Developing Creativity in the Seventh-Grade Art Classroom

Zachary Dane Wallerius
Western Michigan University, walleriusz@gmail.com

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Developing Creativity in the Seventh-Grade Art Classroom

by

Zachary Dane Wallerius

A thesis submitted to the Graduate College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
Gwen Frostic School of Art
Western Michigan University
May 2021

Thesis Committee:

William Charland, M.F.A., PhD., Chair
Christina Chin, PhD.
Cat Crotchett, M.F.A.
Developing Creativity in the Seventh-Grade Art Classroom

Zachary Wallerius, M.A.
Western Michigan University, 2021

This thesis describes a methodology for developing artistic creativity in seventh-grade students through the implementation of a curriculum that fosters authentic engagement with the creative process. In it I explore how student’s waning interest in the arts through middle school despite the value of creative expression for adolescents can be addressed. The research in this paper explores relevant aspects of artistic creativity as well as the psychological needs that must be met in order for students to successfully engage in a creative practice. The paper makes recommendations for how to foster common traits of creative people and proposes how behavior management may encourage a creative learning environment. Ultimately, I propose a curriculum that develops student’s expressive capabilities through direct instruction in meaning making strategies and engagement in authentic personally relevant themes.
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Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to develop a curriculum that will develop seventh-grade student’s artistic creativity by engaging them in authentic and personally relevant artmaking. To accomplish this the thesis addresses the need to instruct students in the use of meaning-making strategies, engage them in personally relevant and authentic themes, and to structure these activities within the context of the creative process by employing the studio habits of mind. Additionally, to achieve these ends the need to create a classroom culture of psychological safety and freedom is explored.

Research Problem

Within my seventh-grade classes there is a wide range of ability level and levels of interest. Students at the middle school come from two different elementary with very different k-4 art programs. Additionally, once students arrive at the middle school art is offered as an elective but not required. Consequently, since the classes are still sorted by grade not tiered by level of completion like the high school, seventh-grade students may have taken art each of the previous two years or may just now be taking their first middle school art class. Additionally, my classroom is frequently one of the first out classes selected by the special ed department in which to place students that had previously been in a self-contained class.

While I’ve never felt that the development of technical skills was the most important aspect of art education, it would have been a source of frustration for me and my students had I tried to make it central to the curriculum in my classes. I was drawn to art education structures that focused on the creative process, habits, and creative process instead, but was frustrated by the results when I tried to employ some of the most student directed structures in my class. My classes were both intimidated by technical processes and frustrated by their inability to convey
their ideas in a meaningful way, but I had also observed that when inspired these same students could make huge creative and technical strides.

When given the proper tools to communicate their ideas, all students can achieve creative success. That success breeds enthusiasm, which lead to the development of technical proficiency as will be shown in this paper and laid out through the successive units of the attached curriculum.

Literature Review

Creativity in the Classroom

In order to teach in a way that develops student creativity, it is essential to define what it is. Runco and Jaeger (2012), state “The common definition is bipartite: Creativity requires both originality and effectiveness.” (p.92) Though, there is debate as to whether more or fewer requirements are needed to define creativity the standard definition provides suitable requirements for what creativity is. It is important to note here that both terms are relative and in the context of a seventh-grade classroom originality is not being defined as a breakthrough in the area of art in general, but relative to individual, age, and experience. It is not possible to avoid a solution you are not aware of and it is a certainty that the creative solutions devised in the middle school classroom will bear some resemblance to existing works. Additionally, effectiveness is important to note as Runco (2012) states:

Originality is vital for creativity but is not sufficient. Ideas and products that are merely original might very well be useless. They may be unique or uncommon for good reason! Originality can be found in the word salad of a psychotic and can be produced by monkeys on word processors. A truly random process will often generate something that is merely original. (p.92)

While the placement of random pictures in a collage or random scribbling may be unique in some ways, they lack the intention necessary to be effective.
Many practices aimed at the development of creativity are note the work of psychologist Carl Rogers. Rogers (1961), describes creativity as “the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other.” (p.350) This definition makes clear that creativity, particularly artistic creativity, has a social component meaning it happens as a result of the creator’s interaction with the outside world or their individual context and does not emanate solely from their individual genius, as has sometimes been suggested.

The understanding that creativity is dependent on social and domain-specific knowledge is supported by Csikszentmihalyi, (Csikszemtmahalyi in Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005) who describes creativity as not happening in the head but in the interaction between a person’s thoughts and a sociocultural context. He also notes that a person cannot be creative in a domain they haven’t been exposed to, (Csikszentmihalyi in Anderson & Milbrandt 2005, p. 66).

Anderson and Milbrandt go on to surmise that creativity is “an individual’s reaction to, extension of, or reinterpretation of social constructs” (p.66). A creative act then is a response to something experienced or understood by the individual and is relative to the context in which they are creating artwork. For most students this would be their school, social circle, and art class. Anderson and Mibrandt state:

In this social context, creativity occurs when an individual student (or group of students), using the symbols and procedures established in the domain of art, has a new idea, or sees a new pattern that is acknowledged by the significant others in the environment as being novel or creative. (p.66)

Understanding that creativity is relative to the context is important helping students understand, discuss, and evaluate their own work as well as the works of other. They are not seeking to create
an artwork in a completely new way or express something completely novel. The goal of creativity in the classroom is to apply the tools domain specific skills of art to communicate their ideas, feelings, and observations in a way that is unique to their personal experiences.

In order to construct problems that encourage the development of creativity it is important to understand the continuum of problem solving and the thought processes that are applied to solving the different problems that fall along that continuum. Kay (1998), describes problems to be solved as existing on a continuum going from open problems to closed problems. She says says:

Problem finding involves the formulation of a problem prior to the actions taken to solve the problem. In this circumstance, the solution to the problem is directed by the choices made by the individual in his or her chosen definition of the problem. (p.271)

Kay (1998) continues to describe that problems existing on the most open end of the spectrum are those like the problems an artist in the studio discovers and solves. Developing and solving these types of problems uses creative thinking. She also describes how problems on the most closed end of the problem continuum are defined problems with a specific correct answer. The thought process used to solve these types of problems is convergent thinking. Logical thinking occurs when the problem is well defined and must be solved and is used to solve problems that exist closer to the closed end of the spectrum. While divergent thinking is the process of developing multiple solutions to a defined problem that is open to interpretation. This thought process is used when solving problems that are more on the open end of the spectrum. Critical thinking is the thought process which is used to evaluate problems and solutions in order to determine the process required to solve a problem or the efficacy of a solution. Villalba (2011) describes the relationship between critical thinking and the creative process:

It is generally accepted that creative thinking also entails convergent and critical thinking. While divergent thinking involves the generation of ideas, convergent thinking refers to
the capacity to provide a single (or few) adequate idea(s). Creativity is usually associated with the capacity to produce something new and adequate. Divergent thinking would be needed to generate ideas, and convergent thinking would be used for choosing adequate ideas. Critical thinking can be considered as part of convergent thinking. It involves the evaluation, analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of something to provide a judgement. Critical thinking thus provides the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of choosing one idea. (p.840)

It is clear from this analysis that each of these types of thought are applied at different times throughout the creative process.

**The Characteristics of Creative People**

Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) describe Csikszentmihalyi’s “Ten Paradoxical Qualities” of creative people. This list was not compiled to exclude or excuse students who don’t possess these qualities, but instead provides an outline of creative behaviors that can be encouraged in art classes in order to help students develop their creative abilities. The characteristics shared by creative people provide a blueprint to help students develop their creativity. Specifically, Anderson and Milbrandt, (2005) described how these ten paradoxical characteristics may be beneficial to consider while designing a classroom climate that is conducive to creativity (p.68).

**Creative People Can be Motivated and Lazy**

Creative people will frequently work diligently and with intense focus for extended periods of time. They may also go through frequent or extended periods of being off-task or relaxed. It isn’t uncommon for ideas to form during this “lazy” period. Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) recommend introducing topics well in advance of starting projects in class so that students’ ideas may incubate, and they can reflect, sketch, and plan while they construct their current project. They encourage allowing for downtime for students, but also suggest being mindful of what is possibly constructive downtime and what may be a sign of issues with a student or indefinite work avoidance.
**Creative People Can be Smart and Naïve**

Creativity requires a certain level of understanding within the domain, in which, a person is creating. Frequently, the cognitive skills most valued in K-12 education are those easily measured by standardized tests. This type of intelligence is required to understand a domain or discipline; however, divergent thinking is required to try new ideas. The naivete, or arrogance to try something that seems absurd to most people and stick with it is necessary to creative actions.

**Creative People Can be Playful and Disciplined**

Creating a unique and original work of art requires the ability to engage, brainstorm, and experiment. Developing and exploring questions without trying to force an answer is a hallmark of the creative process. However, being able to play with ideas isn’t much use if one isn’t disciplined enough to construct a product from the idea. Both of these attributes are necessary for creative people to create work, rather than just imagining it. Creating an environment that is conducive to these traits is much simpler than actually developing them in students. To encourage these attributes large themes with multiple possible entry points such as identity, community, and memory should be explored with several small assignments before students create a larger final project. Students can be required to sketch out or experiment with multiple solutions, but they will often complete the required number with minimal effort so it’s important to explore the topic with more detailed assignments before it is addressed with a long-term project.

**Creative People Can be Imaginative and Realistic**

Creative people often balance the world of fantasy and imagination with reality. It is through the most remote connections between unlike ideas that the most unique solutions result. For students to be able to develop these traits teachers must let go of their personal tastes. The
fantasies, dreams, and subconscious images of students must be allowed in their work, especially if they don’t conform to the instructors’ tastes regarding art. Contemporary art is reliant on the artists’ context. To encourage true creativity and authentic art-making students must be allowed to create work that comes from their personal experience, even and perhaps especially if that experience is steeped in pop culture, cartoons, or anime. Challenging established tastes in art is a tradition that has strong roots from the modern period and extends into contemporary art. Instructors have to help students approach these ideas subjects through the lens of concept to develop creative expressions of their ideas.

**Creative People Can be Extroverted and Introverted**

Art like most creative disciplines is both solitary and social. Artists need time to themselves to work through ideas and develop work, and so may seem introverted while they focus. The art isn’t complete though until it’s been seen. Working in relative solitude is necessary to complete work, but the work exists in a social context. People can solve a problem better as a group than any of the individuals could. Regardless of if the artist agrees with the people, they discuss their work with or not they refine their ideas by discussing them. As long as the environment for these discussions is positive and respectful, discussions can act as the stone an artist sharpens their ideas against.

**Creative People Can be Humble and Proud**

Creative people are both proud of their accomplishments and abilities and willing to step aside and allow others to take the lead when necessary. They are able to apply their abilities within the group’s vision of a creative endeavor rather than impose their own ideas, aesthetics, or values on it. Anderson and Milbrand (2005), point to collaborative murals as an example of this. A group of people cannot all work in the style of one member to create a work that represents
their singular style and vision. The group will have a style of its own that allows for all of its members to accomplish a task they would not be able to accomplish alone.

**Creative People May Not Adhere to Gender Norms**

Studies have shown that creative boys and girls are less likely to adhere as strictly to typical gender stereotypes. Boys will often be more sensitive and girls more assertive, than the average given their gender. To promote creativity a classroom must be accepting of individuals whose behavior diverges from what some might consider typical gender norms.

**Creative People Can be Rebellious and Adherent**

Artists are known for being rebellious and taking risks, but they are also known for their ability to work collaboratively. Artists, even avant-garde artists, are often well versed in traditional media and forms. Creativity requires both the understanding of a domain and the willingness to question and bend the rules to make something new. In order to develop creativity, an art curriculum must develop domain-specific knowledge and traditional skills while providing avenues for creative risk-taking.

**Creative People Can be Passionate and Objective**

Creating good art requires the artist to be passionate about what they are making, but also that they are able to look at their work objectively in order to refine and develop their craft, clarify their message, and generally improve their work. Students are naturally self-conscious about their work and vulnerable to criticism. Care is needed to guide them to an understanding of how they can best improve.

**Creative People Can be Sensitive to Joy and Suffering**

Creative people are known for being open and sensitive. This openness while it may allow some to feel more deeply the joys in life and the act of creating is for most artists an
enjoyable or joyful experience, it is also likely that they experience feelings of pain and suffering more deeply as well. History is filled with examples of artists who were known to take criticism of their work exceptionally hard and who suffered in their lives. To foster creativity, it is important to allow students to bask in the joy of creative expression, by giving them ample time to research, explore and experiment within their work. Constructive criticism should also be given with kindness and artistic accomplishments readily acknowledged.

Fostering a Creative Classroom Environment

The development of creativity can be facilitated by establishing a conducive classroom culture. It is important to understand that creativity can’t be forced. Rogers, (1961) states that creativity can be “fostered by setting up conditions of psychological safety, and freedom.” (p.357) By creating an environment where these psychological needs are met it becomes more likely that an individual’s creativity can emerge. In order to foster a feeling of psychological safety, Rogers (1961) names three principles: accepting the individual as of unconditional worth, providing a climate in which external evaluation is absent, and understanding empathically. He states that in order for an individual to have psychological freedom, they must have complete freedom of symbolic expression. In other words, they must be allowed to use any imagery they believe effectively conveys their intended meaning.

Classroom Management for the Creative Curriculum

In order to facilitate a creative classroom environment these needs must be integrated with the classroom’s management system. Marzno and Marzono (2003) state that classroom management was shown to have the highest impact on student achievement when compared to 228 other variables. While there is not an exact correlation between student’s ability to learn and be creative intuitively it would seem that creativity does have many of the same requirements as
learning. Additionally, Marzano and Marzano (2003) state that “the quality of teacher-student relationships is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management.” (p.1). They continue to outline the factors that contribute to student-teacher relationships and list appropriate levels of dominance, clear expectations and consequences, clear learning goals, assertive behavior, appropriate levels of cooperation, providing flexible learning goals, taking a personal interest in students, equitable and positive classroom behaviors, and awareness of high-needs students. These factors and the student’s needs for creativity can be organized into the categories of clear behavior expectations, empathetic Understanding, and clear and engaging learning goals and expectations in order to facilitate the development of a classroom management system that encourages student’s creative growth.

**Clear Behavior Expectations**

Safety is essential to foster the characteristic of creative people referenced by Anderson and Milbrand (2005). It is near impossible for learning, let alone creative expression, to take place when student isn’t confident that they are physically safe. Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) note that most of the creative blocks that students face are social in nature. They include things like fear of making mistakes, and fear of being criticized. They explicitly state that “The art teacher needs to recognize the social context of creativity and create a safe, fostering environment.” (p.74) In order to create a safe environment for creative development and learning there must be clear expectations and consequences for learning that will allow students to know their physical and psychological safety will be protected. This requires what Marzano and Marzano (2003), referencing Wubbels, Brekelmand, Van Trarwijk, & Admiral (1999) describe as appropriate dominance:

an appropriate characteristic of effective teacher-student relationships. In contrast to the more negative connotation of the term *dominance* as forceful control or command over
others, they define dominance as the teacher’s ability to provide clear purpose and strong guidance in both academics and student behavior.

According to Marzono and Marzono (2003) appropriate dominance concerns establishing clear expectations and consequences, establishing clear learning goals, and exhibiting assertive behavior. Expectations must be explicitly clear as must the consequences. Assertiveness according to Marzono and Marzono (2003) is neither aggressive nor passive and is primarily concerned with how the rules are enforced. Assertiveness describes enforcement of expectations that is done calmly but firmly. By applying the appropriate level of dominance in a class and enforcing the rules and consequences in an assertive manor, students can be assured that they will be treated fairly and that their right to learn, as well as their psychological safety will be protected in the art classroom.

**Empathetic Understanding**

Rogers (1961) as well as Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) state that artistic creativity is far more likely to occur in an environment where students feel a sense of safety. Rules and procedures should provide students with a reasonable sense of physical safety and some level of psychological safety, but a strong teacher-student relationship is necessary to establish psychological safety in the truest sense. Marzono and Marzono (2003) state that “effective student-teacher relationships don’t have anything to do with the teacher’s personality or even whether the students view the teacher as a friend.” (p.2) A teacher’s behavior toward students isn’t based on liking or disliking them as friendships are. It is knowing understanding and caring for students and demonstrating that through behaviors that make it clear. This goes hand in hand with one of the means for facilitating creativity prescribed by Rogers (1961), accepting the individual as having unconditional worth. He describes this as “recognizing the potential of the
individual and having faith in their growth no matter their current state.” (p.357) By doing this, students are given the safety to discover and be themselves.

To truly fully convey that a student is understood to have unconditional worth in a teacher eyes they must be understood empathetically. Taking a personal interest in students is the first step in understanding empathetically which Rogers (1961) describes as providing the ultimate psychological safety:

If I say that I “accept” you, but know nothing of you, this is a shallow acceptance indeed, and you realize that it may change if I actually come to know you. But if I understand you empathetically, see you and what you are feeling and doing from your point of view, enter your private world and see it as it appears to you – and still accept you that is safety indeed. In this climate you can permit your real self to emerge, and express itself in varied and novel formings as it relates to the world. This is a basic fostering of creativity. (p.358)

Teacher interactions with students that demonstrate a teacher has a personal interest in them, and their success are described by Marzono and Marzono 2003. A teacher may take time to talk with students outside of class or during lunch. They may also make an effort to be aware of student’s accomplishments in their extracurricular activities and be aware of other important events in their lives. One of the simplest ways for a teacher to show this is to greet students by name as the enter class. Marzono and Marzono (2003), also describe more subtle behaviors that teacher may show care and concern for students. They can be intentional in making eye contact, make sure move around the room and stand near each student. They should also give credit for student’s ideas and encourage all students to participate in class. As students become more comfortable in class and share more it is important that teachers continue to engage with them. The subjects and ideas presented in student work are an excellent avenue for developing the student teacher relationship and demonstrating empathetic understand of students.

Marzono and Marzono (2003) also describe how an awareness of high-needs students builds relationships. Though what they prescribe is how teachers respond to their awareness of
their high-needs student’s issues. They describe how being aware of different student’s needs and working with them to develop and execute a variety of strategies helps improve student outcomes. This is another way that classroom management when applied properly creates a classroom where students are understood empathetically, and their unconditional worth validated. An example from Marzono and Marzano (2003) is their recommendation for addressing the needs of students who have a fear of relationships or a fear of failure. They recommend that a teacher who is aware of this provide safe interactions with peers and teachers and coach them in how to use positive self-talk and being assertive.

**Clear Goals and Expectations**

Clear expectations for work are also an important part of classroom management. Marzono and Marzano (2003) describe this as another way that teacher exhibit appropriate dominance, consequently building relationships and encouraging student achievement. They describe the important of establishing goals, providing feedback, revisiting goals, and providing summative feedback. Art educators must strike a balance between clear work expectations and creative freedom. If the goal is to encourage creative growth, then the emphasis should be on the former rather than the later. This balance can be established by crafting goals that encourage authentic engagement in the creative process through the creation of personally relevant artworks.

**Personally Relevant Curriculum**

In order for student’s artwork to be authentic it needs to be personally relevant. A personally relevant art curriculum will be developmentally suited to student’s technical ability and will engage them in themes that allow them to explore and express ideas that are relevant to their personal lives. Gude (2007) says “The essential contribution that arts education can make to
our students and our communities is to teach skills and concepts while creating opportunities to investigate and represent one’s own experiences-generating personal and shared meaning.” (p.6) It must also address student’s different ability levels, which in most schools will vary greatly, and may not necessarily be contingent on previous class experience.

In seventh grade the majority students will be in what Kerlavage (1998) describes as the artistic challenges stage of their development. She explains that this stage often marks the end of student’s art education and that at this stage of creative development children are extremely concerned with developing the skills to create art. She describes how this time can be a struggle for many students:

Greater attention to proportion and action, an understanding of three-dimensional spaces, realistic use of color, and development of an aesthetic concept of design are characteristic of the stage of artistic challenges. In an attempt to become more proficient in these areas, students set standards for what they consider good art. As a result, many individuals face an artistic crisis at this time involving a lack of self-confidence in their ability to produce work that meets those standards. (p.54)

In order to prevent this type of crisis she recommends having students track their own artistic growth rather than comparing themselves with others.

Students interest in creating realistic representations of the world at this stage is based on their belief that good art is defined by characteristic. They are especially interested in drawing the human form and faces and prefer drawing from a reference rather than from imagination. This means it is important to support and encourage these efforts, but to also encourage explorations into more expressive approaches.

Kerlavage (1998) explains that conceptually, students at this stage begin to move away from narrative art and want to make artwork that is more expressive; dealing with subjects like social issues, world views, and emotions. Exploring these themes and expressing them should be encouraged by allowing time for research and exploration. They are also interested in learning to
use as many materials and techniques as possible and benefit from time spent experimenting with a wide variety of them.

**A Stimulating Environment**

Authentic artwork isn’t a symbolic reinterpretation of what is already known. As Gude (2013) explains “good art projects are not assignments to illustrate or symbolize a theme” (p.7.) Students need space to explore and experiment using a variety of materials in a space that visually and conceptually stimulating. Gude (2007) also describes learning begins with play and that all students need time to mess around with various materials without being directed toward mastering a technique or solving a problem. She continues on to explain how students also need to be engaged in conceptual play to develop an understanding that artwork doesn’t always start with a clearly defined goal. Often the artwork evolves out of a process of experimentation or exploration. Amorino describes how research supports the correlation between an individual’s sensory experiences and their creative output (2009):

The primacy of sensory knowing to artistic engagement is well supported by theorists who trace its significance from childhood through adulthood Margaret Mahler (1975) proposes that, beginning in utero and extending throughout childhood, rapidly evolving, highly sensory-based stimuli provide experience and knowledge Kosslyn (1980) is among those who suggest that children rely mainly on concrete, sensory images for coming to grips with the world Cohen and MacKeith (1992) bring the activity of play into the discussion, asserting that it stems from a need for kinesthetic activity and the stimulation of the sense of touch (e g running, jumping, and mucking around in the sand) Aside from these contentions, one need only watch a child joyfully splashing in the water, eagerly reaching for colorful objects, reacting happily to the taste of ice cream, or moving in rhythm to a song, to find sensory-impelled, emotionally charged, expressive activity In line with this thinking, Joan Mowatt Erikson (1985) presents a particularly compelling argument for the primacy of sensory knowing and its relevancy to the creative intellect. (p. 217)

In addition to sensory stimuli Amorino (2009) traces the path from sensory stimuli to emotional response:
based upon the majority of findings, it is reasonable to conclude that sensory stimulation is most likely followed by (or perhaps integrated with) emotional response William James (1884) supports a close correlation between sensory and emotional phenomenon when he writes, “My theory … is that bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting facts, and that our feeling of the same changes IS the emotion” According to Izard (1993), emotions are the “primary motivational system for all levels of behavior, including free drive exploration and creativity” Heinz Werner (1978) is among those who draw direct linkages between sensory engagement, emotional reaction, and resultant visual symbols, each of which is “through and through a work of art”). (p.218)

This makes clear that in order to authentically engage students in the artistic process sensory, or emotional stimuli should be what initiates the learning and art making processes either by assigning a prompt or by encouraging students to select a subject that personally relevant to them.

**Encouraging Expression and Communication**

It was previously noted that the inability to express the more complex social and emotional experiences was a factor in adolescents losing interest in art. Developing the tools to express the deeper emotional experiences of adolescents is an essential part of engaging students in the creative process. This entails instruction in meaning making strategies, open ended tasks based on generative themes, and instruction in the technical aspects of artmaking so that they can be integrated into the artistic process. Amorino (2009) describes the artistic process as a cycle:

This process unfolds within the “domain of human experience,” which includes psychological, social, and cultural components, each of which has a continual impact on the senses and emotions of the individual. This complex may be visualized as an “Artistic Impetus Model” which necessarily (or generally) begins with sensory stimulation, is followed by emotional response, and leads to an expressive impulse. Once the expressive impulse has been evoked, it plays itself out through a kinesthetic engagement with provided materials. This engagement with materials introduces the added ingredient of media, which incites further sensory stimulation, thereby re-igniting the process at its point of origin and initiating a second, cyclical series of events. As this circular procedure continues to repeat itself, it is further regulated by cognitive intervention, which contributes to the formalistic decisions about the work at hand. (p.218)
This model explains the cyclical process into which teachers can incorporate the necessary concepts that will allow student to as Gude (2013) states,

skillfully and creatively utilize available materials, tools, technologies, critical theories and contexts to introduce students to a wide-range of developmentally appropriate aesthetic practices—means of artmaking based in particular methodologies of experiencing, producing, making meaning, and interpreting. (p.7)

It is important that art educators build students expressive capacities by in these areas facilitating an understanding of meaning-making strategies, art making methods, problem finding and solving strategies in the context of generative themes in order for students to properly translate the expressive impulse into kinesthetic action.

Evaluation

While evaluating student work is usually required, educators must be careful to do so in a way that is free of judgement. “External evaluation is always a threat,” (p.357) says Rogers (1961) who defines external evaluation as a determination of good or bad but draws a distinction between evaluation and personal preference which is to like or dislike an idea. Rogers continues to describe how someone’s progress toward becoming creative may be limited if they feel they can not admit they like something that has been evaluated as good or admit that something represents something of themselves if it is evaluated as bad. In short if one is feels they must be concerned with what others think they are likely to be preoccupied to decide if what they create truly represents themselves which will make it more difficult for them to be creative.

Evaluation in a classroom that is focused on developing creativity requires nuance, so as not to infringe on the student’s psychological safety or freedom. It seems impossible a teacher could give grades without subjecting a student to external judgement, but it’s important to distinguish between requirements and value. Grading based on requirements should be done impersonally. Grades shouldn’t be based on things like “creativity” or technical skill, instead
they should be based on a student’s application of a concept. For example, “uses and explains symbolism in work” or “effectively uses composition” are based on objective teachable ideas that are ways of expressing creativity and communicating an idea.

**Building the Creative Curriculum: Strategies and Models**

Numerous approaches have been created to develop student’s creativity. The following model is based on several of the common elements from strategies that have shown success; generative personally relevant themes, meaning-making strategies, and authentic engagement in the artistic process. The Art Impetus Model, Amorino (2009), Teaching Meaning in Art Making, Walker (2001) and Art for Life, Anderson, T & Milbrandt, M (2005) all describe the development of generative and personally relevant themes as a means, or investigations into relevant issues to inspire students art production. Meaning-making strategies are prescribed by Gude’s (2004) *Post-Modern Principles* is paired with more commonly known meaning making strategies. The Studio Habits of Mind provide a structure for the thought processes and areas of practice that guide these explorations. Each of these models describe parts of the what, how, and why of the curriculum. Together they form the structure of a curriculum that infuses classroom artmaking with creative development.

**Generative Themes**

Themes are a common entry point for artmaking assignments as they provide a direction for artistic inquiry without restricting the possible symbolic expression of students. However, not all themes are created equally. Students are often asked to create an artwork that represents happiness, play, or community. These are better identified as “big ideas” as defined by Waker (2001):

Big ideas- broad, important human issues- are characterized by complexity, ambiguity, contradiction, and multiplicity. Whether stated as single terms, phrases, or complete statements,
big ideas do not completely explicate an idea, but represent a host of concepts that form the idea. For example, the term conflict may represent a number of concepts, such as power, personal and social values, justice and injustice, and winners and losers. (p.1)

Walker (2001) recommends constructing units that use big ideas as guide; using guiding questions and activities to explore them.

An example of how big ideas can be misused in the classroom is discussed by Gude (2007), who describes how quality projects based around identity can help students form that identity by asking them to explore how their sense of self is related to their family, social and media experiences. She laments that:

Unfortunately, many projects in art classrooms do not actually promote expanded self-awareness because students are directed to illustrate or symbolize known aspects of self-identity, rather than being encouraged to consider themselves in new ways through investigating content that is often overlooked or taken for granted. (p.8)

Gude, states that “Authentic insight into self is more likely promoted through indirect means, asking students to reflect and recall experiences through making art.” (p.8) She recommends assignments like designing trophies for labels that have been assigned to them or depicting a least liked body part. These more directed prompts that lead students to explore how they personally or how other individuals have experienced or experience the more concrete themes or “big ideas” like power, or community without limiting their symbolic expression are examples of generative themes.

For students who have lost confidence in their art-making abilities or whose artmaking experiences in school have been limited to cookie cutter assignments it will likely be necessary for them to build to more conceptually challenging themes. Amorino’s (2001) Art impetus model is an excellent example of the gradual development of student’s ability to address increasingly more challenging conceptual ideas in their work. This process is intended to reawaken artistic
expression in adolescents. It was developed, by Amorino (2009), as an antidote to the decline of artistic expression that commonly occurs in late childhood.

He begins with simple directly observed objects and moves to more complex ones. Through this process, the students become familiar with creating work based on their senses. In the following stages, the students are guided through increasingly complex generative themes, based on student’s memories and dealing with big ideas such as personal identity or history and culminating in a self-portrait. This system is a model for conceptual scaffolding leading to self-directed idea generation and artmaking.

Through participation in the study the students developed their technical and conceptual artmaking abilities. Amorino (2009) argues that their technical skills develop out of the necessity created by the student’s personal ideas. By beginning with the inspiration for the work he was able to engage the students authentically in the creative process. They were not engaged in a rehearsal of artmaking by practicing skills disassociated from their purpose nor were they simply told to be creative and given materials, as he decried in his observations of faulty practices in art education. He demonstrated that art can and should be thought of and taught as a practice. It is something that is learned by doing and can’t be fully understood if it is divorced from its purpose.

**Meaning-making Strategies**

In the current postmodern era, artists are free to use any and all techniques as they have been employed throughout the history of art. Strategies such as gesture, focal point, and expression are well known and have been employed by artists for thousands of years but postmodern principles as described by Gude (2004) are more recent in nature. These methods of creating meaning are derived from modern and contemporary artists and movements. Contemporary artists frequently use these approaches in their work, as the name implies.
Gude proposes a curriculum based on generative themes and diverse contemporary practices. As an entry point to contemporary practices she proposes the postmodern principles. While these principles are not an exhaustive list, they provide a starting point for the exploration of contemporary art strategies that could be used in addition to themes to help students create meaning in their artwork. Her list includes appropriation, recontextualization, juxtaposition, layering, interaction of text and image, gazing, hybridity, and representin’(sic).

The post-modern principles describe ways of combining images and approaching ideas to create meaning in artworks. Several of these principles apply to the way in which different images are used and combined. Appropriation for example, is the use of already existing intellectual property in a new context to create new meaning. It is frequently used in contemporary work as a means of critiquing ideas, societal memes, mores, and values. Recontextualization is another meaning-makings strategy that utilizes a familiar subject, but places that subject in a new context to change meaning. Juxtaposition refers to the combination of images in a jarring or surprising way. When using text as a component of the artwork, the artwork includes text that interacts with the image rather than describing the or being illustrated by the it. The text and image together have a different meaning than either of them would have separately. The last principle Gude lists dealing specifically with how images are combined is layering. Layering is the combination of images by layering one on top of another. This effect can be created using a variety of techniques but is used to demonstrate a relationship between the images often depicting disparate events simultaneously. These principles are tools that can be explicitly taught to students. Understanding these strategies gives students the tools express deeper or more personal ideas in a meaningful way.
Gazing, Hybridity, and Representin(sic) are more complex terms that do not necessarily deal with how to combine images. Rather, they deal with a set of ideas, or ways of thinking about certain ideas. For example, gazing describes the creation of art that makes the viewer aware of who makes and creates the imagery we commonly consume and how it affects us. Representin(sic) is the creation of artwork that is based upon one’s personal history and culture. Hybridity refers dually to a way of creating or combining images using a combination of new, old, and mixed media, and to the blending of cultural elements within artworks. These are more complex ideas, that would be difficult to teach explicitly to middle school students but could inform the selection of generative themes for their work.

Engaging in the Creative Process

The studio habits of mind are eight habits that are taught in the most effective art classrooms. Hetland, Winner, Veneema, and Sheridan (2013) discuss how these habits are developed as a result of effective art instruction through the four studio structures; demonstration-lecture, students-at-work, critique, and exhibition. The habits include; understanding art worlds, stretch and explore, reflect, develop craft, engage and persist, envision, and observe. The studio habits provide a framework for understanding the most effective methods for art instruction and making the sometimes-hidden benefits of that education explicit. The studio habits can be framed as objectives to give clarity and focus to classroom activities and instruction. Practicing these habits in the context of the four studio structures authentically engages students in the creative process through their artmaking.

A 7th Grade Curriculum to Foster Creativity

A creativity-centered curriculum for seventh-grade will incorporate the development of technical skills and meaning-making strategies as they are applied to artistic expression through
the exploration of generative themes. The artmaking activities will be conducted in a classroom environment that ensures the psychological safety and freedom of the learners through a classroom management plan that places them at the highest priority and through interactions and discussions that seek to understand students empathetically and demonstrate acceptance. Through the development of a creative culture and open ended personally relevant assignments students will develop their creative abilities through authentic engagement in the creative process.

Classroom management combined with conversations that facilitate empathetic understanding are imperative to the development of a creative culture. A classroom management plan must be explicitly clear in its purpose and consequences. The purpose being to protect each student’s right to learn and be creative and what that means. The consequences being the steps that will be taken to protect those rights. In order to promote a culture of safety and trust these must be sacrosanct.

Conversations that facilitate empathetic understanding go hand in hand with classroom management because the opinions, and ideas expressed in artwork as well as the symbolic representation that students choose will not become deeper and more personal if earlier attempts are met with any sort of ridicule or disrespect. It is important that respectful and constructive dialogue be taught explicitly prior to conversations and that these standards be upheld throughout class discussions. Teacher’s discussions with students must also demonstrate empathetic understand and acceptance of students based on what is learned from them. All students must see through their interactions with their teacher and peers that they will be understood and respected.

A creative culture requires opportunities for creative expression to thrive. In order to facilitate this the initial units will include broad but approachable subjects paired with
appropriate meaning-making strategies and skills. As Amorino (2009) noted, the inability to express the more complex emotions and ideas that are inherent in middle school it is important that students receive direct instruction in the techniques and strategies giving them the skills necessary to produce meaningful artworks. To accomplish this early units will teach basic technical skills paired with different meaning-making strategies pulled from Gude’s (2004) post-modern principles. For these assignments potential ideas and themes will be suggested but not required in order to allow students the more creative freedom. Following the lessons on subjects and meaning-making strategies students will be presented with a series of generative themes. After viewing examples of artworks that deal with these themes or ideas students will create their own artwork using the strategies and subjects of their choice. These themes will become increasingly complex and open ended as students move through the units. The ultimate goal being for them to be able to select an idea or topic that addresses a big idea of their choosing; then research, explore and create personal artwork that addresses it.

**Unit 1: Symbolism, Observational Drawing, and Identity**

In this unit students are introduced to techniques for improving their drawing from observation as well as the use of symbolism to create meaning. They will apply and practice observational drawing to create a series of drawings based on a self-selected theme. For the final artwork they will create an artwork that uses symbolism to convey something about their personal identity. These exercises open students up to the idea of how objects may have deeper meaning in an artwork. Students will also develop their drawing skills and increase confidence in their ability to develop their technical skills for artmaking. As they work the teacher should discuss with them the objects that they choose to include and why. This is a low risk way for students to begin sharing things about themselves and an opportunity for the teacher to
demonstrate empathetic understanding and acceptance. The discussion should be kept positive or steered toward how and what the artwork communicates and if that is consistent with the idea regardless of the teacher’s feelings about the student’s chosen topic, like video games, or hunting. This is an opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate that they accept the student for who they are regardless of if they share common ground. So long as a work of art doesn’t attach or harm another student or effect their ability to learn and be creative in the classroom it should be allowed as far as school policy will permit.

**Unit 2: Places and Layering**

Following a demonstration and practice session on drawing interior and exterior spaces and showing depth, students create a series of faster drawings of places that are important to them. Following the creation of these drawings, students are introduced to the meaning-making strategy of layering. For their final artwork of the unit students are asked to apply layering to the creation of an artwork that expresses something about their relationship to one or more of the important places they chose to draw. Again, the new skill is combined with a strategy for creating meaning, are taught and applied. It is important to discuss with students how they choose to apply the technique and what they are conveying as they work. These discussions can lead to realizations for the student and provide another opportunity for the teacher to demonstrate they acceptance of the student. Many students will find ways to meet the assignment requirements without revealing anything about themselves. This should be allowed. Forcing a student to share memories or ideas is neither possible nor helpful, if the goal is to increase student’s perception of themselves as creative. The process should be as much as possible a positive one in which they create and share work and are validated for their efforts. Criticizing
the work for not being deep enough will only show students that what they did share is not good enough and discourage them from sharing anything more.

**Unit 3: Faces, Expressions, and Text**

In faces, expressions, and text students learn how to draw the proportions of the face and facial features and practice drawing a variety of different look faces and expressions. Following this they are introduced to the interaction of text and images as a way to create meaning in an artwork. After viewing and discussing exemplary artworks students create their own, which must use facial expressions and text in combination with any other techniques or strategies they like to convey an idea. Several topics for their artwork are suggested before they begin. Again, as students are working it is important for the teacher to discuss their choices and ideas with them while giving encouragement and demonstrating a willingness to know and accept them as they learn more about them through discussion and the artwork they create.

**Unit 4: Figure, Gesture, and Expressive Style**

In figures, expressive mark, and style students learn basic techniques for creating more realistic drawings of people with a variety of gestures. They will then explore several artworks by Post-Impressionists and Expressionist art movements and discuss how they used expressive mark and stylization to convey their ideas. For their final artwork the students will be asked to create their own artwork that includes at least one person and employs expressive stylization and mark to convey their idea. Several potential ideas will be given but again the students will be able to choose their own idea or topic. They may also use any other meaning-making strategies they would like to enhance their idea.
Unit 5: Juxtaposition and Recontextualization

In the juxtaposition and recontextualization unit, students are no longer required to use any set subject in their work. Their personal control of the artwork is increased so more scaffolding to help them develop ideas may be necessary. For this unit they will view artwork that demonstrates the use of juxtaposition and recontextualization to create meaning. From these discussions, students will develop an understanding of what juxtaposition and recontextualization are before applying the techniques to their own artwork. Following the completion of their pieces they will describe their idea and how they created it in a short artist statement followed by a class discussion.

Unit 6: Appropriation and Parody

For the appropriation and parody unit students will begin again by discussing examples of the techniques and discuss how the artists used appropriation and parody as well as what they believe the artists intended message is. Following their discussion students will be asked to create an artwork that uses appropriation or parody to convey an idea or to express a personal belief. This unit continues to add to student’s arsenal of strategies for creating personal artwork. As students choose and begin work on their subject they will engage in discussions with their peers and teacher about the idea they want to express and how well different possible solutions to the assignment will address the issue. This assignment gives students only a small amount of direction to guide their making and allows them almost complete control of their own creative process.

Unit 7: Metaphor and Identity

Metaphor can be a difficult concept for students to grasp, as such this unit is combined with a guiding theme. For this project students will be asked to use metaphor to create an artwork
that describes something about how they view themselves. Examples could be metaphors for what their mind, hands, or heart are like. To make the metaphor clearer students may choose to pull from other meaning-making strategies and they should be invited to use any subject within their work. As students work the teacher should engage in discussions with students and the students should discuss with their peers what they are representing and what they will use to create their metaphor.

**Unit 8: Things I’ve Outgrown**

For the unit’s I’ve outgrown students are asked to create an artwork based on the theme. This theme is open ended, and their artwork could depict anything from toys and games from their childhood to places they used to enjoy. For this assignment students are in complete control of their creative process and may use any strategy, technique, or subject to create their artwork. Now instead of mandating the means by which students will express an open-ended topic is given and they are given a structure for working through the creative process. They will begin by listing things they feel they have outgrown. The topics may be serious or silly, a marker of milestones in their lives or frivolous things they’ve let go over time. Following the creation of their lists each student selects an idea and begins brainstorming how they could represent their relationship to the topic. They then sketch their idea or ideas before discussing the possible solutions with their classmates and teacher. After they have had time to reflect on their idea and make changes they begin to work on the final artwork.

**Unit 9: People or Things I Haven’t Seen in a Long Time**

People or things I haven’t seen in a long time is a theme that continues to reflect on the past but allows students a great deal of freedom in terms of the type of thing they choose to make their artwork about. They could choose something they miss or something they are happy to not
see for a long time. They are free to choose any subject and use any strategy to create their work. The unit begins with a brief brainstorming session and is followed by sketching and reflection independently or with peers. Students are fully engaged in the creative process with limited support in this unit. Artist discussions and material demonstration occur independently from the themed assignment now and students work to develop skills they feel are most important to the development of their artwork.

**Unit 10: What I Value**

What I value is another generative theme. It creates space for personal introspection as the class is asked to think about what is important to them and create an artwork that expresses that. Following this they engage in the creative process to choose the best possible way to combine their ideas and construct meaning using any subject, or strategy. Following the creation of their artwork the students write a short artist statement describing their idea and how they depicted it, before engaging in a peer discussion about their artwork.

**Unit 11: Changes**

Changes is a theme that offers students the chance to consider both past and future changes and by extension their feelings about how the events of the past have affected them and how they hope future events will unfold. To begin the unit students are asked to reflect on the most important changes for their past and what changes they hope will shape their future. Following this brainstorming session, they are asked to begin sketching ideas that describe their feelings about past changes, hopes for future changes, or their feelings about change in general. They will then seek feedback from peers regarding their sketch or sketches and reflect on what they have made so far before beginning a final artwork based on the theme.
Unit 12: Self-Portrait

The final assignment of the year is to create a self-portrait. The only requirement for this unit is that the students express something about themselves. They are free to use any strategy, technique, or material they have available to them. They do not even have to include their likeness in the artwork if they would prefer to work metaphorically.

Conclusion

Engagement in artistic creative expression is extremely beneficial to middle school students, who are navigating major transitions in their lives. Artistic expression is a way for adolescents to process and reflect on their experiences. It is an avenue to express their views and find emotional balance. For many students it can be a way to build confidence and feel a sense of accomplishment. However, these benefits can only help the students who engage in the creative process and find some level of success.

While art may be extremely beneficial to middle school students, middle school is also when many adolescents stop seeing themselves as artistic or creative. The complexity of their lives, feelings, and world view outpace their ability to express them, and most see the realistic representation they believe would make this possible as beyond their abilities. Simultaneously, middle school is a time when students become much more concerned with fitting in. They become more competitive and self-conscious. This makes them much more likely to abandon pursuits they don’t feel they excel in. To address these issues any curriculum that hopes to maintain or reignite artistic creativity in students must offer them a judgment free class environment, and a personally relevant curriculum that instructs them in the use of a visual vocabulary enabling them to express complex feelings and ideas.
The foundation of a creativity centered art curriculum is a supportive and judgement free class environment that provides students with the safety to express themselves without fear of ridicule. It is eminently important that all students know their physical and psychological safety will be protected and that they will be empathetically accepted by their teacher and the class community. Trust in this safety needs to be developed over time. It is important that students be able to enter into the artmaking experience with low risk subjects first so they can develop this level of comfort. This is supported through assignments that focus on exploration of techniques and strategies first and leave subject open choice.

The belief that good art requires photorealistic representation is an idea that needs to be challenged through assignments and examples. The artworks used as examples should feature a variety of different styles and levels of realism. The focus of the early assignments should be on strategies for creating meaning in artwork such as symbolism, and methods for combining images. Through these exercises, students should build confidence and develop an understanding of how to employ visual communication to express complex ideas. Possible themes or topics should be provided with these assignments to support students who struggle with thinking of ideas for what to make. As students acquire more tools for expressing themselves and become increasingly comfortable doing so the class can shift to increasingly complex themes and an explicit focus on the creative process.

Once students are equipped with the tools and techniques to create meaningful work they can be led through the creative process as it is applied to increasingly more complex themes and ideas. These themes should be relevant to the lives of the students and not large abstract ideas in order to be effective. By intentionally creating an accepting and safe classroom environment, teaching meaning making strategies, employing personally relevant themes, and explicitly
teaching the creative process teachers can help students recognize and develop their artistic and creative potential.
References


Appendix A

Unit 1: Symbolism and Identity

Objectives

- Develop observational drawing skills
- Apply observational drawing skills to the creation of series of drawings.
- Understand and apply symbolism to the creation of artwork

Lessons

Contour Line Drawing Exercises

First the term contour line is defined for the class and it is explained that the purpose of these drawings is not to create finished or even accurate drawings but to practice a specific set of skills and improve their hand eye coordination. The tendency of people drawing from observation to look more at their paper instead of closely examining the object is discussed and the tendency of the resulting artwork to look like something halfway between a symbol and the actual object is demonstrated.

Following the explanation students are asked to cup their hands to create deeper wrinkles in their palm. They are then asked to create a blind contour drawing of the lines. They do this by looking only at their hand and following the lines with their eyes while simultaneously tracing that same path with their pencil on the paper. This is done twice as a warmup. The first time for 45 seconds the second for full minute. The students should be reminded that the resulting drawings are not supposed to look like their hands. These are exercises. The difficulty of looking only at the object you are drawing and not looking back at the paper should also be acknowledged.
For the second exercise the students should be asked to repeat the blind contour drawing exercise looking at an object from a still life. It is preferable that this object have organic lines like leaves or petals. This time the students are asked to draw two one-minute blind contour drawings on a separate area of the paper.

For the directed partially blind contour line drawing the students are allowed to stop and look at the page when the instructor calls out stop once every ten to forty-five seconds. While they are looking at their paper, they may readjust their pencils placement, but they aren’t allowed to make any marks. When the teacher says go, they are allowed to continue drawing without looking at their page. The students will complete two drawings filling at least half a page with each. One for five minutes and one for ten.

Self-directed partially blind contour line drawings are the final exercise. They are completed using the same process as the directed contour line drawing, but the students may look at their page as often as they like, however, they still may not make any marks while looking at the paper. Once again, the students should make a five- and ten-minute drawings using this technique. It is important to let students know that this exercise is primarily intended to develop their awareness of where they are looking while they are drawing particularly if they are reaching a high level of frustration.

Symbolism Intro and Artist Discussion

To prepare for the assignment symbolism is explained to the class and they are shown two examples of symbolism being used in an artwork. The students are asked to discuss how they believe Frida Kahlo and Ernie Barnes have used symbolism in their artworks “Self-portrait at the Mexican American border” Figure 1 and “Stored Dreams” Figure 2. Attention will be paid to how different artists arrange objects in their work to convey different meanings.
Figure 1. Self-portrait Along the Boarder Line Between Mexico and the United States. Frida Kahlo. 1932. Image © Frida Kahlo. Published under fair use.

Figure 2. Stored Dreams. Ernie Barnes. 1962-94. Image © Ernie Barnes Family Trust. Published under fair use.
Object Drawing Series

Students will see several demonstrations of how techniques for drawing objects before they select a theme to guide their personal investigations. Some suggestions for themes they may choose could be tools I use, objects from nature, technology, or things I’ve outgrown. Students will then create a series of drawings using their chosen theme as a guide.

Final Artwork

For the Symbolic Objects artwork assignment seventh-grade students depict a collection of personally significant objects to symbolize aspects of their lives and personal identities. Before beginning their final artwork, students are asked to think about how the objects they chose to draw represent them. They are then asked to create an artwork that uses symbolism to convey something meaningful about themselves. Students will be encouraged to use the objects from their themed series in their final artwork but may choose not to. They may also include any other objects or figures they believe will add to the meaning of their work.

Reflection and Critique

Following the creation of their work students will write a brief artist statement before engaging in a peer critique with other class members.

Assessment

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempted</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contour Line Exercises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Artmaking Technique</td>
<td>Few of the exercises are completed</td>
<td>Some of the contour line exercises are completed</td>
<td>All of the contour line Exercises are completed.</td>
<td>Contour line exercises are completed and integrated in a creative manor to create an aesthetically pleasing image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Object Series</td>
<td>Created a series of drawings.</td>
<td>Created five drawings with uncertain relationships.</td>
<td>Created a series of drawings with some functional or aesthetic similarities.</td>
<td>Created a series of drawings that creatively explore an idea, or concept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symbolism Artwork</td>
<td>Artwork contains objects.</td>
<td>Artwork contains objects that represent hobbies, or interests in a superficial way.</td>
<td>Selected and arranged objects to creatively represent important aspects of your personality or life.</td>
<td>Incorporated symbolism within a work of art to represent aspects your life, and personality in a creative and authentic way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Page is partially filled.</td>
<td>Page is mostly filled.</td>
<td>Composition serves the concept or idea.</td>
<td>Composition is used to enhance the mood, feeling, or idea of the artwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
<td>Little attempt was made to develop and execute quality craftsmanship.</td>
<td>Creative ideas is represented with some effort to create a well-crafted image.</td>
<td>Worked toward developing or applied craftsmanship effectively convey the creative concept or idea.</td>
<td>Extensive effort was made to develop craft in service of the artwork or was executed convey the creative idea in the most effective way possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Minimum Writing Requirements</td>
<td>Some questions are answered with proper punctuation</td>
<td>Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation.</td>
<td>All questions are completely answered, with proper punctuation.</td>
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<td>Proper Responses</td>
<td>Responses are brief and do not show a</td>
<td>Responses the meaning of the work or the</td>
<td>Responses describe how the chosen</td>
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<tr>
<td>great deal of thought.</td>
<td>subjects that were choses.</td>
<td>subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.</td>
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Appendix B

Unit 2: Places and Layering

Objectives

- Understand and apply the techniques used to draw places and represent space to the creation of a series of drawings featuring place of personal importance.
- Use layering to create an artwork that expresses why or how one or more of the places you choose to draw are meaningful to you.

Lessons

Drawing places and showing depth demo and practice

The class follows along as the basics of creating a landscape drawing or drawing of an interior space are demonstrated. Following the demonstration students draw a place from imagination that includes at least ten objects.

Drawing important places

Each student selects three places that are important to them and creates a series of faster drawings. The places may be places they have actually been or places they feel are important. The drawings should be made from life or drawn using the closest reference to life that they have. The teacher will give instruction on the use of horizon lines for outside spaces or corners for interiors.

Layering Introduction and Artist Discussion

The students are introduced to the meaning-making strategy layering where multiple images are placed on top of each other to create meaning. After viewing several examples of layering the students look at an example of layering like “Nee Nee” by Caldonia Curry AKA Swoon Figure
4. The students discuss what they think is going in the image and what they see that makes them see that.

**Final Artwork**

For their final artwork the students will be asked to create an image containing one or more of the places from their sketches and employ layering as a means to convey a meaning, mood, or idea. Examples of topics artwork could potentially address may be memories that make the chosen place important to them or hopes for the future. When using laying students can make room for coincidence and ambiguity in their work. The option of reimagining the place or introducing stylistic choices should be offered. It would also be fair to allow students with a different idea of how to apply the layering technique to choose a different subject.

**Reflection and Critique**

Following the creation of their artwork students will create a short artist statement and discuss their work in a peer critique.

Figure 3. Nee Nee. Swoon AKA Caledonia Curry. 2012. Image © Caledonia Curry. Published under fair use.
### Assessment

<table>
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<th>Met</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
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<td><strong>Used Artmaking Technique</strong></td>
<td>Created a drawing with at least one method for showing depth</td>
<td>Created a drawing with two methods for showing depth.</td>
<td>Created a drawing that used all three basic methods for showing depth.</td>
<td>Created a drawing that used at least all three methods for showing depth effectively to create a believable and detailed scene or demonstrated extensive effort.</td>
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<td><strong>Important Places Drawing Series</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personally important places drawings</strong></td>
<td>Drew fewer than three places</td>
<td>Drew three places with some attention and though.</td>
<td>Drew three important places with careful attention to depth and composition.</td>
<td>Drew more than three important places or applied effort and skill that exceeds expectations to create the work.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Places and Layering Final Artwork</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Layering Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Combined at least one image with an important place.</td>
<td>Combined an image with an image of an important place to show some relationship.</td>
<td>Combined an image of a place with one or more images creatively to communicate a new meaning or describe their relationship.</td>
<td>Combined a place with one or more images in a creative way to convey a personally meaningful idea, narrative, or belief.</td>
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<td>Composition serves the concept or idea.</td>
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<td>Craft</td>
<td>Made some effort to develop craft.</td>
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<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Writing Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Some questions are answered with proper punctuation</td>
<td>Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation.</td>
<td>All questions are completely answered, with proper punctuation.</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proper Responses</strong></td>
<td>Responses are brief and do not show a great deal of thought.</td>
<td>Responses the meaning of the work or the subjects that were choses.</td>
<td>Responses describe how the chosen subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Unit 3: Faces, Expression, and Text

For this unit students will develop their ability to draw faces with expression and explore how the interaction between text and image can create new meanings within a work of art.

Objectives

- Learn to draw faces using basic proportions.
- Draw faces with different expressions.
- Use the interaction of text and image and facial expression to create meaning in a work of art.

Lessons

*Five faces practice*

The class is shown how to layout the proportions of the face and draw the features from a front view. As each feature is demonstrated the class draws along to create a face on their own. After the draw along practice is completed the students each create four more additional drawings while attempting to make each face as unique as possible.

*Expression Practice*

The class is shown how to draw tension lines in the face and adjust the different facial features to create a variety of facial expressions. They then practice drawing at least three different facial expressions using a reference. Text Intro and Artist Discussion: The class views a slideshow and discusses how text and image can interact with each other to create meaning. Following the technical instruction, the class will study examples of artwork where text has been combined with images to effectively convey a meaning that would not have been apparent had the words or picture been viewed separately. The students begin by discussing an example of an
artwork like Banksy’s “I remember When all This Was Trees” Figure 4. Following a discussion of the piece specifically how the image and text might be different if they were depicted separately the class is shown an example of adding text to an image that doesn’t rise to the standard of creating new meaning from the combination of text and image. A slide where the Nike slogan “just do it” is replaced with the single word “shoes” is displayed. The class is engaged in a discussion of why the Nike’s actual slogan is more effective. The word “shoes” is then replaced with a statement “They’re good for running” and the class is again engaged in a discussion to determine if this is more effective. The answer is that of course it isn’t. Blandly describing what is going on in the picture is not the same as adding text that enriches the idea.

![Image of Banksy's artwork](image.jpg)

Figure 4. I Remember When All This Was Trees. Banksy. date unknown. Image © Banksy. Published under fair use.

Lastly before beginning on their own work the class looks at the artwork “Portraits of Myself and Lola Montes” by Molly Crabapple and discuss how the inclusion of text here again changes the artworks meaning to be something that neither the text nor the picture alone
conveys. At this point if it doesn’t come up organically the style of the text is pointed out and discussed. The students should be made aware that the text in the Molly Crabapple piece is scrawled in the same style that someone might use to vandalize a bathroom stall or to write a mean note to pass in science class. The style of the letters may give the viewer some clue as to how the artist views their original authors. Again, to emphasis the point that the style of text can affect the overall message of the work the Banksy example and the Nike example are reviewed. It is pointed out that the text in the Banksy example again fits with the narrative of the piece while the font I have selected for my mock Nike slogan is in Times New Roman, which is a font you wouldn’t imagine Nike using.

Figure 5. Portraits of myself and Lola Montes with things said about us by our contemporaries. Molly Crabapple. 2014. Image © Molly Crabapple. Published under fair use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<td>Face and Expression Drawing Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Craft: Faces</strong></td>
<td>Practiced drawing fewer faces than required or did not use technique.</td>
<td>Used the technique to draw nearly the required number of faces.</td>
<td>Used reasonable effort to practice the technique and drew the required number of practices.</td>
<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort or skill in executing the required practice or completed more than the required amount of practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Craft: Expressions</strong></td>
<td>Drew fewer than required or showed little effort.</td>
<td>Used technique to draw nearly the number of required expressions or partially used technique.</td>
<td>Used reasonable effort to practice the technique and drew the required number of practices.</td>
<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort or skill in executing the required practice or completed more than the required amount of practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Text Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Included text in the artwork.</td>
<td>Text makes sense with the subject of the artwork.</td>
<td>Text works with images in a unique and effective way to create new meaning and express an idea.</td>
<td>Text is aesthetically and conceptually integrated in the artwork in a unique and meaningful way to express a meaningful idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expression Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Included a face with an expression in the artwork.</td>
<td>Expression makes sense with the artwork.</td>
<td>Expression is incorporated within the artwork in a unique and effective way to</td>
<td>Expression is aesthetically and conceptually integrated in the artwork in a unique way to</td>
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<td>Page is partially filled.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craft</td>
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<th>Reflection</th>
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<td>Minimum Writing Requirements</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Proper Responses | Responses are brief and do not show a great deal of thought. | Responses the meaning of the work or the subjects that were choses. | Responses describe how the chosen subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way. | NA |
Appendix D

Unit 4: Figures, Expressive Mark, and Style

Students will learn to draw the figure and use gesture, in addition to expressive mark and style to create meaning in their artwork.

Objectives

- Learn basic techniques for drawing figures from imagination basing them on a stick figure form.
- Apply expressionistic style to add meaning to a personal artwork and communicate mood.

Lessons

**Figure Drawing**

The unit will begin with a demonstration of how to draw the figure by transforming a stick figure structure into a fleshed-out form and adding details. After following along with the teacher to create a drawing of a person the students will complete three to five practice drawings of people in different poses. They will be encouraged to use a photo reference. Throughout the year students will be encouraged to continue this practice and demonstrations of increasing depth and difficulty will be facilitated.

**Expressionism and Artist Discussion**

Students view a brief slideshow discussing the main points and ideas underpinning expressionism and describing their use of stylized representations, expressive marks and expressive color to convey moods and ideas. The students then view an example of an expressionist artwork and discuss how the artists use of color, style and expressive mark making
change or enhance the mood and idea of the artwork. Edvard Munch’s “Workers Returning Home” Figure 9 is an artwork that may be discussed.

![Workers Returning Home](image)

Figure 6. Workers Returning Home. Edvard Munch. 1915. © Edvard Munch. Published under fair use.

**Final Artmaking**

For the final artmaking assignment student are required to include at least one human figure and apply expressionistic style to their work. They may include any other subject or meaning-making strategy they would like to convey their idea. Suggested topics dealing with situations that may lend themselves to expressionist styles will be presented but the decision of what to make is up to the students.

**Reflection and Critique**

Following the creation of their artwork students will be asked to write a brief reflection describing what they hoped to convey and how they choose to do this in their work. Following the discussion students will engage in peer critiques to discuss how their artwork progressed and how they think it may be improved.
### Assessment

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<td><strong>Figure Drawing Practices</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Craft: Figures</strong></td>
<td>Practiced drawing fewer figures than required or did not use technique.</td>
<td>Used the technique to draw nearly the required number of figures.</td>
<td>Used reasonable effort to practice the technique and drew the required number of figures in different poses.</td>
<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort or skill in executing the required practice or completed more than the required amount of practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figure Gesture</strong></td>
<td>Included a figure in the artwork.</td>
<td>Figure makes sense with the subject of the artwork.</td>
<td>Figure and gesture work with other elements in a unique and effective way to create new meaning and express an idea.</td>
<td>Figure and gesture are aesthetically and conceptually integrated in the artwork in a unique and meaningful way to express a meaningful idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expressionism</strong></td>
<td>Manipulated elements of the work to appear differently from their natural appearance.</td>
<td>The changes to the color, texture, or style of the work do not contradict the intended meaning.</td>
<td>Expressionist strategies are incorporated within the artwork in a unique and effective way to communicate and idea or mood.</td>
<td>Expressionist strategies are aesthetically and conceptually integrated in the artwork in unique way to effectively communicate an idea or mood.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Composition serves the concept or idea.</td>
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</table>

**Figures, Gesture, and Expressionism Final Artwork**
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<th>Made some effort to develop craft.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td><strong>Minimum Writing Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Some questions are answered with proper punctuation</td>
<td>Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proper Responses</strong></td>
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<td>Responses the meaning of the work or the subjects that were chosen.</td>
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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix E

Unit 5: Juxtaposition and Recontextualization

For the juxtaposition and recontextualization unit students will apply juxtaposition or recontextualization to a work of art with the intent of conveying a mood, emotion, or idea that would not exist without the addition of a second element or a new context.

Objectives

- Understand juxtaposition and recontextualization.
- Choose and apply the one or both of the meaning making strategies in a unique and effective way to communicate an idea or personal belief.
- Engage in the creative process to plan and create your artwork.
- Reflect on your finished artwork and discuss it with your peers.

Lessons

Introduction

To begin the unit the terms will be defined, and examples of these techniques will be displayed and discussed by the class. In order to discuss juxtaposition, the class will view the artwork “Tatlin at Home” by Raul Hausman Figure 10. It will be explained to them that the artist’s intention was to communicate the need for rational thought over the emotional impulses that the artist believed led to World War I. However, Hausmann chose to depict this idea in an irrational way. The class will then be asked to briefly discuss how Hausman’s depiction uses juxtaposition create an “irrational” depiction of his idea.
The class will then discuss the artwork “Remembering” by Ai Weiwei, where the artist has covered the entire façade with different colored back packs to spell out the words “She lived happily in this world for seven years.” Figure 12. It will be explained that there is a backpack for each child who died in unsafe schools that collapsed as a result of an earthquake in China. The class will then discuss what they believe the purpose of Weiwei’s artwork is and if it represents an issue in a more rational way by placing the backpacks in a new context.
**Artmaking**

For the artmaking portion of the unit students will be instructed to create a work of art that uses either juxtaposition or recontextualization. They may use any material or techniques they would like to complete their artwork. To construct their image, they may choose to create an entirely new artwork, trace elements from one of their existing pieces, or add on to a work of art they had previously completed. On the second day of the project students will share in small groups their idea and work so far. During this time students will give and receive feedback on the work their ideas and what different interpretations their peers have.
**Reflection and Critique**

Following the completion of their artmaking they will complete a short artist statement describing how they used juxtaposition or recontextualization in their work and what effect it had on the meaning.

**Assessment**

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<td><strong>Created a sketch or other planning artifact before beginning work.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Created a sketch or series of sketches that show a possible composition.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Planning included research, sketches, and or explorations that informed the final artwork.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Planning demonstrates thoughtful research, gathering of references and explorations of various materials and strategies.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Craft:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Completed minimal practice before beginning final artwork.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Created at least one practice drawing before starting the project.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrated careful study and practice of a technique, material, or subject to be applied to the artwork.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrated exceptional effort and improvement of technique based on the needs of the planned project.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Artwork</strong></td>
<td><strong>Juxtapose or Recontextualize Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Combined images to attempt the effect.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Combined images that wouldn’t go together to create surprise</strong></td>
<td><strong>Juxtaposed or recontextualized images and integrated them in the artwork in a unique and meaningful way to express a personally relevant idea.</strong></td>
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<td>NA</td>
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Appendix F

Unit 6: Appropriation and Parody

In this unit students will learn to distinguish between appropriation, parody, and plagiarism. They will then apply either appropriation or parody to the creation of a personal artwork to convey meaning.

Objectives

- Understand appropriation and parody.
- Choose and apply the one or both of the meaning making strategies in a unique and effective way to communicate an idea or personal belief.
- Engage in the creative process to plan and create your artwork.
- Reflect on your finished artwork and discuss it with your peers.

Lessons

Introduction

To begin the unit students will compare a “Fat Ronald” by Ron English Figure 13 and “Show Me the Monet” Figure 14 by Banksy in which he appropriates one of Monet’s water lily paintings. In the discussion the students will identify the changes each artist made from the original and how those changes convey a different meaning from the original and identify which is more parody and which is more appropriation.

Artmaking

Following the discussion each student will choose either an existing artwork, character, figure, or other known image created and owned by someone other than themselves and convert it into a personal artwork that employs either parody or appropriation. As these techniques are frequently used in artwork that comment on social and political issues the students will be asked
to create lists of what they consider their core values before beginning. As with the previous unit, students will engage in an in-process critique in small groups early in the artmaking process to discuss their ideas and get feedback.

Figure 10. Fat Ronald. Ron English. Unknown date. © Ron English. Published under fair use.
Reflection and Critique

After completing their artwork, they will write a short statement describing how they used either appropriation or Parody to convey their idea. Lastly the class will be split into groups of approximately ten to engage in discussions about the artworks created for both the appropriation and Parody” unit and the “Juxtaposition and Recontextualization” unit.

Assessment

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<td>Created a sketch or other planning artifact before beginning work.</td>
<td>Crated a sketch or series of sketches that show a possible composition.</td>
<td>Planning included research, sketches, and or explorations that informed the final artwork.</td>
<td>Planning demonstrates thoughtful research, gathering of references and explorations of various</td>
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<td>Develop Craft:</td>
<td>Completed minimal practice before beginning final artwork.</td>
<td>Created at least one practice drawing before starting the project.</td>
<td>Demonstrated careful study and practice of a technique, material, or subject to be applied to the artwork.</td>
<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort and improvement of technique based on the needs of the planned project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriation or Parody</td>
<td>Attempted to use one of the strategies.</td>
<td>Applied the strategy in a way that shows understanding.</td>
<td>Used appropriation or parody in a unique and effective way to create new meaning and express an idea.</td>
<td>Used appropriation and parody in a unique and meaningful way to express a personally relevant idea.</td>
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<td>Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.</td>
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Appendix G

Unit 7: Metaphor

In this unit students will develop an understanding of how to use metaphor visually to express ideas in their work. As metaphor can be a challenging strategy to use students will be given a subject to use to guide their investigation.

Objectives
- Use metaphor to visually express something about yourself.
- Apply understanding of meaning-making strategies create meaning and express your idea.
- Engage in the creative process to plan and execute a unique and effective artwork.

Lessons

Introduction

Metaphor Introduction: Students view a slideshow defining metaphor and showing examples of visual metaphor. The class then looks at an artwork that employs visual metaphor and discusses what they think the artist is trying to convey. For this discussion the class will look at the artwork “Music of the Woods” by Vladimir Kush, Figure 11. The class will discuss what the artwork is representing through metaphor and how.
Artmaking

Following the artist discussion students are asked to create an artwork using visual metaphor to describe something about their identity. Suggested metaphors may include my mind is like, my heart is like, or my hands are like. Students may use any material and are encouraged to use any of the other meaning-making strategies that were previously studied this year.

Reflection and Critique

Once students have finished making their work, they are asked to create a brief statement that explains what they were trying to convey and how they chose to represent it. After writing their statements the class engages in a peer critique where they discuss what the images make them think of and how they understand the work when they look at it.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Attempted</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Met</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td>Created a sketch or other planning artifact before beginning work.</td>
<td>Created a sketch or series of sketches that show a possible composition.</td>
<td>Planning included research, sketches, and or explorations that informed the final artwork.</td>
<td>Planning demonstrates thoughtful research, gathering of references and explorations of various materials and strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Craft</strong></td>
<td>Completed minimal practice before beginning final artwork.</td>
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<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort and improvement of technique based on the needs of the planned project.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Artwork</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor</strong></td>
<td>Artwork includes a subject that could be a metaphor if given proper context.</td>
<td>Artwork includes a subject that somewhat communicates the idea.</td>
<td>Used metaphor in a unique and effective way to create new meaning and express an idea.</td>
<td>Used metaphor in a unique and meaningful way to express a personally relevant idea.</td>
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<td>Creative Application of Meaning Making Strategy</td>
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<td>Composition serves the concept or idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Craft</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Writing Requirements</td>
<td>Some questions are answered with proper punctuation</td>
<td>Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation.</td>
<td>All questions are completely answered, with proper punctuation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proper Responses</td>
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<td>Responses the meaning of the work or the subjects that were choses.</td>
<td>Responses describe how the chosen subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.</td>
<td>NA</td>
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Appendix H

Unit 8: Things I’ve Outgrown

Objectives

- Develop a plan for an artwork based on the theme.
- Engage in the creative process to refine and execute a plan for making artwork based on the theme “Things I’ve Outgrown”.
- Use meaning-making strategies, artmaking skills, and composition to effectively communicate your idea through a visually interesting design.

Lessons

Intro and Brainstorming

To begin brainstorming for the assignment students will be asked to create a series of lists of things they have outgrown. These will include toys, places, activities, music, games, and relationships. After creating their lists, they will be asked to read through what they’ve listed and pick one thing they know they want to include. They may ultimately include more in their final project. The class is then asked to sit quietly and remember what it was like before they outgrew what they choose and to think about when they felt they had outgrown it. What if anything replaced it? What happened to it? How do they feel thinking back on memories of it?

Planning and Revising

After brainstorming the class will begin sketching out ideas of how they could communicate their feelings, thoughts and or ideas around this topic. The planning should include practice sketches or studies and possible compositions. While not mandatory it is recommended that students discuss their ideas with peers and receive feedback and make edits and changes to their plans before starting on the final artwork.
**Artmaking and Revising**

After creating a plan student begin working on their final artwork. They are encouraged to periodically look at each other’s work and get feedback and ideas from one another. They should also work lightly and be open to making changes as they go.

**Reflection and Critique**

After completing their work students write a short reflection describing what went well and what they would have liked to have improved in their artwork. They then engage in a peer critique focused on what they like about each other’s work and what the different projects remind them of.

**Assessment**

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<th>Attempted</th>
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<td>Crated a sketch or series of sketches that show a possible composition.</td>
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<td>Planning demonstrates thoughtful research, gathering of references and explorations of various materials and strategies to effectively communicate a personal idea based on the theme.</td>
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<td>Choose and Applied Meaning Making Strategy</td>
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<td>Artwork employs a strategy with an unclear meaning.</td>
<td>Choose and applied meaning making strategies in a unique and effective way to explore the theme.</td>
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<td>Creative Process</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Minimum Writing Requirements</td>
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<td>Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation.</td>
<td>All questions are completely answered, with proper punctuation.</td>
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<td>Responses the meaning of the work or the</td>
<td>Responses describe how the chosen</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>show a great deal of thought.</td>
<td>subjects that were choses.</td>
<td>subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.</td>
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Appendix I

Unit 9: People or Things I Haven’t Seen in a Long Time

Objectives

- Develop a plan for an artwork based on the theme “It’s been awhile”.
- Engage in the creative process to develop, revise, and execute your idea.
- Use meaning-making strategies, artmaking skills, and composition to effectively communicate your idea through a visually interesting design.

Lessons

Intro and Brainstorming

To begin brainstorming for the assignment students will be asked to create a series of lists of people, things, or activities that they miss, haven’t seen in a while, or are glad to be done with. They will be asked to read through what they’ve listed and pick one thing they know they want to include. They may ultimately include more in their final project. The class is then asked to sit quietly and recall their memory of this thing, their feelings about it, and consider how they could represent this in an artwork.

Planning and Revising

After brainstorming the class will begin sketching out ideas of how they could communicate their feelings, thoughts and or ideas around this topic. The planning should include practice sketches or studies and possible compositions. While not mandatory it is recommended that students discuss their ideas with peers and receive feedback and make edits and changes to their plans before starting on the final artwork.
**Artmaking and Revising**

After creating a plan student begin working on their final artwork. They are encouraged to periodically look at each other’s work and get feedback and ideas from one another. They should also work lightly and be open to making changes as they go.

**Reflection and Critique**

After completing their work students write a short reflection describing what went well and what they would have liked to have improved in their artwork. They then engage in a peer critique focused on what they like about each other’s work and what the different projects remind them of.

**Assessment**

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<td>Planning demonstrates thoughtful research, gathering of references and explorations of various materials and strategies to effectively communicate a personal idea based on the theme.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Develop Craft:</strong></td>
<td>Completed minimal practice before beginning final artwork.</td>
<td>Created at least one practice drawing before starting the project.</td>
<td>Demonstrated careful study and practice of a technique, material, or subject to be applied to the artwork.</td>
<td>Demonstrated exceptional effort and improvement of technique based on the needs of the planned project.</td>
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</table>

**Final Artwork**
| Choose and Applied Meaning Making Strategy | Created an artwork with an unclear meaning or strategy. | Artwork employs a strategy with an unclear meaning. | Choose and applied meaning making strategies in a unique and effective way to explore the theme. | Chose and applied meaning making strategies in a unique and meaningful way to explore the theme in a personally relevant way. |
| Creative Process | Assignment was completed | Made slight adjustments based or executed a personal goal that was easily attainable. | Made adjustments and persisted through challenges in the making process to realize an appropriate personal goal. | Made adjustments and persisted through challenges in the making process to realize an ambitious personal goal. |
| Composition | Page is partially filled. | Page is mostly filled. | Composition serves the concept or idea. | Composition is used to enhance the mood, feeling, or idea of the artwork. |
| Craft | Made some effort to develop craft. | Made minimal effort to develop and / or apply craft to convey idea. | Demonstrated adequate effort and time to developing craft in order to convey idea effectively. | Exceptional effort was made to developed craft in service of the artwork or was executed convey the creative idea in the most effective way possible. |
| Reflection / Artist Statement | | | | |
| Minimum Writing Requirements | Some questions are answered with proper punctuation | Most questions are completely answered with proper punctuation. | All questions are completely answered, with proper punctuation. | NA |
| Proper Responses | Responses are brief and do not | Responses the meaning of the work or the | Responses describe how the chosen | NA |
| show a great deal of thought. | subjects that were choses. | subjects and strategies were used to convey meaning in unique and effective way. |
Appendix J

Unit 10: What I Value

Objectives

- Develop a plan for an artwork based on the theme “What I value”.
- Engage in the creative process to develop, revise, and execute your idea.
- Use meaning-making strategies, artmaking skills, and composition to effectively communicate your idea through a visually interesting design.

Lessons

Intro and Brainstorming

The theme is introduced, and students are asked to make a list of the things, people, activities, and beliefs that are most important to them. They are then asked to choose from the listed items one or more things from the list they think would make an interesting subject for their artwork or that they feel particularly strongly about. Once they have chosen their topic the class is asked to sit quietly and think about how these things have impacted their lives or shaped their decisions, or otherwise affected them.

Planning

After the brainstorming session the class engages in a planning session where they sketch, practice or experiment with possible subjects, compositions and strategies. They are encouraged to talk with peers about their ideas and make revisions to create the best possible plan for their artwork.
Artmaking

Following their planning and exploration session students are asked to create an artwork based on the ideas they developed. As they work, they are encouraged to look at the work or their peers and make revisions or modify ideas.

Reflection and Critique

Once the artwork is complete student should write an artist statement describing where the idea for their work came from or what they were conveying through the piece. The class will then share their projects in a peer critique and discuss how the positive aspects of the work.

Assessment

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Develop Craft:

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Final Artwork

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<td>Created an artwork with an applied meaning.</td>
<td>Artwork employs a</td>
<td>Choose and applied meaning</td>
<td>Chose and applied meaning</td>
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<td><strong>Meaning Making Strategy</strong></td>
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<td>strategy with an unclear meaning.</td>
<td>making strategies in a unique and effective way to explore the theme.</td>
<td>making strategies in a unique and meaningful way to explore the theme in a personally relevant way.</td>
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<td><strong>Minimum Writing Requirements</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proper Responses</strong></td>
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used to convey meaning in unique and effective way.
Appendix K

Unit 11: Self-Portrait

Objectives

- Develop a plan for an artwork that expresses something about yourself.
- Engage in the creative process to develop, revise, and execute your idea.
- Use meaning-making strategies, artmaking skills, and composition to effectively communicate your idea through a visually interesting design.

Lessons

Introduction

The subject of the module is introduced to the class. They will create a self-portrait. The only requirement for this self-portrait is that it must be an artwork and it must express something about them. It doesn’t have to include their likeness. The class will then view a slideshow depicting different self-portraits by different artists throughout art history, discussing informally as they go through the slideshow how they are different from one another and what the artists may have been communicating about themselves if anything.

Artmaking

Students are free to begin this project however they think would work best. They can sketch, plan, explore, or immediately begin on their final artwork. As they work, they are as usual encouraged to look at each other’s projects for inspiration and to give and receive feedback, making revisions as they go. At this point in the year the goal is that they naturally work through the creative process to create their artwork.
**Artist Statement and Critique**

For the artist statement in this project the students write about themselves, what they wanted to express, and why. For the critique the class hangs the artworks then reads the artist statements and tries to match them to the artworks. As they match them, they must explain what they see in the artwork that makes them think the statement is correct. They may rearrange and swap artist statements as long as they give an explanation that includes an observation about the work that makes them think the project and statement match.

**Assessment**

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<td>Artwork employs a strategy with an</td>
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