

FIND YOURSELF!

LESSON 4: TAKE A STAND (PRESENT SELF)

Theme: Identity

Grade: Middle School

Time: 6-7 classes (50 minutes in length)

Introduction

A person's beliefs and values are part of his or her identity. Middle school students need the opportunity to explore topics that are meaningful to them and take a stand for their beliefs. In this lesson, students will explore present-day social issues in the world that they believe involve an injustice and create a poster to represent their positions.

Some contemporary artists are also social activists, creating artwork to promote or bring awareness to a cause. Barbara Kruger's work addresses feminist issues using a graphic format and limited colors. Her close-cropped style, black, white and red palette, and simple font are important in engaging the viewer and exposing her position on certain issues.

The street artist known as Banksy also addresses contemporary issues using a limited palette and a graphic format. Known for his visual ironic commentary on social and political issues, Banksy creates protest art on the streets to bring social awareness to the general public.

This project is designed for students to be able to give voice to an issue that is important to them. This is an opportunity for the students to explore their values and beliefs, and discover what they are willing to defend. They will also learn how to use timesaving skills and appropriated images and text to create a poster.

Resources

- Barbara Kruger's work retrieved from <http://www.arthistoryarchive.com/arthistory/feminist/Barbara-Kruger.html>
- Banksy protest art retrieved from <http://giveusart.com/2015/05/01/may-day-the-art-of-protest/>
- Site with links to global issues. Retrieved from www.globalissues.org
- [What is satire?](#) video on YouTube
- [American Dad's scene using satire](#) video on YouTube
- Examples of print art from the Mexican Revolution by [Taller de Grafica Popular](#)

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that...

- It is important to make informed decisions on issues.
- Taking a stand about something one believes in helps solidify a persons' sense of identity.
- Some artists use their artwork to make a statement about contemporary social issues.
- Students can create art about social issues.

Essential Questions

- How are artists social activists?
- What is satire used by some artists?

- What is a social issue that concerns you?
- How does a person solidify his/her sense of identity through art making?

Knowledge

Students will know [how to]...

- What satire is and how artists use it in visual art.
- Research an issue of importance to them.
- How to use certain art vocabulary terms such as value, contrast, shape, irony, exaggeration, font, juxtaposition, emphasis.
- How to incorporate text into a work of art.
- Juxtapose and layer images in their artwork.

Skills

Students will be able to...

- Distinguish between exaggeration and irony in a variety of artwork.
- Create a work of art about a current event that shows the student's position on the issue.
- Reflect in writing on how taking a stand on an important issue helped to understand their identities.
- Use photocopies, appropriated images and projectors to create their artwork.

Washington State EALR's

- 1.1: Understands and applies arts concepts and vocabulary.
- 1.2: Develops arts skills and techniques.
- 1.3: Understands and applies arts genres and styles of various artists, cultures, and times.
- 2.1: Applies a creative process to the arts.
- 2.2: Applies a performance and/or presentation process to the arts.
- 2.3: Applies a responding process to visual arts.

- 3.1: Uses the arts to express feelings and present ideas.
- 3.2: Uses the arts to communicate for a selected purpose.
- 3.3: Develops personal aesthetic criteria to communicate artistic choices.
- 4.2: Demonstrates and analyzes the connections among the arts and between the arts and other content areas.
- 4.4: Understands how the arts influence and reflect cultures/civilization, place and time.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task:

Students will create a poster to convey a message about an injustice in the world that they feel strongly about.

Student self-assessment and teacher assessment using teacher-made rubric (attached)

Other evidence:

- Mind map: Students will create a mind map involving contemporary issues and their stand on the issues.
- Student participation in class discussions.
- Notes taken on the contemporary issue of choice.

Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Essential Questions and complete Performance Task.)

- Ask students if they know what satire is. Think about Language Arts class and how satire is used in writing. Listen to students' ideas.
- Watch a [What is satire?](#) video on YouTube that explains satire. After watching the video, ask the students to recall the types of satire that were explained in the video. Write them on the board: exaggeration and irony.
- Watch a short video from cartoon [American Dad's scene using satire](#). Ask students the following questions:
How does this video use satire?
Can you think of any other examples from popular culture that uses satire? Songs? Videos? TV shows?
- Show a variety of works of art by Barbara Kruger and Banksy. Have students decide if the work is an example of exaggeration or irony. Ask the students to explain their reasoning.
- View examples of print art from the Mexican Revolution by the printing group Taller de Grafica Popular. Ask:
What is happening in this image?

What elements did the artist use to create this piece?

How did the artist arrange the elements?

What do you think the artist was trying to say? What is the message?

How did the artist successfully get his message across to the viewer?

What would you have done differently?

- As a class, have students come up with issues of social problems that the students find disturbing. Write them so that everyone can see. Peruse the list available on www.globalissues.org if needed.
- Have students brainstorm on their mind map about issues they feel strongly about. Ask the following questions to facilitate deeper exploration:
 - What issues do I feel strongly about? List at least three.
 - Whom do these issues affect?
 - What can I do to help?
 - What can other organizations do to help?
- Have students choose one issue and research further using computers, tablets, the internet, and print media. Set up computer and/or library time, if needed. Students need to collect an assortment of images and print about their topic. Look for facts and statistics about the topic, as well as a quote or two.
- Demonstrate how to trace images using a light box, a projector, or a window with light shining through. Show students how to overlap images to create layers in their work. Sketch in pencil.
- Demonstrate how to incorporate text into the image, using a font that works with the artwork and varying the size of the letters. Discuss how the letters are shapes, not just lines. Students can trace words using the above methods. Encourage students to add text to get their message across. Text does not need to be only at ninety-degree angles to the edge of the paper. It can also be diagonal.
- Allow students time to sketch their images, tracing where appropriate. Observe for overlapping and layering of images and text.
- Demonstrate how to use India ink to create a dramatic black and white image. Discuss value, and creating a balance of light and dark areas.
- After students have inked their images, have them finish their artwork with a personal, emotional message in red acrylic paint, or a color of their choice.
- Have students write a written commentary on their piece. What is the issue? What can be done to change it? This is their call to change the world.
- Have students share their artwork and written commentary with a partner. Call for volunteers to share with the class.
- Have students complete the scoring guide and personal reflections before turning the work in to be graded.

Grading Rubric for TAKE A STAND

Assignment: Students will research a social issue that is of interest to him or her and create a poster to increase awareness of the issue.

The artwork is created by appropriating images and text into a black and white poster, using juxtaposition and layering techniques. The poster will also include a quote or statistic about the social issue.

To receive a "satisfactory," the artwork must:

- Fill the space
- Layer images and text
- Respond to three of the questions on the mind map
- Compare and contrast his or her mind map to that of another student's
- Be accompanied by a written work clearly explaining their position on a social issue
- The poster is created with high contrast (black and white)
- Students were able to describe what they saw in the selected artists' works

To receive a "proficient," the student's artwork must meet all of the criteria for a "satisfactory" and:

- Respond to four or more of the questions on the mind map
- Demonstrate effective use of juxtaposition and appropriating images to create an original work of art about a social issue
- Students were able to interpret what they saw in the selected artists' works

To receive an "exceptional," the student's artwork must meet all of the criteria for a "proficient" and:

- Include a strong focal point to draw the viewer's attention
- The self-assessment provides evidence of profound awareness into social issues
- Students were able to interpret and show deeper insight in the selected artists' works

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

List three things that you learned in this lesson:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

This artwork made me look at the world differently because: _____

If money, time, and resources were not an issue, what would you do to help solve the problem you researched? _____

Another way that I can explore this issue through artmaking is: _____

Another social issue I would like to explore through artmaking is: _____

