize the island's historic event, but it might also remind you of your grandfather because he owned one)

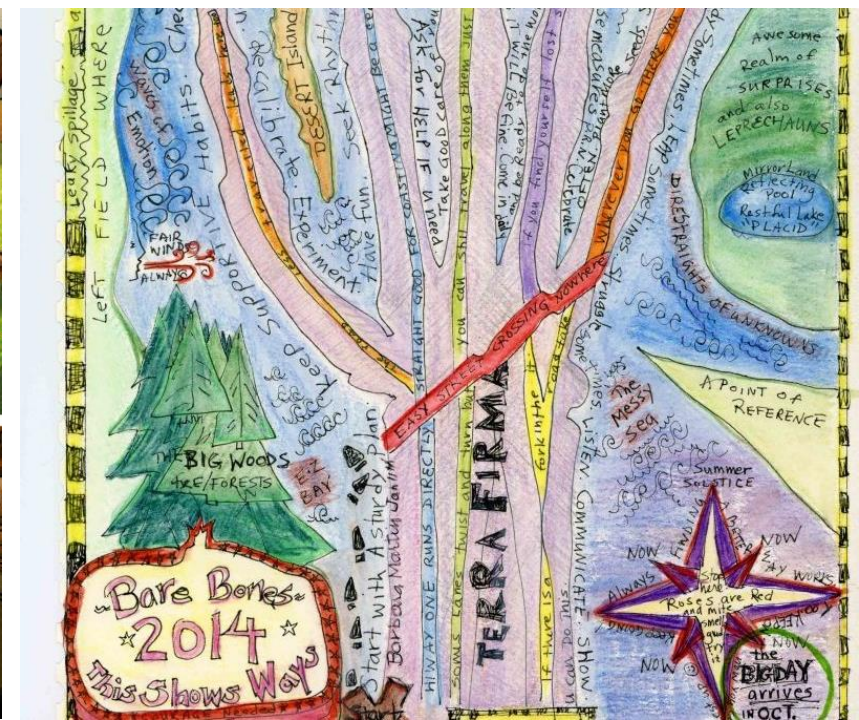
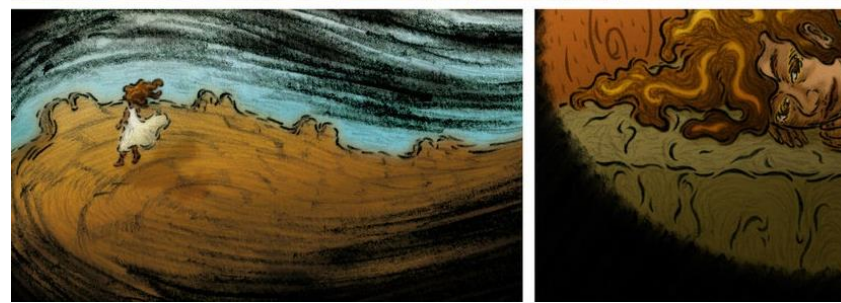
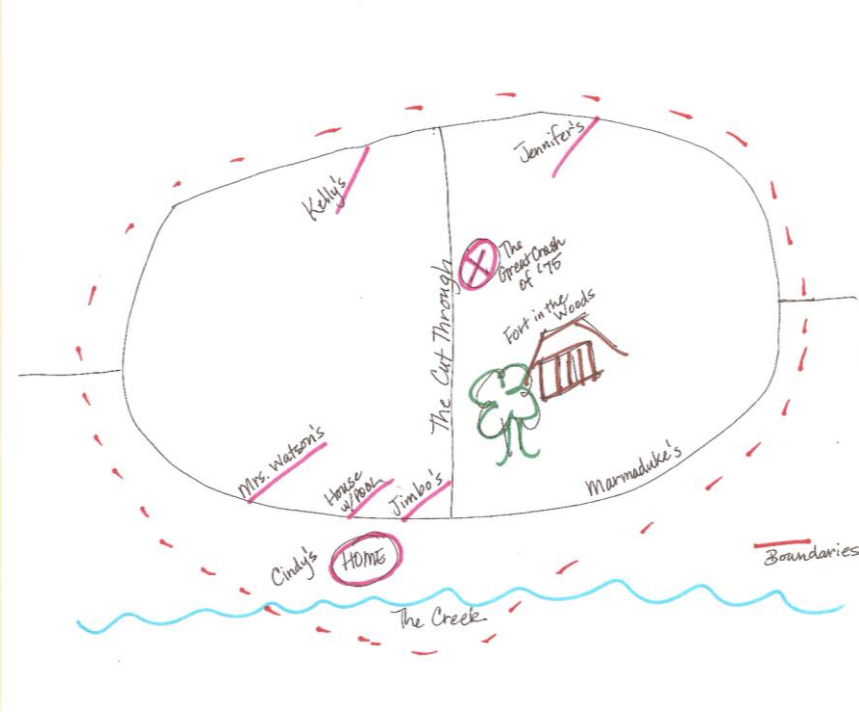
This drawing is personal, it can be abstract or not. It doesn't have to make sense to others, only to you.



## *Some questions to think about when drawing ...*

- How is my Island?
- What are the most important good and bad things about my Island?
- What are my dreams/fears?
- What place does my island have in my heart?









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# Personal Geography as a Kick start for the project

1. After all students have finished their personal geography drawings they will have their minds in place for the discussion about what are the main topics that they would like to address in their community to create their science trail stations.
2. Ask each student to choose the most important topic he/she would like to work on (remind them to think about what is important for the community as a whole and not for themselves alone). This can be done using an online tool like [Padlet](#) or post-it notes for example.
3. Let students reflect on what are the most common topics among the class.
4. Divide the class in groups and allow each group to decide on what topic/s to work on.
5. Let students explore the [IDiverSE activities](#) and choose one that targets the chosen topic/s. If there is no activity focusing on the chosen topic, let students choose one activity that suits their interests and that will train them in the methodology they should use to then address their chosen topic/s for the [creation of their science trail](#).





3 colors and an item

*Dreams/Fears*

*Memories/Experiences*

*Island name here*

*My favorite part of History*

*A local action*

*Local People*