



VSA International Art Program *for Children with Disabilities*

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Edition 2013

A series of visual art lesson plans designed
to engage students with disabilities.



VSA International Art Program
for Children with Disabilities

Teacher Resource Guide
Edition 2013

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Portions of this publication were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, this content does not necessarily reflect the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 4-5

LESSON PLANS

SECRETS ABOUT ME..... 6-11

Ceramic tile

Student artists are challenged to reveal elements of themselves in symbolic, safe, metaphoric ways, through the creation of a ceramic tile.

THE FLUID ME..... 12-19

Drawing, watercolor

Student artists are challenged to depict the self in a non-literal manner.

I AM A SANDWICH..... 20-25

Ceramic sculpture

Student artists are challenged to represent the self through the creation of a metaphorical sandwich. The appearance and characteristics of the sandwich are open to symbolic and expressive interpretation.

I AM NOT A ROBOT..... 26-33

Paper sculpture

Student artists create a 3-D figural self-portrait, which forms the basis for a second creation of an abstracted/reconfigured/open-ended Futurist-like portrait.

WEAVING PERSONAL STORIES..... 34-39

Textile

Utilizing everyday found objects, student artists literally weave together pieces of their identity, overlapping complex symbols and metaphors.

MANY SIDES OF ME..... 40-45

Collage, sculpture

Through studying and learning the technique of bricolage, student artists incorporate an awareness of both the body and the self.

XEROX AND BEYOND..... 46-51

Collage

Taking advantage of the photocopier as an artist's tool, student artists create works that push the portrait from pictorial accuracy to meaningful representation.

APPENDIX OF ACTIVITY WORKSHEETS..... 52

INTRODUCTION

Students in today's classrooms possess a wide range of learning styles and abilities. Each lesson plan in this Teacher Resource Guide is written broadly to include students with various needs. We encourage you to approach this curriculum using a Universal Design for Learning framework, to include students with a range of abilities without modifying instruction for each individual student, thus promoting the dignity, independence and learning of all students.

The lessons conform to the following principles of Universal Design: (1) Multiple Means of Representation – presenting information in multiple formats so that all students understand the content, (2) Multiple Means of Expression – providing multiple options for students to express themselves, and (3) Multiple Means of Engagement – providing multiple opportunities for students to work in ways that are interesting and challenging for them.

We hope that this Teacher Resource Guide gives you and your students the opportunity to experience the inherent joys of creating and learning in the arts. We look forward to including the work of your students as part of the online exhibition of *Yo Soy...Je Suis...I Am...*, VSA's *International Art Program for Children with Disabilities*, at www.kennedy-center.org/education/vsa/programs.

Lastly, we invite you to share with us your own experiences with these lessons and, if you like, to add to our library of lessons by sending us your suggestions to: VSAinfo@kennedy-center.org.



INTRODUCTION

"I have a face, but a face is not what I am. Behind it lies a mind, which you do not see but which looks out on you. This face, which you see but I do not, is a medium I own to express something of what I am. Or so it seems till I turn to the mirror. Then, my face may seem to own me; to confront me as a condition to which I am bound" (Bell, 2000, p. 5).

The self-portrait has consistently been a rich and meaningful form of artistic engagement. Portraits of Frida Kahlo, Leonardo DaVinci, Pablo Picasso, and Vincent Van Gogh, for example, are staples in modern pre-K-12 art rooms. How, though, can we update the self-portraits we display in our classrooms as well as the methods we use to teach the self-portrait for contemporary times? How can we address our students' needs and identities today? The digital world has changed the ways in which we process information and connect with the world beyond our doors. A lesson on "how to draw the face" is not complex enough to be meaningful in and of itself in reflecting the complex and constantly changing identities of our students. Our students negotiate and renegotiate their relationships, making connections with communities locally, nationally, and globally, all the while searching for self-understanding and self-expression. Thus, relevant self-portraiture today need not even include the use of a mirror, the first item one would think necessary to successfully depicting the self. It is time to rethink the ways in which we help students to express components of the self.

This unit of lessons re-conceptualizes the "self-portrait" in alternative, challenging, symbolic, and beautiful ways, breaking from traditional teaching of self-portraiture. We hope this guide serves as an inspirational starting point for both teachers and students.

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SECRETS ABOUT ME

Grade level: 4 – 12

Expected Length: 3 – 4 class periods

Students will create a self-portrait in a clay tile inspired by selected works from *PostSecret* (www.postsecret.com), a digital archive of an ongoing community art project where people mail in their secrets anonymously on a handmade postcard.

Objectives

Art Making

Students will create a symbolic 6"x6" clay tile representing aspects of their secret selves using form and texture.

National Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.

Critical Inquiry

Students will interpret the secret messages being sent in selected age-appropriate works from *PostSecret*.

National Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.

Art History Inquiry

Students will compare and contrast how contemporary artists construct different ways of "sharing" secrets in their art.

National Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

National Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.

Aesthetic Inquiry

Students will identify the expressive qualities in selected age-appropriate works from *PostSecret*.

National Standard 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.



Key Vocabulary

Form:

The overall shape of a 3-dimensional object

Texture:

The surface quality of objects that appeals to the tactile sense

Symbol:

Something that stands for or represents something else.

Clay:

A natural, moist earth substance used in making brick, tile, pottery and ceramic sculpture

Slip-and-Score:

A system used to connect clay pieces together.

Lesson: SECRETS ABOUT ME

Materials

Wedged ceramic clay, air dry clay, or other modeling compound

Clay tools, such as gouges, picks, plastic knives and forks

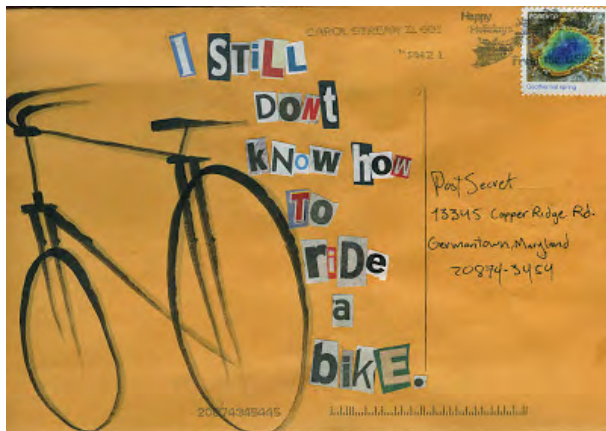
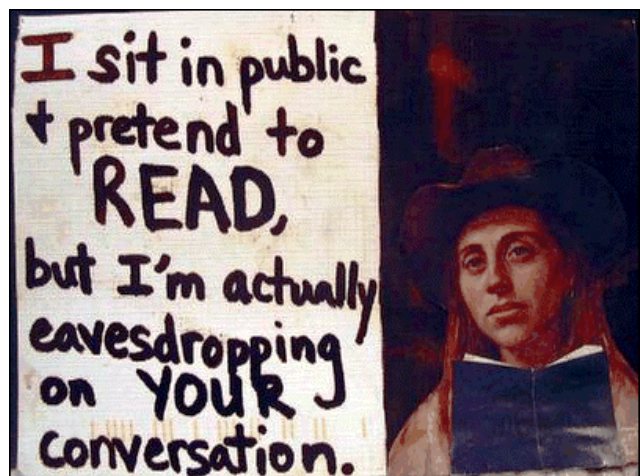
Acrylic paint

A variety of different sized paint brushes

Print outs of suggested works from the *PostSecret* books or website (www.postsecret.com).

Focus on works that address the revealing of metaphoric "portraits" of the artist.

Examples of suggested *PostSecret* work:



Lesson: SECRETS ABOUT ME

Discuss

- 1 Group students to discuss selected *PostSecret* postcard examples through a Think-Pair-Share activity. Have the students study and describe the image to each other highlighting those aspects that reveal the personal qualities of the artist.
- 2 Pose the following questions to the students, both orally and in written format:
 - *What is the message the artist is presenting about him/herself?*
 - *What symbols have been used to help the artist tell his/her personal story portrait?*
 - *How are you like the artist?*
 - *How are you different?*
- 3 After thinking about these questions independently, students pair-share their discoveries with one another.
- 4 Each team selects one member to report the team's findings to the class.

Prepare

- 1 Have students respond to Idea Generator Worksheet (see appendix, page X), presented in written form and orally. Students should name or communicate through another preferred communication, 4 to 6 positive secrets that classmates may not know about them.
 - *Student pairings can be utilized in the completion of their idea generator.*
- 2 Have students think of symbols that represent the answers given in the Idea Generator Worksheet
- 3 Students then sketch the symbols of the 4 to 6 positive secrets on the back of the Idea Generator Worksheet.
 - *Symbols should be simple, bold, and have little detail, keeping in mind that they will be created in 3 dimensional relief.*
 - *Utilize classroom discussion, or the student pairs, to assist students in transforming the ideas on the Idea Generator Worksheet into symbols. Taking this process in steps helps students move from a concrete level of thinking ("I like sports") to the more abstract ("I can use a football jersey to depict that I like sports").*
- 4 Next, students will design their tiles, organizing the symbols to fit on a square sheet of paper the size of the tile, allowing all symbols to be visible.

Lesson: SECRETS ABOUT ME

Create

It is important to remind students of the tactile nature of ceramic, and, therefore, the opportunity to create a variety of textures on the 3-dimensional surface.

Making a sample "texture plate" in advance to pass around the classroom provides students with the opportunity to feel the different textures in clay work. Encourage students to focus on the three-dimensional quality of clay during the project.

- 1 To create the clay tiles, place a ball of clay onto a canvas sheet or placemat. Place wooden sticks on either side the distance apart desired for the finished tile. Consider 6" x 6" as a manageable size.
- 2 Using a rolling pin, roll out the clay, much like pie dough, gently rolling the clay to the desired width. The thickness will be established by the height of the sticks. Trim the excess clay on the top and the bottom with a plastic knife to create a square tile.
- 3 Give the students extra small chunks of clay. Show them how to add features of their symbols to their tiles by pushing and pulling the clay into shapes and forms.
- 4 Demonstrate the process of adding these forms to the tile through the slip-and-score method.
 - *Slip and score is done by making shallow crosshatched indentations with a pointed tool in both the tile and the form, and adding slip (watery clay) to the crosshatched areas.*
 - *The form is then placed on the tile and smoothed to create a bond.*
 - *Students can be told to make a tic-tac-toe design on the clay to provide a concrete direction for crosshatching*
- 5 Encourage students to work using additive and subtractive techniques, that is, adding clay as well as removing it from the tile.
- 6 After creation of all tiles is complete, allow to air dry overnight, or fire in a kiln if available.
- 7 Finished tiles can be painted with acrylic paints or non-toxic school-grade glaze. Provide a variety of sized paint brushes. Allow to dry overnight.

Lesson: SECRETS ABOUT ME

Reflect and Discuss

- 1 Have students place their completed tiles in front of them.
- 2 Students then move 4 seats to their right so that students face a tile with which they are not familiar (not their own work or that of their Think-Pair-Share partner).
- 3 At each tile should be placed a Detective Worksheet (see Appendix, page X). Read the directions aloud.
- 4 Have students respond to the worksheet, by listing in writing, or by using another form of preferred communication, the possible “secrets” shown in the symbols they see on the tiles.
- 5 Have students share their discoveries with the class.
- 6 The tile artist then responds with his or her intention for the creation.
 - *As should always be the case, students can reserve the right to keep their “secrets” secret.*

Student Samples



THE FLUID ME

Grade level: 4 – 12

Expected Length: 2 class periods

Students will paint a watercolor and acrylic portrait using lines and representative patterns. Fluid mark-making and expressive lines are at the root of this lesson. These concepts are reinforced through the examination of the works of Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, and Jenny Saville. These artists do not provide photographic images of their subjects, but rather use expressive and fluid marks to represent the self. *Careful selection of images is required as often these artists use nudity in their work.*

Objectives

Art Making

Students will create a self-portrait painting using acrylic paint and watercolor.

National Standard 1: Understanding and Applying media, techniques and processes.

Critical Inquiry

Students will investigate how the brushstrokes and color choices in the work of Lucian Freud, Jenny Saville, and Francis Bacon provide insight into the expressive nature of the artists.

National Standard: 2. Using knowledge of structures and functions.

Art History Inquiry

Students will analyze the varied ways that artists communicate expressive parts of their identities.

National Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Aesthetic Inquiry

Students will support their ideas regarding a work of art which does not photographically depict the artist.

National Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.



Key Vocabulary

Fluidity:

Flows easily and gracefully

Pattern:

A repeated decorative design

Acrylic paint:

Paint with a resin base

Watercolor:

Paint resulting in a pastel color thinned with water

Contour line drawing:

The outline, defining lines of the object being drawn

Expressive line:

Lines that flow and are organic and fluid in nature

Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Materials

Soft drawing pencils (no erasers)

9" x 12" newsprint sheets of paper

18" x 24" heavy drawing paper
(*sturdy enough to paint on*)

Black acrylic paint, slightly watered down

Handheld mirrors for each student

Watercolor palettes

Watercolor brushes

1 to ½ inch acrylic brushes

Yard sticks, broom handles, or dowel
rods at least 3 feet in length – one
for each student

Masking tape

Markers/crayons

Print outs of suggested works:



Lucian Freud, *Reflection (Self Portrait)* (1985)



Francis Bacon, *Self Portrait* (1969)



Jenny Saville, *Reverse* (2003)

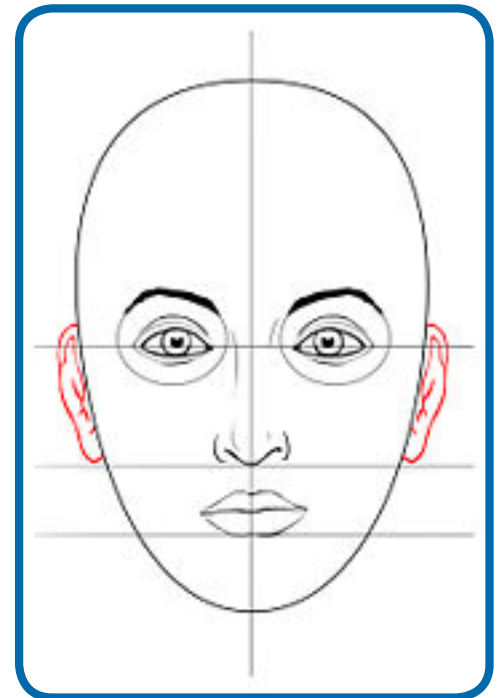
Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Discuss

- 1 When faced with the challenge of creating a self-portrait, the blank sheet of paper often intimidates students. It is important to think about the age and stage of development of students and to tailor this lesson to the given class. Students are generally eager to create pieces that replicate reality. For this lesson, it is important to communicate to students that *they are not photographers, but rather artists interpreting the self in ways that are not always realistic.*
 - Share selected artworks by Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, and Jenny Saville with the students. These works can be projected from the online sources referenced above or printed out. Laminate the printed visual.
 - Focus the discussion on the elements of the works that do not directly replicate the face, but instead create a representation using lines with fluid movement.
 - Encourage close examination of the techniques of Freud, Bacon and Saville on the part of the students. Students can practice making fluid lines by drawing directly onto the visuals using washable markers to identify key features and/or details.
 - Fluid lines can also be “drawn” with thin lines of white glue. Once the glue has dried students can run their fingers over the surface and better “see” the image.

Create

- 1 Begin by discussing proportions of the face through the use of a projected (overhead projector, ELMO, PowerPoint or Smartboard) image of a face.
 - To add intrigue you may use school pictures of the students, reminding students that few individual faces conform to the proportions exactly.
- 2 Draw the correct proportion lines directly onto a picture to reinforce the concepts. Encourage students to follow the lines on their own faces while doing this to better understand the relationships and proportions.
 - Head is an oval shape
 - Eyes are half way between the top of the head and the chin
 - Nose is midway between eyes and chin
 - Mouth is midway between nose and chin
 - Ears from the top of the eyes to the mouth
 - The neck extends from the base of the ears



Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Create, continued

- 3 Begin with a stretching exercise requiring students to stand up and do full arm circles. This reinforces the need for students to use their full arm and not just their hands/fingers in the drawing process.
- 4 Remind students of the importance of keeping their eyes on the subject that they are drawing — *not on the paper*. A short discussion of related hand-eye activities can emphasize this. Present these questions in writing and verbally discuss:
 - *Where do you look when playing the piano? Why?*
 - *Where do you look when catching a ball?*
 - *Bring a soft ball into the class and have students toss it to you while focusing on your hand. Then have each student toss it while “keeping your eyes on the ball.”*
- 5 Following these activities, provide mirrors to all students along with several sheets of newsprint (these drawings are just for practice so inexpensive/recycled paper can be used) and a drawing pencil.
 - *Some simple modifications and tool adaptations might include a tennis ball, foam pipe insulation, or a milk carton handle slipped over a drawing tool, for easy gripping.*
 - *You may tape the drawing paper to desks if stability is needed.*
 - *Alternatives to handheld mirrors are: reflective contact paper glued to cardboard sheets; reflective poster board cut to size; aluminum foil wrapped over cardboard.*
- 6 Demonstrate the process of creating a contour line drawing of the face. Drawing just the outline and defining lines seen on the face results in a contour line drawing. Emphasize using one continuous line without lifting the pencil from the paper.
- 7 Pair students and have each pair do a quick (approximately 2 minutes) contour line drawing of their classmate’s face.
 - *Remind students of the potential for their drawings to look very different than how their faces actually look.*
 - *In reality, a contour line drawing done while really keeping one’s eyes on the face being drawn (rather than on the paper) will often result in a startlingly strong representation of the face.*
 - *Remind students again that they are not photographers, but artists interpreting the self.*
- 8 Direct students to draw only the lines seen—no shading, no erasing—and to look at the partner’s face at least 80% of the time.

Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Create, continued

- 9 When the first drawing is done, have students look in the mirror and draw their own faces on another sheet of paper.
- 10 Repeat the drawing again asking students to use their opposite (non-dominant) hand.
- 11 Repeat one last time using their dominant hand.

Reflect and Discuss

- 1 Have students lay out all four drawings and examine them. What were the results of the process?
- 2 Which drawing was their most successful at capturing their features in a way that satisfies the student artist?

Create

- 1 Review the drawing techniques already discussed, with particular attention given to the importance of using continuous lines and to keeping your eyes on the reflection in the mirror (not on the paper). *Reinforce the concept that realism is not the end goal.*
- 2 Again, begin with arm circles to loosen up muscles.
- 3 As a class, create very long paint brushes by attaching one-inch paint brushes to the ends of broom handles, yard sticks, and/or dowels or rods using masking tape. Adjust the length based on the height of your students; when held, the brush should easily touch the floor.
- 4 Dilute black acrylic paint to the consistency of a milkshake and pour it in shallow paint pans (frozen food dishes work well). Put a loop of masking tape on the bottom of the pans to anchor them and place on the floor. Have students use another loop of masking tape to secure a large piece of drawing paper to the floor.
- 5 Position and secure the mirrors so that students can easily see themselves. While looking at themselves in mirrors, students create a contour line drawing of their head and face using the long modified paintbrushes. *Remind students to not worry about creating a photographic representation.*
- 6 Depending on the time and resources, students can do more than one, selecting their personal favorite for use in the final work.
- 7 Set drawings aside to dry.

Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Idea Generation

- 8 Have students name three of their personal qualities. Present the following questions in writing and verbally, asking: What makes each student unique? What adjectives would they use to describe themselves?
- 9 Follow this with a guided imagery exercise that pushes students to imagine each quality as a colorful pattern. Have students close their eyes and repeat to themselves each one of the qualities they have named.
 - *What do they see in their mind's eye? What color is this quality?*
 - *What kind of line would best represent the quality?*
 - *Have students (in pairs or on their own) write or otherwise record the answers for each quality.*
 - *Each quality should be represented by one color and one type of line.*
- 10 Using markers or crayons, have students experiment on the scrap paper with ways to create a pattern using the lines they have designed. Limiting the qualities to three will ensure a limited (3) color palette which will help create a cohesive work.

Create

- 1 Demonstrate the use of watercolor paint, highlighting how the intensity of color is lessened by the addition of water (more water = paler color).
- 2 Show students how panes of the face can be added with the watercolor paint.
- 3 On the (now dry) paintings created with the long handled brushes, have students complete their artwork by using watercolor to paint their faces and incorporating their personal pattern as a background.

Reflect and discuss

Post all the class works on the wall. Invite an outside "guest" to join the class and match up the works with their artists.

Lesson: THE FLUID ME

Student Samples



I AM A SANDWICH

Grade level: 7 – 12

Expected Length: 3 – 5 class periods

Students will create a metaphoric self-portrait clay box in the shape of a sandwich. This project is inspired by the works of Vincent Van Gogh, Jorge Pardo, and Kristine Yuki Aono. These artists present an introduction to metaphoric representation of self through the use of specific objects reflecting personal qualities, interests, and traits.

Objectives

Art Making

Students create metaphoric sandwiches made of clay which represent their personal qualities, interests, and traits.

National Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.

Critical Inquiry

Students will examine Vincent Van Gogh's *Boots*, Jorge Pardo's *House*, and Kristine Yuki Aono's *Issei, Nisei, Sansei*. These works are not a mimetic representation of the individual, but rather serve as examples of more abstract ways to approach the creating of a self-portrait.

National Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Art History Inquiry

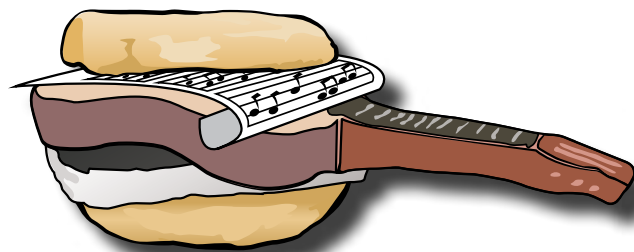
Students will formulate an understanding of the installation as an art form.

National Standard 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.

Aesthetic Inquiry

Students will compose a rationale justifying the need for contextual understanding when experiencing a work of art.

National Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.



Key Vocabulary

Installation:

An art exhibit specifically designed for a gallery or museum space.

Mimetic:

Representation or imitation of reality.

Contextualism:

Aesthetic theory focusing on the meaning and message of the artwork as well as the artist's intent.

Texture:

The surface quality of objects that appeals to the tactile sense.

Symbol:

Something that stands for or represents something else.

Clay:

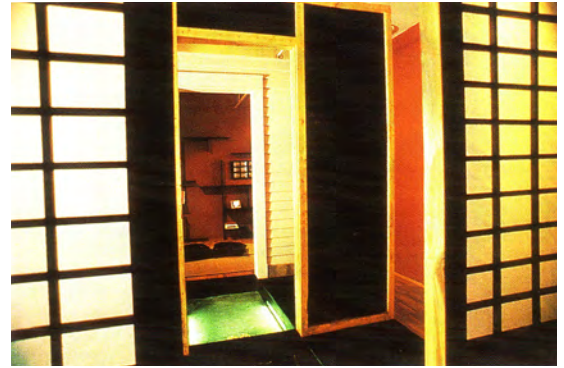
A natural, moist earth substance used in making brick, tile, pottery and ceramic sculpture.

Lesson: I AM A SANDWICH

Materials

Clay Clay mats
Clay tools Acrylic Paint

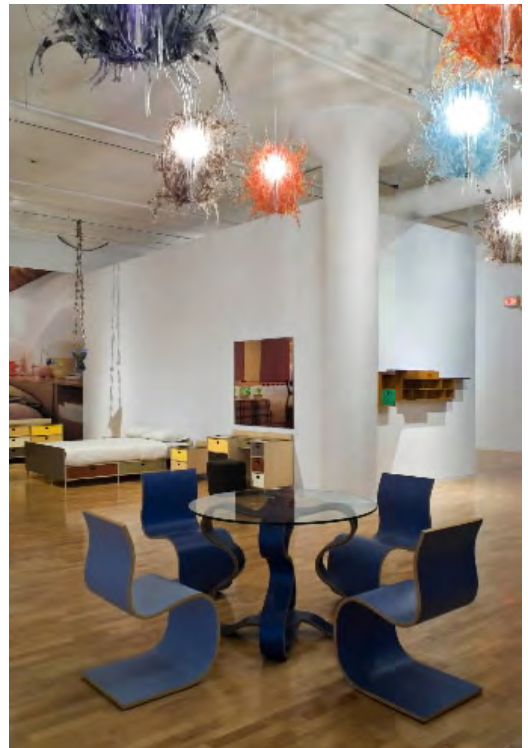
Print outs of suggested works:



Kristine Yuki Aono, *Issei, Nisei, Sansei* (1990)



Vincent Van Gogh, *Boots* (1887)



Jorge Pardo, *House* (2008)

Lesson: I AM A SANDWICH

Discuss

- 1 Begin with an examination of the suggested works, shown on an interactive white board or projected on a screen. Because the works of Pardo and Aono are installations, it is important to take the time to discuss this contemporary art form. Present tailored (or simplified) versions of the following questions orally and in writing, and follow with discussion.
 - *How do these installation spaces reveal personality traits of the artists/subjects? (Imagine walking through these spaces. How would you feel? What would you notice? Would this place feel welcoming or threatening? Why?)*
 - *What clues can we find that tell us about the artist or subject? We call this the context, or background information. What do we know about the artist's context looking at these clues? (What might we imagine about the life of this artist because of our observations of his/her work? What do we think this artist likes, dislikes, fears, loves?)*
 - *How do these installations differ from your concept of a traditional mimetic (realistic) portrait? Most people are used to seeing portraits that actually look like the person. Can we consider these works to be portraits even though they do not look like the people? (Why do you think that the artist chose to represent him or herself in this way?)*
- 2 Students may then compare and contrast the Pardo and Aono installations with the painting by Van Gogh, with an emphasis on the use of an object or objects as symbolic representations of a person.
 - *What do we (think we) know about Van Gogh by looking at these shoes?*
 - *Why do we think that Van Gogh chose to focus our attention on this every day object?*
 - *Is this a self-portrait? Why or why not?*
- 3 A Venn diagram can be constructed to facilitate the examination of the three works. A Venn diagram shows overlap as well as distinguishing factors between two or more things. Draw three circles, each one overlapping with the other, with a common middle. Students can work in teams or small groups. Provide pre-typed words or images for non-readers to place in the circles. These discoveries are then shared with the group.



Lesson: I AM A SANDWICH

Prepare

- 1 Use Idea Generator (see page X) or any other brainstorming tool to assist students in compiling a list of their personal qualities, traits and/or interests. Read the questions aloud and provide students with the opportunity to respond in writing, orally or by another preferred communication style.
- 2 From their generated list, students design symbols (or select objects) representing each of the qualities, traits, and/or interests. This can be done by sketching, by searching for images in magazines, or by using technology.
 - Encourage students to choose symbols that are bold and evocative and with minimal detail.
 - Suggest that students create symbols that are both literal and metaphorical when creating their "sandwiches." For example, one student might choose to select a tomato as a means to represent her/his Italian heritage. Another student might select the Italian flag, which would obviously result in a different kind of representation.
 - All students benefit from step-by-step development of their ideas.

Create

- 1 Students begin by creating, with clay, the individual symbols that they have listed or named through the use of their Idea Generator. Some students may work best wearing non-latex gloves or by manipulating the clay in a zip-lock bag.
- 2 Demonstrate how to create each symbol with particular care by showing how to push and pull the clay to create a three-dimensional form. Some simple modifications and tool adaptations might include using cookie cutters embedded in Styrofoam balls, or slipping foam pipe insulation or a milk carton handle over a drawing tool for easy gripping.
- 3 Sandwiches are built by stacking the individual symbols in layers on top of each other.
 - Each layered object is fastened to the piece below it through the slip and score technique. Take a fork and make crosshatched, shallow divots in the clay, on the two objects being stacked. Apply a thin layer of slip (watered down clay) to the crosshatched area. Press the two pieces together and smooth the seam if needed.
- 4 The top piece of the sandwich is not attached to the larger form. Set aside the top piece for the box lid.
- 5 After all sandwich layers have been attached (minus the top piece), students then scoop out the interior to create a box. The walls of the box should be 1/4" to 3/5" in thickness. Students may use a small ice cream scoop or metal spoons to assist in the scooping process.
- 6 After firing in the kiln, or allowing to dry overnight, the sandwiches are painted with acrylic paint. The acrylic paint provides a satin finish but will not make the sandwiches water-tight.

Lesson: I AM A SANDWICH

Reflect and Discuss

- 1 Have students complete an Artist Statement (see page X), in writing, orally, or by another preferred communication style, which reveals the meaning of their sandwich.
- 2 Once the Artist Statements are complete, have the students shift 3 to 4 seats away from their desk/table. The goal is to have each student sitting in front of a sandwich with which they were not exposed to during the creation process.
- 3 Students are asked to provide a description of the sandwich before them in writing, orally, or by another preferred communication style as if they were offering it at a local café as the “Daily Special.” Encourage students to think of this as creating a clever advertisement for the sandwich, naming and incorporating the qualities of the sandwich that they find appealing.
- 4 These written “ads” are then shared with the class. The artists can respond by sharing their Artist Statements.

Student Samples



I AM NOT A ROBOT

Grade level: 7 – 12

Expected Length: 3 – 4 class periods

In this open-ended lesson, students begin by creating simple geometric sculpture self-portraits out of paper. Through a series of steps that demonstrate how the illusion of three dimensions can exist on a two-dimensional plane, students transform their paper sculptures into two-dimensional personal statements. Students engage in a dialogue about the similarities and differences between man and machine.

Objectives

Art Making

Three step process –

1. Students will create a figurative model of themselves using white drawing paper.
2. These figurative models will, together, create a representation of the entire class. Then, students will create a colored pencil drawing of the class figurative still life.
3. Students will create a personal response reflecting on the self as machine using the material of their choice.

National Standard 1: Understanding and Applying media, techniques and processes.

Critical Inquiry

Students will investigate the style used by Fernand Léger in his work *Soldiers Playing at Cards* for clues as to how the individual is morphed into the machine.

National Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.

Art Historical Inquiry

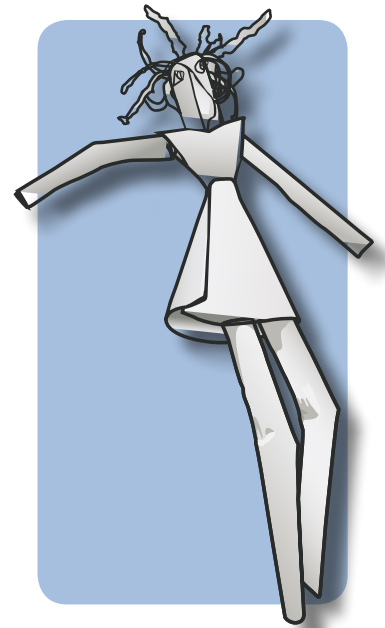
Students will explain key points of the Futurist movement.

National Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Aesthetic Inquiry

Students will summarize how the work of the Futurist society's examination of man and machine.

National Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.



Key Vocabulary

Futurism:

An art movement of the early 20th century, celebrating the onset of the technological revolution.

Socially Transformative Art:

An aesthetic theory based on the concept that art should be instrumental in encouraging and supporting a change in society.

Complementary Colors:

Colors on opposite sides of the color wheel. "As different as they can be."

Analogous colors:

Colors next to each other on the color wheel. "Best friends."

Open ended:

An assignment providing for many possible solutions to a problem.

Lesson: I AM NOT A ROBOT

Materials

White drawing paper scraps

Scissors (adaptive, as needed)

Scotch tape

Black construction paper (9" X 12")

Colored pencils/washable markers

Pencil sharpeners

Drawing boards

Stapler

Variety of materials as needed

Print outs of suggested works:



Stills from the movie *Transformers* (2007)



Fernand Leger, *Soldiers Playing at Cards* (1917)



Tim Hawkinson, *Emotor* (2000)

Lesson: I AM NOT A ROBOT

Create

- 1 Students create a 3-dimensional model of themselves using white paper and tape and/or a stapler. Some students might need hand over hand assistance.
 - a. Create simple body shapes, legs, arms and heads by making cylinders of paper, taping (or stapling) the overlapped ends
 - b. Tape or staple these shapes together to form the figure
 - c. Add embellishments using accordion folds, fringing, curling strips and scoring
 - d. Encourage students to create personal details using the white paper, such as long legs, curly hair, etc. so each 3-dimensional portrait has identifiable characteristics.
 - e. Students' work should be large, resulting in a figure ranging from 15" to 24" tall.
 - f. The use of pencils, markers, pens, or other mark-making devices on the paper sculpture is not encouraged.
- 2 As each figure is completed it is tacked to the wall/board
- 3 Place the figures very closely together, creating a class still life from the figures.



Figure



Figure detail



Wall still life



Folding, curling, scoring

Lesson: I AM NOT A ROBOT

Discuss

- 1 Show an example of artwork by Fernand Léger and discuss the Futurist movement. Explore the origins of the movement and the impact of the Industrial Revolution. Present simplified versions of the questions below in writing and verbally discuss:
 - *With the onset of the Industrial Revolution, society looked to machines to answer many of life's problems. Robots could replace humans when completing mundane daily tasks. How far can/could robots go in completely replacing us? (Where in our lives do machines do work that people used to do? Do you have machines in your house that do or simplify tasks? Household chores?)*
 - *What is it that machines can do that humans cannot?*
 - *What can humans do that machines cannot? (Can machines think or feel? Can they make friends?)*
 - *Ask students to describe similarities and connections between the figures in Léger's work and their work.*
- 2 Play a clip from the movie *Transformers*, bringing the concept of the mechanization of society into the present day.
- 3 Present the work *Emotor* (2000) by Tim Hawkinson.
 - *In this work the artist mechanizes his own face. By externalizing control of the face's expressions, the artist investigates the blending of human and machine. This work is an example of a socially transformative work of art, one that brings to light a social issue in an effort to change society's thinking.*
- 4 The following discussion provides a stepping-off point for the next step in the studio creation. End the discussion by having students ponder the question:
 - *If we can all be reduced to mechanized versions of ourselves, as on our wall still life, how do we maintain our unique qualities?*

Create

- 1 Provide each student with a 9" x 12" sheet of black construction paper and have each student fold it in half, then half again, creating four 3" x 9" panels.
- 2 Position students around the class portrait still life, ensuring all students have a good view.
- 3 Have students pick four discrete sections of the still life. A viewfinder may be used to assist students in visually isolating their sections. A simple viewfinder is created by cutting a small rectangular hole in the center of a 4" x 6" piece of paper.