



**Transcript for *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines* by Jeanne Walker Harvey (Henry Holt and Company)**

**Introduction (approximately 0:00 – 3:41)**

Hi everyone! It's Colleen from the KU Natural History Museum, and I'm so excited to welcome you to Story Book Science today. I do want to wait for some folks to join us.

So while we wait, if you want to go grab a piece of string, this is a great opportunity to do it! You'll need this for after the reading when we talk about spiders and spider webs and make models of those spider webs.

Now just to give you a brief intro to what we'll talk about at the end of the reading, we're going to talk about spiders like this garden spider! And this garden spider, it is an orb-weaver. So the web that it creates is in the shape of an orb, or a circle. And so when we make a model of its web, we're going to take that string, and we are going to attach the two ends together to make it look like a circle. And we'll do some more models, as well. So, again, if you want to go grab that string, this is an excellent time to do that! But if you don't have a string, that's all right, as well. You'll be able to follow along perfectly without it.

Now it looks like some folks have joined us, so let's go ahead and get started with Story Book Science today.

So, first and foremost, we need to go over our Story Book Science regulations and guidelines. So what that means is when we are on Story Book Science, if you write a question or comment – and you should feel free to do so – you need to make sure you use kind and considerate words. And if you respond to someone's question or comment, you also need to make sure to use kind and considerate words. We are not in the museum, but we want to make sure that we follow those museum guidelines and that we make sure that this space is welcoming and inclusive. So can you use those kind and considerate words for me? Excellent!

Alright! So for today's Story Book Science, we are going to be reading about Maya Lin. And we'll be reading the book *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines*. This book is written by Jeanne Walker Harvey, and it's illustrated by Dow Phumiruk. And we're reading it with permission from Henry Holt and Company. So thank you to them for the permission to read this book! Now I really like this book. It's so amazing to read about Maya Lin and her design for the memorial: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. But it also is a really good reminder about perseverance! For Maya, some people didn't like her design, and she didn't give up, though. She kept going! She stood up for herself and for her design. And this story is a good reminder that we should also persevere and stand up for ourselves, especially when people aren't necessarily being nice.

Now the last thing I want to say is that if you have any questions, please feel free to ask those. You can write those in the comments, but just know I may not be able to see them immediately. And I'll only answer them if time remains. Additionally, if you need a partial transcript of this reading, then that will be made available a little later today. So if there are no further questions, I will go ahead and get started with our reading of *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines*.

## Reading from *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines* (approximately 3:42 – 13:19)

Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines *includes copyrighted materials, and we do not have permission to include the written text of the book in this transcript.*

## Conclusion (approximately 13:20 – 22:38)

The end.

Now I am so glad that we got to read about Maya Lin together. And as you can see, it might be a little difficult, but there is a photo of Maya Lin on the wall. And when we read this story, we read that Maya Lin has designed many different things, but this story focused on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. And some people just didn't like that design. They said she was a young! She was only a student! They said that she was female! They said that her design just didn't look like a memorial should look like. So Maya Lin was challenging people to think about how they could design things and what things could look like. And even though people objected and they tried to make her feel bad, she persevered. So she continued to work to see her design become something that was built. She stood up for herself, for her design; and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was built.

Now she's designed many things, not just that memorial. She's designed the Civil Rights Memorial, which is in Montgomery, Alabama. She has designed the Women's Table, which is at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. She's designed Silver Missouri, which is at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. And, of course, we read about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. And there are a couple photos of that. So remember in the book when it said that it kind of cut through the land? You can see that. And then that's a close up of those names that Maya really wanted to incorporate and include because the names were very important.

Now with a lot of her art, what we read about is that she incorporates the environment - so the natural world! And in some like Women's Table – I'll show you again – there's water. So she incorporates and adds water to it. And when I think about Maya Lin and her designs and how she adds water and all of these elements of nature, it makes me wonder what shapes and designs can I see in nature? What animals make those shapes? So I want you to think about that for just a moment. What shapes do you see in nature, and what animals make them?

Now when I think of an answer to that question, my first thought is I think of spider web shapes and the spiders that make them. So spider webs, they are made by spiders as a place to rest or as a place to catch food. And sometimes spiders use them to do both of those things! So we're going to go over a couple of spider web shapes together.

The first is an orb web. So this is a garden spider. I'll let you see. And the garden spider is an orb-weaver. So the shape of the garden spider's web is an orb.

So what do you think an orb web looks like? Well, an orb web means that it's a circular-shaped web. So here's a photo, and I want you to look at it. Do you see that circular shape? Do you see that? You can see a lot of circular shapes in this very, very big orb web.

Now we can make a model of this orb web, which is something we can create to represent the shape of the web. So if you have a piece of string, you can follow along! You want to make sure that the pieces of the string, they are attached together like that. And you want to make it in a circle shape as best as you can. Now

it's a lot easier to do this on a flat surface like a table. I'm only holding it up so that you all can follow along. So try to make that in a circular shape as best as you can. And this is a model of an orb web!

Now the next web I want to talk about is a sheet web. And some spiders that make sheet webs include the filmy dome spider. So this is a spider that makes a sheet web. It's a sheet-weaver, and here's a photo of what its web would look like. Now in this photo, you'll notice a dome. Sometimes sheet webs have a dome on them. Sometimes they don't. That's not what we're looking for. Instead we're looking for this structure right below that dome. It kind of looks like a sheet of paper, and the bits of the web are built kind of layer upon layer upon layer of each other forming that sheet.

So let's model this. Take your string, and what you want to do is you want to form the string layer upon layer of each other. So fold one end onto the other. You'll see that there's a layer. And you can do it again! Fold upon each other, so that there are these layers. And that's how we model the sheet web!

Alright. So I have one final web to go over and that is the tangle web, also known as a cobweb. Now the types of spiders that make tangle webs, there are several, but we're going to focus on this spider. Now it's a little hard to identify just looking at the top of the spider; but if we flip it over, so we can look at the underside. Do you see a structure, or a shape, on the underside of that abdomen? What does that look like? Does it look like an hourglass?

Now if you notice the hourglass shape, then you have noticed a key feature of this spider. This is a black widow, specifically a female. And we know that because of that hourglass shape on the underside. That hourglass shape is normally red, but it can also be kind of a range of colors like yellow or orange. But that's an indication of a black widow spider. And black widow spiders create tangle webs, or cobwebs. And here's a photo of a black widow spider on its web. And when you look at, it kind of looks like a mess. There's not really a pattern. It kind of just looks like a bunch of spider web strings all strung together. Do you notice that? That's what I see.

So when we model a tangle web, what we're going to do is we're going to take that string, and we're just going to kind of make it a little messy! So I like to roll it in my hands and then hold it like this. Do you see how it kind of looks like a tangle? There's not really any order. There's no pattern, kind of just looks random. This is a model of a tangle web!

Alright. So I had an amazing time reading about Maya Lin and learning about her designs. We talked about a lot of different designs, but we focused on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. We then talked about spiders who we can think of as nature's designers, and we talked about some of the webs that they create like the orb web, the sheet web and the tangle web, also known as the cobweb. Now if you want to look for more of nature's designers, there is a scavenger hunt you can do with this month's iNaturalist project. And there will be some information about that on the website that you can find from the Museum from Home page.

And you should join me next week for Story Book Science. I'll be reading the book *And Tango Makes Three*. It's written by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell and illustrated by Henry Cole. We'll be reading this with permission from Simon & Schuster. And then we'll talk about families! So this book is about two male penguins, Roy and Silo, and how they care for a chick named Tango. And we're going to talk about families in different animals, including penguins, but also humans. So I hope that you join me next week for Story Book Science, and I'll see you then! Bye!