

Unit 1: How do I see art?

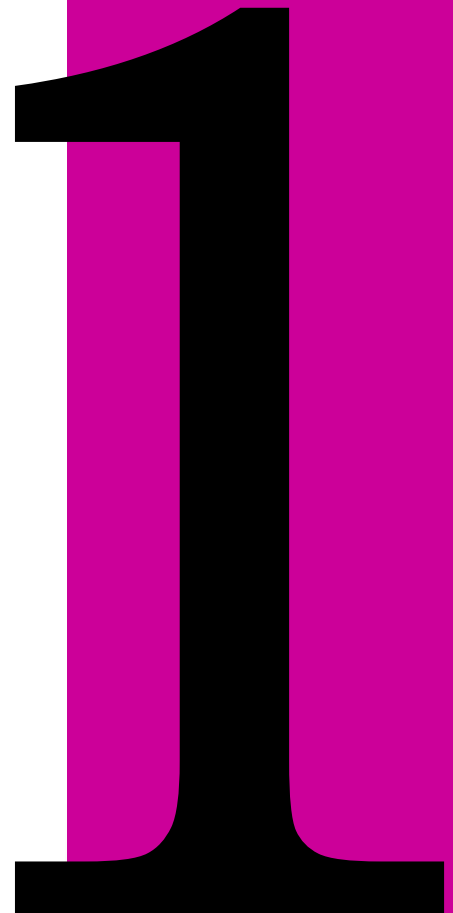
Lesson One: Music Interpretation



Lesson Two: Surrealist Mad Libs



Lesson Three: Vessel Design



Unit 1: How do I see art?*Unit Overview*

This unit is designed to help students begin to think conceptually about art making. Through exposure to a wide range of visual references and materials, students will increase their understanding of what counts as art. Students will build critical thinking skills and develop a vocabulary to discuss their artistic choices. These projects will help students learn to form unique, symbolic ideas to carry out their artistic visions.

Enduring Understandings

- It is up to the individual creating or viewing an object or action to decide if it is art.
- There are often controversies over whether particular objects or actions count as art.
- It is a human instinct to create art as an expression of the imagination, a mode of communication, and for ritualistic and symbolic use.
- Meaning can be conveyed in art through representation and abstraction.

Essential Questions

- What counts as art?
- What is the purpose of art?
- Is art important?
- Can art be functional?
- How can art convey meaning?

"No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did he would cease to be an artist."

– Oscar Wilde

Unit 1: How do I see art?

Unit Objectives

Students will know:

- Key terms to describe a work of art such as aesthetics, media, expression, interpretation, symbolism, intent, genre, style;
- Types of visual art media such as drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, film, computer art, installation, fashion, architecture, furniture, textiles;
- The work of prominent abstractionists, and surrealists;
- Characteristics of abstract art;
- Characteristics of surrealist art;
- Examples of vessel art from a range of cultures and historical periods;
- Artistic techniques such as oil pastel, colored pencil, and papier-mâché;
- Methods of research such as books, periodicals, and internet resources.

Students will be able to:

- Discuss why an artist would choose to make a piece of art;
- Discuss whether or not an object or action is art;
- Consider what makes a piece of art important;
- Interpret the meaning work of art and explain why it is significant to them or others;
- Create an effective composition in oil pastel using music as their inspiration;
- Create an effective composition in colored pencil using a Mad Libs word game as their inspiration;
- Create an effective vessel sculpture using papier-mâché;
- Create representational and abstract compositions that convey the same message;
- Convey a clear message in their artwork;
- Discuss their artistic choices using appropriate vocabulary;
- Participate in a group critique of their work.

Unit 1: How do I see art?

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Visual Art 9-12

- 1. Methods, Materials and Techniques**
 - 1.9 - Demonstrate the ability to create 2D and 3D works that show knowledge of unique characteristics of particular media, materials, and tools
 - 1.11 - Explore a single subject through a series of works, varying the medium or technique
- 2. Elements and Principles of Design**
 - 2.13 - Use color, line, texture, shape, and form in 2D and 3D work and identify the use of these elements in the compositions of others
 - 2.16 - Create artwork that demonstrates a purposeful use of the elements and principles of design to convey meaning and emotion
- 3. Observation, Abstraction, Invention and Expression**
 - 3.9 - Create 2D and 3D artwork that explores the abstraction of ideas and representations
- 4. Drafting, Revising and Exhibiting**
 - 4.10 - Students will demonstrate the ability to develop an idea through multiple stages, responding to criticism and self-assessment
- 5. Critical Response**
 - 5.8 - Students will demonstrate the ability to compare and contrast two or more works of art, orally and in writing, using appropriate vocabulary
- 6. Purposes and Meanings in the Arts**
 - 6.6 - Students will describe and analyze examples of art forms that integrate practical functions with aesthetic concerns
- 8. Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence and Change**
 - 8.7 - Students will classify works from the United States and world cultures by genre, style and historical period



*Unit 1: How do I see art?***Lesson One: Music Interpretation**

5 class periods

Lesson Description

The objective of this lesson is to familiarize students with methods of conveying meaning through their art. Students can choose their favorite song to inspire their artwork. Through listening carefully to the music and the lyrics, students will create two compositions that will be displayed as a diptych. One composition will depict a representational interpretation of the song that can draw upon the literal meaning of the lyrics or the message of the song. The second composition will be abstract and devoid of representational imagery; it will be inspired purely by the mood, tempo or emotion that the song evokes.

This project will teach students to understand the distinction between representational and abstract art and will help them convey meaning by manipulating the elements of art such as line, color and space.

Hans Hoffman, *The Gate*, 1959-60**Enduring Understandings Essential Questions**

- Abstract art does not rely on representational images to convey a meaning; instead tools such as line, color, and shape create the composition.
- Artists throughout history have looked to other forms of art, such as music, for ideas and inspiration.
- How is abstract art different from representational art?
- How can concepts be expressed without representational imagery?
- How can music inspire artists?

Evidence of Learning

- One representational and one abstract composition inspired by a song
- Drawing inspiration exercises Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Group Critique
- Written reflection

Unit 1: How do I see art?

Lesson One: Music Interpretation

5 class periods

Benchmark Product

A successful project is defined as two compositions in oil pastel on approximately 16"x20" paper. One composition will depict representational imagery inspired by the chosen song. The second will feature an abstract composition based on the mood or feeling the song creates. Both compositions should demonstrate thoughtful consideration of color, line and space and show careful use of the materials.

Key Vocabulary

- Representation
- Abstraction
- Interpretation
- Abstract Expressionism



Resources

Kasimir Malevich, *Suprematism (Supremus No. 58)*, 1916

Mark Rothko, *Magenta, Black, Green on Orange*, 1947

Jackson Pollock, *One: Number 31*, 1950



Starling, Grade 12

Materials

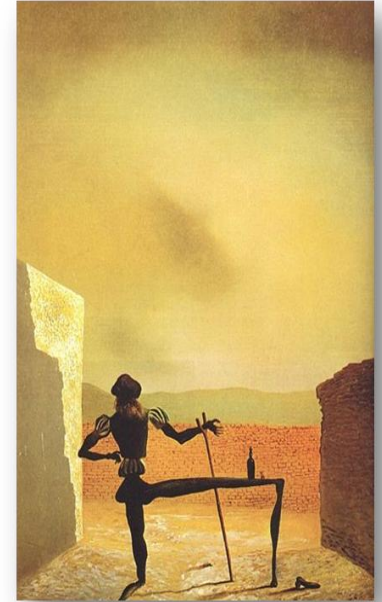
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Sketch paper
- 16"x20" drawing paper
- Oil pastels

*Unit 1: How do I see art?***Lesson Two: Surrealist Mad Libs**

12 class periods

Lesson Description

The objective of this lesson is to introduce students to the Surrealist art movement and demonstrate how art can convey humor, surprise, and satire through dreamlike imagery and thought-provoking juxtapositions. Students will explore art from the Surrealism movement and discuss why artists would choose to create art with seemingly nonsensical images. Students will then create their own Surrealist-inspired compositions by completing a 'Mad Libs' word game template and creating an image based on the results. Through this exercise, students will discover and analyze the complexities that can occur in art inspired by free association, the unconscious and liberty of the imagination.



Salvador Dalí, *The Ghost of Vermeer of Delft Which Can Be Used As a Table*, 1934

Enduring Understandings Essential Questions

- Surrealism was a cultural movement that emphasized humor, juxtaposition, and non-sequitur. It marked a significant departure from previous styles.
- Surrealist art allows artists to explore their dreams and the unconscious through visual images.
- Is surrealism a significant form of art? Why?
- Why would an artist choose to create surrealist art?

Resources

Giorgio de Chirico, *Love Song*, 1914
 Max Ernst, *The Elephant Celebes*, 1921
 Man Ray, *Cadeau*, 1921
 Joan Miro, *The Tilled Field*, 1923-4
 Rene Magritte, *The Treachery of Images*, 1928-9
 Yves Tanguy, *Indefinite Divisibility*, 1942

Evidence of Learning

- Composition in colored pencil inspired by Mad Libs word game
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Group Critique

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Lesson Two: Surrealist Mad Libs

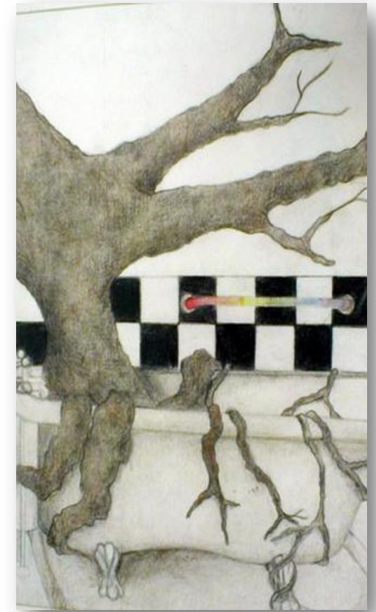
12 class periods

Benchmark Product

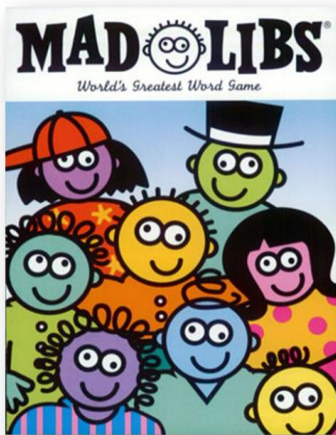
A successful project is defined as a composition that fully and thoughtfully reflects the imagery and themes developed in a completed 'Mad Libs' word game. Students should consider the unique juxtapositions created by the random nature of the word game and capitalize on the humorous, bizarre, and unpredictable combinations it generates. Students will work in colored pencil and create a composition on drawing paper approximately 11"x14" in size. Students will show careful use of the materials.

Key Vocabulary

- Surrealism
- Non-sequitur
- Juxtaposition
- Sigmund Freud
- The Orange Alternative
- Automatic Writing



Laura, Grade 12



Materials

- 'Mad Libs' word game sheets
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Sketch paper
- Colored pencils
- 11"x14" Drawing paper

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Lesson Three: Vessel Design

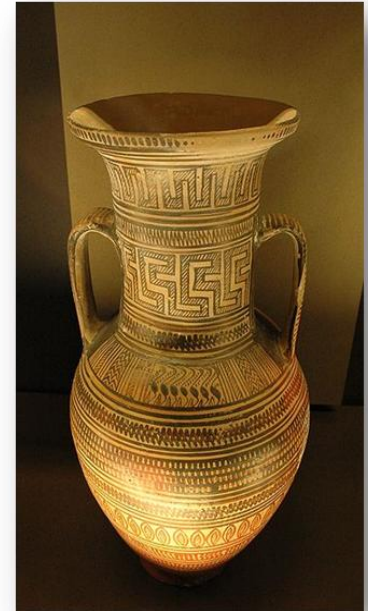
20 class periods

Lesson Description

The objective of this lesson is to introduce students to the concept of functional art by exploring the vessel. Many cultures have created vessels for practical and artistic purposes. Following the adage, 'form follows function,' students will be challenged to design and create a vessel in papier-mâché to contain their favorite or least favorite object or liquid. Through this exercise, students will discover that art objects can be functional and, reciprocally, functional objects can be art.

Enduring Understandings Essential Questions

- Functional art or 'applied art' is a debated issue. While some believe that pure art can have no purpose, others believe that art and everyday objects are interchangeable.
- Since ancient times, artists have thoughtfully decorated vessels created for numerous specific functions.
- Can art be functional?
- How has the vessel been a prominent art object throughout history?



Late Geometric Attic Amphora, 700 BCE

Resources

Innermost Coffin of Tutankhamen, Egypt, 1323 BCE
Ceremonial Wine Vessel on Wheels, China, Early 18th century
Locket, American, 1849
Mende Helmet Mask, Sierra Leone, 1940
 Pablo Picasso, *Pregnant Woman*, Spanish, 1950

Evidence of Learning

- Thumbnail Sketches
- Vessel of papier-mâché designed for a specific object or liquid
- Class discussions
- Teacher observation
- Group Critique

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Lesson Three: Vessel Design

20 class periods

Benchmark Product

A successful project is defined as a vessel that is designed to hold a specific object or liquid. The vessel should clearly relate to the object or liquid it was created for. Students should consider all of the surfaces and angles of the vessel. Students can elect to use papier-mâché, ceramic clay or mixed media for their vessel assembly. The choice of materials should suit the vessel's design and function. Students should demonstrate careful use of the materials.

Key Vocabulary

- Vessel
- Function
- Applied Art
- Amphora
- Objet d'art



Haley, Grade 11

Materials

- Pencils
- Erasers
- Sketch paper
- Papier-mâché paste
- Newspaper strips
- Armature wire
- Cardboard
- Tempera paint
- Paintbrushes
- Ceramic clay
- Carving tools
- Low fire glazes