OBJECTIVES:

- The students will examine the characteristics of Surrealism in Salvador Dali’s artwork.
- The students will use colored pencils and crayons to create their own surreal, dream-like picture.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:
Salvador Dali was born in Spain in 1904 (around the time of the invention of the car). He had his first drawing lesson at the age of 10. His father was a wealthy business owner who built Dali his own art studio. Dali eventually went to study art in Madrid and had his first art show at 21 years old. During the next 7 years he became internationally famous for his surrealist art. His paintings are filled with strange scenes and objects from his imagination or dreams. Dali loved attention and was quite a showman. He wore a long, curled-up mustache. He was notorious for not knowing how to count money. Once, he arrived to an event in a limousine filled with cauliflower. He held a lecture in a deep-sea diving suit. The helmet was soundproof. While the audience was laughing, he was suffocating because no one could hear his cries for help. He loved to shock the public and traveled with his pet ocelots. Dali died at the age of 85 and will always be one of the 20th century’s most famous and unusual artists.

*Note that there is a Venezia Series biographical book on Dali. You may check it out from the library for use during your lesson. The book should NOT leave the Tarwater campus. You can use the book as a read aloud, but most likely you will only have enough time to use selected pages to enhance your lesson. Please preview the book carefully and skip any images or content that are inappropriate for the elementary classroom.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
The painting: Persistence of Memory, 1931
Salvador Dali got the idea for this painting after an evening meal when he found himself looking at the remains of runny Camembert cheese. His painting consists of drooping forms of clocks as well as the ‘soft self-portrait’ melting on rocks underneath it, which he added to a barren landscape. In contrast to these elements of softness are the large rocks and strange blocks in the painting. All that is man-made or human has been conquered by time. In this dream-like artwork, time that is measured by mechanical clocks is not important, as all things human are temporary. When compared with the permanence of the landscape, the mechanical measurement of time has no importance. The live ants crawling on the solid clock have been said to suggest our inevitable death. We are all conquered by time. (Rephrased from: Bradbury, K., Essential Dali. Bath, U.K.: Parragon, 1999, p. 70)
The style of art – Surrealism: “Sur” means beyond, so surrealism means “beyond realism”. Surrealism is a major artistic movement where artists attempt to represent the world as seen by the unconscious mind. These artworks are inspired by dreams and imagination and usually contain scenes that are very fantasy-like and unreal. Surrealism depicts bizarre images of objects that may be based in reality but the artist has changed them so they look more dream-like. Some of the methods an artist uses to create surrealist art are:

- **Dislocation**: Placing an object in unusual or unfamiliar surroundings (a train coming out of a fireplace)
- **Scale Change**: Changing an object’s usual size (an enormous apple next to a man)
- **Replacement**: Replacing an expected object with an unexpected one (a car steering wheel that is a clock)
- **Levitation**: Floating objects, defying gravity (islands floating in the air)
- **Juxtaposition**: Joining two images in an impossible combination (a rock sitting on top of a fragile flower)

*Additional posters of Dali’s work will be available in the supply tub, and a slideshow about Dali’s artwork is available in the “Support Materials”.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR DISCUSSION:

**Subject Matter**
- What adjectives would you use to describe this scene?
- Is this a realistic painting? Why or why not? What makes it surreal? (Dreamlike imagery)
- Describe some of the Surrealist methods that are evident in this painting. (Look for dislocation, scale change, replacement, and juxtaposition.)
- Why do you think the artist titled the painting *Persistence of Memory*?
- What do you think the soft clocks symbolize?

**Elements of Art**
- What type of **colors** (dark/light; warm/cool; bright/dull) did Dali use in this painting?
- How do these colors help create a dream-like scene, and what **mood** do they create?
- How did Dali use empty **space** in this painting?

**Principles of Design**
- Where do you see repetition and balance in the painting? (repeated clocks in a triangular arrangement)

**Evaluation**
- How does this painting make you feel? Would you want to be able to visit this dream-like place?

**PROJECT**: The students will make their own surreal pictures. To help students understand the "dream like" concept, they could share a few of their dreams that have seemed real but then had some impossibility in them (flying dreams, impossible situations, instant changes in setting, etc.). Using colored pencils and a lot of imagination, have the students make their own dream sketches. Ask them to demonstrate at least two methods of Surrealism (dislocation, scale change, juxtaposition, replacement, or levitation) in their artwork. If the students give some examples, ask them to make the project their own by not specifically using the given examples. Have each student give his/her masterpiece a title and sign it in a bottom corner. The artwork can be displayed or saved in the students’ portfolios.

**SUPPLIES:**
- 9 X 12 white drawing paper
- Colored pencils