

Images of Power, Oppression, and Protest - Art with Something to Say

Ruth E. Jansen

Class and Grade Level(s):
Upper Middle and High School Students

Goals and Objectives: Students will:

- Work cooperatively in small groups
- Communicate concepts and emotions with visual/symbolic images
- Learn design and drawing techniques
- Make use of multiple media types to create color contrast and texture

Curriculum Standards addressed:

- Standard 1 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in applying media, techniques, and process to communicate ideas.
- Standard 2 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in using structures and functions of art.
- Standard 3 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas in an artwork.
- Standard 4 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in identifying symbolic meaning in artworks from varied cultures, times, and places, and analyze and interpret how the visual arts reflect history, culture, and aesthetics.
- Standard 5 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in identifying possible intentions of artists and analyze and evaluate works of visual art.
- Standard 6 - Student will demonstrate proficiency in connecting concepts used in other disciplines with the visual arts.

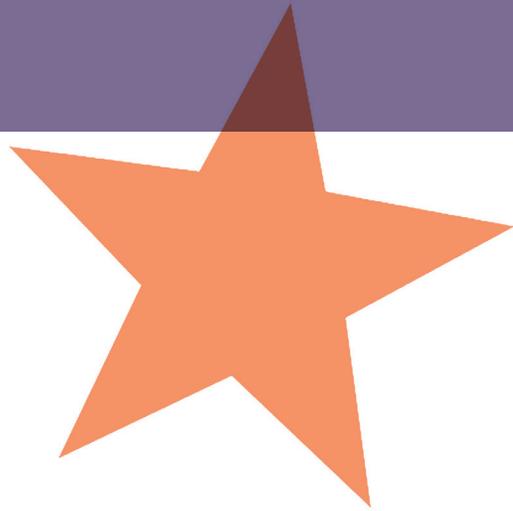
Time required/class periods needed: 10-12 class periods

Primary source bibliography:

- "Art, Music, and Revolution K-1 6 Workshop" Spencer Art Museum - Handouts and session notes
- In the Spirit of Resistance - African-American Modernists and the Mexican Muralist School, Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins and Shifra M. Goldman, The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1996
- "Strong Pictures Get the Point Across" by Karen Friedland, Arts and Activities, Feb 2009, pg 38
- "Visual Images of Power, Oppression, and Protest" Powerpoint presentation created by Ruth Jansen, handout and associated links

Other resources used: newspapers and magazines

Handout - Planning and Assessment guide

**Required materials/supplies**

- 9" X 12" and larger white drawing paper
- Pencils
- Magazines and newspapers
- Glue
- Rulers
- Markers
- Acrylic paint
- Gesso
- Brushes in various sizes
- Palettes
- Paper towels
- Water containers
- Large pieces of mat board or cardboard

Vocabulary:

- Elements of art - line, shape, value, texture, color, space
- Principles of design - balance, contrast, unity, pattern, variety, repetition, rhythm

Procedure:

- Show the powerpoint program and discuss the ways the artists have used visual images or symbols to communicate ideas or feelings about the issues involved.
- Have a group discussion about the kinds of issues facing teens today - drugs, drinking, smoking, suicide, war, abuse, violence, global warming, the economy, etc.
- On their planning guide, have each student list what they feel are the three most important issues discussed.
- Have the students sketch two ideas of images or symbols that they associate with one or more of the three topics they chose.
- Armed with their list of words and the images they have drawn, have the students search through newspapers and magazines to find other images and symbols that might convey the ideas or emotions related to their topics. Cut out the images.
- Review previous lessons on creating balance in a composition and on unifying devices such as repetition and overlapping.
- Each student should create a collage using the images they have selected.
- Discuss how advertising, posters and billboards get their message across by communicating ideas, symbols, and emotions with few or no words. Refer to examples of ads, artworks, murals and other media familiar to students in their daily lives.

- Divide students into groups of three based on similar choice of topic. Have each individual sketch ideas for the poster/billboard, first in thumbnails, then on larger paper, incorporating what they consider to be the most successful images they have found.
- Next have the groups work collaboratively to unite everyone's ideas into a single composition to be transferred to large illustration, mat, or cardboard. Prepare the boards by coating with white gesso. When dry, rule a two-inch border all the way around the board and paint the border with black acrylic paint. Transfer the final design to the prepared board.
- Review possible color schemes that might be used and how these might affect the kind of message they have chosen to communicate. Also discuss how pattern and texture can invigorate and unify the design.
- Have students use acrylic paint and other media of their choice if desired to finish their design.
- Students should complete the appropriate portions of their self-assessment forms as a group.
- Conduct a class discussion and critique of the finished images, pointing out why the images are successful in communicating the ideas the students identified.

Assessment/Evaluation

- Student will fill out a self-assessment form on their participation in the project.
- Class will have a group discussion and critique of the finished artworks.
- Teacher will assess on the same criteria as the student self-assessment form.

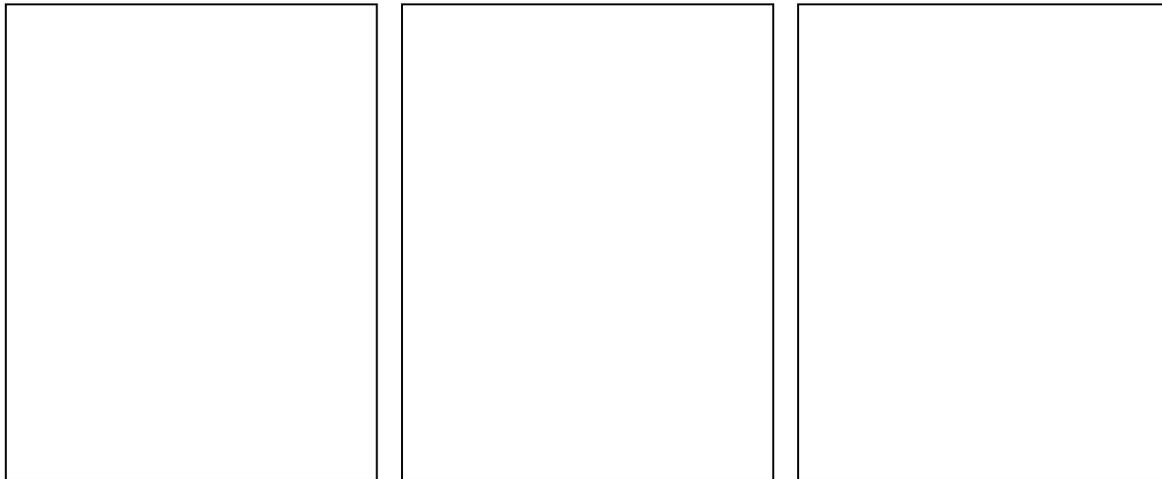


Visual Images of Power

NAME _____

Procedures:

1. In the first space below make a list of the three most important issues you feel are facing you as a teen in today's world (e.g. drugs, drinking, abuse, war, etc.).
2. In the other spaces below draw several symbols that might be used to represent the ideas or feeling/emotions related to the ideas listed in box 1.
3. Look through newspapers and magazines and cut out additional images you feel communicate the ideas/feelings you have identified.
4. On 9" X 12" paper, create a collage using the images you have cut out or drawing in images you have created. Your collage should show consideration for the elements and principles of design in a balanced composition.
5. Collaborate with two other students who have chosen the same issue to explore. On 9" X 12" paper complete two thumbnail sketches combining what you consider to be the images that best symbolize or represent your idea.
6. Work collaboratively with your group to unify your sketches into a final design on 12" X 16" paper.
7. Work with your group to prepare a piece of 24" X 32" or larger mat board or cardboard by painting it with gesso, ruling a 2" border on all four edges, and painting the border with black acrylic paint. Transfer your final design to the board and paint with acrylic paint, adding other media as appropriate.

Three empty rectangular boxes are arranged horizontally, intended for the student to draw symbols or write their list of issues.

Artist's Statement:

In the space below write an artist's statement of at least five (5) complete sentences that include:

1. a physical description of your finished Visual symbols design (subject/theme, motifs, details, colors, etc.)
2. describe the symbolism involved in your choices of design elements, including your choice of colors.