

schoolarts

BONUS LESSON IDEAS | GRADES K-12

Each month your subscription of *SchoolArts* magazine includes a collection of ready-to-use lessons in a convenient ClipCard® format. Each classroom-tested lesson is written by an art educator and includes an essential question, materials list, procedure list, and assessment suggestions.





Building Block Re-Fab **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can we change the predetermined appearance of toys to make them more beautiful?

Objective

Students will change pre-existing blocks with paint and create additional building supplies by adapting recycled materials.

Materials

cardboard, foam, or wooden building blocks; cardboard tubes and cones (from yarn); cardboard rings from masking tape rolls; acrylic paint and brushes; colored tape; glue and glitter

Procedures

1. Show students images of intriguing and color-rich architecture from around the world. Show buildings painted by Dutch artists Haas & Hahn, who re-envision entire neighborhoods with colorful palettes.
2. Students select a block to work on and create a custom color scheme and design for it. Allow blocks to dry.

3. On subsequent days, additional details or decoration can be added by other students, creating collaborative work and shared ownership.

4. Use blocks to create buildings, as well as entire neighborhoods and cities.

Assessment

Did students use fine motor skills in applying paint, tape, or other decorations to blocks? Ask students to consider how visual, colorful changes can alter a building or neighborhood. When building, do students collaborate on creating large-scale 3D sculptures? Do they demonstrate hand-eye coordination and social skills?

Sue Liedke, art teacher at Settlement Music School's Kaleidoscope and Kaleidoscope Plus Program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Primary Color Prints **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can students use sponge rollers and found objects to create designs?

Objective

Students will learn printing techniques using household objects. Students will create a printed design using primary colors and black.

Materials

12 x 18" (30 x 46 cm) white paper, sponge rollers (one for each primary color), expanded polystyrene trays (one for each primary color), paintbrushes, variety of found objects, tempera paint (red, blue, yellow, and black)

Procedures

1. Read children's books about the primary colors and review the color wheel with students.
2. Discuss printmaking and demonstrate how to make a print with an object and tempera paint.
3. Using the sponge rollers and primary colors, students roll the paint onto their white papers.

4. Students paint the edges of their found objects and other household gadgets with black paint and press them over the primary colors.

Assessment

Did students create a balanced design? Were all three primary colors used? Was the printing technique used correctly?

Wendy Libby, art teacher at Fruit Street School in Bangor, Maine.



Family Collage **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can materials be combined to create a collaged family portrait?

Objective

Students will combine materials to create a family portrait inspired by William H. Johnson's paintings.

Materials

10 x 10" (25 x 25 cm) cardstock, tempera sticks, oil pastels, glue sticks, scissors, 2 x 10" (5 x 25 cm) colored paper, pre-cut head and body shapes, googly eyes, foam or wood shapes

Procedures

1. Introduce students to William H. Johnson's portraits. Study the composition, use of pattern, and subject matter. Review the meaning of the word "portrait."
2. Prompt students to discuss their families: "How many people are in your family? What do they look like? Are they tall, short? What clothes do they wear? How old are they?"
3. Students begin their artwork by focusing on the background. Choose two to three colored tempera sticks and encourage students to create a pattern.

4. Once the background pattern is complete, students can choose a piece of colored paper to glue to the bottom of their cardstock. This will be the ground for their family portrait.

5. Next, students will collect materials for their collaged portraits. Provide a variety of pre-cut head and body shapes.

6. Students will glue down their head shapes first and then add clothing and other details such as eyes, hair, and accessories.

Assessment

Students should be able to explain what a family portrait is and create a completed collage with all family members included.

Colleen Pickup, pre-K teacher at Settlement Music School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Collaborative Color Book **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can young students explore colors and monochromatic design?

Objective

Students will identify colors, sort them onto pages, and experiment with using those colors in different mediums.

Materials

large blank board book, acrylic or tempera paint, tempera sticks, gel crayons, collage materials

Procedures

1. Students will be exposed to colors through age-appropriate literature. Begin each day with a book about colors. The teacher should examine the different parts of a book (e.g., cover, pages, spine), as students will collaborate to create a book together.
2. Each day, allow a student or students to choose a color to focus on. On that day, ask where they see that color, who is wearing that color, etc. Have students select art materials in that color.

3. Use various materials (paint, tempera sticks, etc.) to make marks together on one page, allowing each student to collaborate. Allow that page to dry completely. Repeat with a new page and a new color on subsequent days.

4. After completion, refer to your book often for color identification and reminders. Students will enjoy seeing their work and using it to demonstrate their learning.

Assessment

Are students able to correctly identify colors? Do they effectively sort and categorize their supplies when adding them to the book? Have they collaborated with their peers?

Sue Liedke, art teacher at Settlement Music School's Kaleidoscope and Kaleidoscope Plus Program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Circles Upon Circles **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can we create a variety of circles?

Objective

Students will explore different materials and create mixed-media circle compositions.

Materials

white card stock, tempera sticks, oil pastels, dot markers, circle stencils in different sizes, stickers, cut-paper circles, glue sticks

Procedures

1. Show students Wassily Kandinsky's *Circles in a Circle*, 1923. Discuss the variety of shapes and colors within the composition.
2. Have students practice drawing circles in the air using their index finger as a pretend pencil. Ask them to make enormous and tiny circles.
3. Next, distribute white card stock and dot markers, allowing students to fill their card stock with circles.
4. Introduce tempera sticks and encourage students to draw larger circles layering over their dot markings.

5. Gradually provide additional media. Distribute oil pastels and stencils and ask students to add more circles. Lastly, distribute stickers, cut-paper circles, and glue sticks. Students continue to layer circles upon circles until there is no white card stock showing.

Assessment

Did students combine a variety of materials to create circles? Is the card stock paper free of white space?

Colleen Pickup, pre-K teacher at Settlement Music School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Abstract Playgrounds **Elementary**

The Essential Question

How can strips of paper be manipulated to give the idea of a three-dimensional playground?

Objective

Students will use the idea of abstraction while creating a three-dimensional playground. Paper strips will be manipulated by bending, curling, and interlocking.

Materials

9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) colored paper, strips of colored paper in various widths and lengths, glue, scissors, paper punches, books with pictures of playgrounds

Procedures

1. Read books that show pictures of playground equipment. Ask students to discuss what they see.
2. Students choose a 9 x 12" sheet of colored paper. Provide each table with a box or bin containing strips of colored paper cut in various widths and lengths.

3. Students can change the form of the paper strips by bending, curving, curling, layering, or interlocking. Next, they glue the strips to the 9 x 12" paper so they stand up away from the paper.

4. Optional: Paper punches and fancy-edged scissors can be used on the strips.

Assessment

Were students able to manipulate the paper strips to create a 3D form? Were students able to describe their paper-strip sculpture in terms of playground equipment (slide, jungle gym, see-saw, etc.)?

Wendy Libby, art teacher at Fruit Street School in Bangor, Maine.



Magazine Bowls **Elementary**

The Essential Question

How do artists use recycled materials to create functional forms?

Objective

Students will create a 3D functional basket using recycled magazines.

Materials

magazines (enough for twenty pages per student), hot glue guns, hot glue sticks, decoupage medium, plastic bowl (for draping the form), large brushes, scissors

Procedures

1. Students learn about balance, size, proportion, and scale, and study the difference between functional and nonfunctional pieces of 3D art. Show examples of 3D art made from recycled materials and discuss why the artists chose those materials.
2. Show examples of various magazine bowls. With this as inspiration, students sketch ideas for their own magazine bowls.
3. Students use about twenty magazine pages each. If they choose to use a color theme, they can search for those colors in the magazines available.

4. Students cut their pages in half vertically and fold the pages into approximately ½" (1.3 cm) strips.

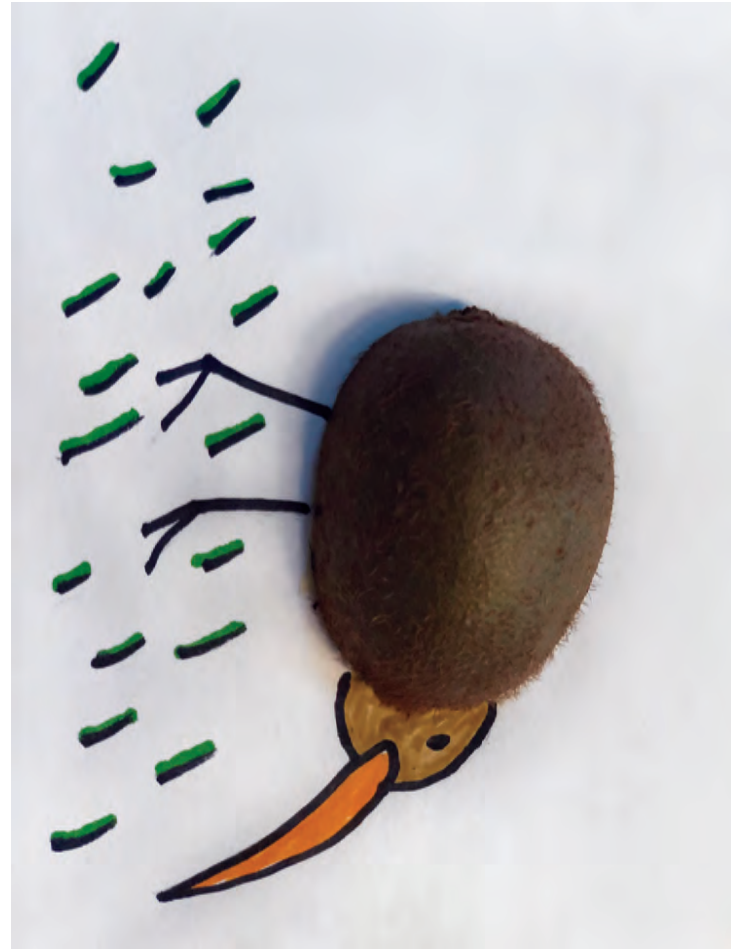
5. Students roll the first strip to make a coil for the center/bottom of the bowl and hot-glue the spiral together to hold everything in place. Additional strips are added to make a larger coil. Students repeat this until the desired coil size is created (at least 10" [25 cm] in diameter).

6. The coil is draped over a plastic bowl and pulled over to create the bowl shape. Two coats of decoupage medium are added to both sides of the bowl.

Assessment

Did students create a 3D vessel/bowl using recycled magazines?

Leigh Drake, art teacher at Old Donation School in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



Found Object Illustration **Elementary**

The Essential Question

How can we incorporate 3D objects into a 2D drawing?

Objective

Students will choose a 3D object to incorporate into their 2D drawing.

Materials

sketchbooks, color media, pencils, 3D found objects

Procedures

1. Students look at various artworks that illustrate how different artists use found objects in their drawings. Ask students why they believe the artists chose to create this way. Ask them to provide examples of objects one might use in a drawing like this. Then ask them to choose an object from home or from class to use for this assignment.
2. Students create three thumbnail sketches of their chosen subject matter interacting with their 3D object. Share tips and video clips to assist students in creating this illusion. Encourage them to focus on their subject matter with a simple, uncluttered background.

3. Students have peers critique their designs and take suggestions before transferring their design to their final paper.

4. Students draw out their design in pencil first and consider how they will illustrate their subject in a manner that shows interaction with the found object.

5. After they complete their pencil drawing, students select their choice of media. When the design is finished, students take a photograph and post their designs to our online virtual platform.

Assessment

Students write an artist statement on their process and reflect on their use of design qualities to capture the uniqueness of illustration interacting with their found object.

Leigh Drake is an art teacher at Old Donation School in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Artwork by Mikela S.



Printed Cityscapes **Elementary**

The Essential Question

Can students use horizontal and vertical lines to create a cityscape with overlapping buildings?

Objective

Students will practice printing techniques using the edge of a piece of corrugated cardboard.

Materials

12 x 18" (30 x 46 cm) white paper, black crayons, paintbrushes, water-color paints, black tempera paint, 1 x 3" (2.5 x 7.5 cm) pieces of corrugated cardboard

Procedures

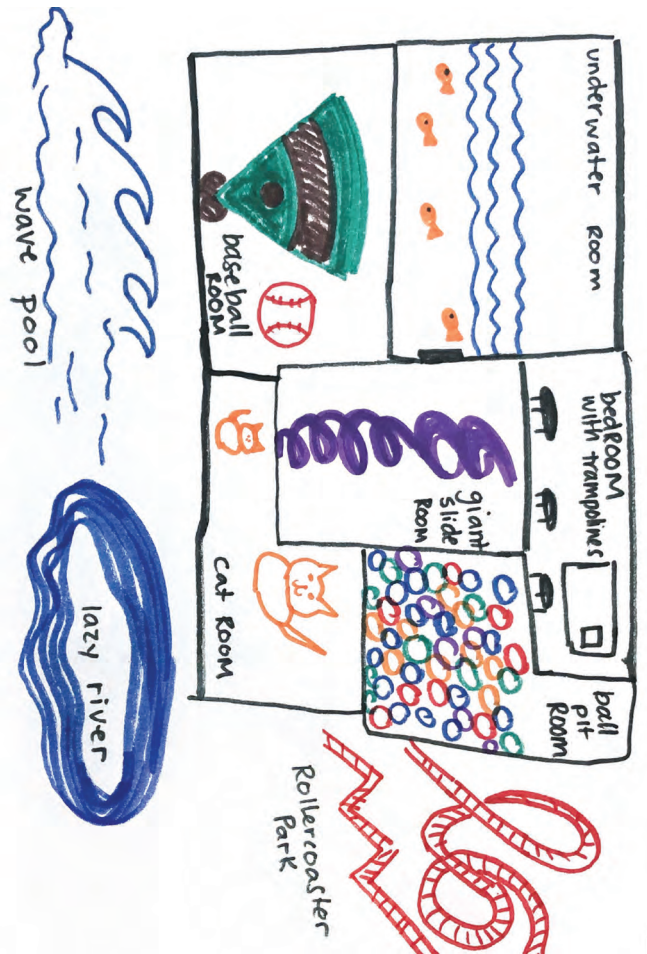
1. View pictures, photographs, and illustrations of cities in children's books. Discuss with students. What do they see? What do all of the images have in common?
2. Students lightly draw various sized rectangles with black crayon to create their buildings. Next, they add windows, doors, roofs, and other details.

3. Ask students to draw other things found in a city, such as streetlights, people, and vehicles.
4. Students paint in their buildings and other cityscape features using watercolors.
5. Students bold the lines in their composition by dipping the edge of a piece of corrugated cardboard in black tempera paint and printing over their crayon lines.

Assessment

Does the drawing represent a cityscape? Did the student incorporate overlapping shapes? Was the printing technique used correctly?

Wendy Libby, art teacher at Fruit Street School in Bangor, Maine.



Dream Home Blueprint **Elementary**

The Essential Questions

How can students think like architects to create imaginative blueprints?

Objective

Students will understand what architects do. They will use this knowledge to create a blueprint of their dream home.

Materials

paper, drawing materials (markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc.)

Procedures

1. Introduce the concept of architecture. I recommend using the book *If I Built a House* by Chris Van Dusen or *Iggy Peck, Architect* by Andrea Beaty and David Roberts.
2. Show students an image of a blueprint. Ask, "What do you think a blueprint is used for?" Give students a few minutes to discuss, then explain that an architect uses a blueprint to plan a building before construction. Explain to students that they will be making blueprints of their dream homes.

3. Ask students, "If you could build a house with any types of rooms in it, what would you make?" Ask students to discuss with a partner before sharing ideas as a group.

4. Next, ask students, "How might we draw a blueprint?" Call on a few students to come up to the board to collaboratively create a blueprint for a house. This allows students to practice making the blueprint together before working independently.

5. After students create a mock-blueprint as a class, they will work independently on their own blueprints using paper and drawing materials.

Assessment

Did students create a blueprint of a house with several rooms? Can students explain what an architect does and what a blueprint is?

Shannon Thacker Cregg, elementary art teacher in San Antonio, Texas.



Portrait of Nature **Middle School**

The Essential Question

How can a student incorporate the use of natural materials in a self-portrait?

Objective

Students will use natural materials along with other media to create a portrait.

Materials

natural objects (e.g., twigs, acorns, leaves, shells), burlap, foam board or cardboard, spray adhesive, hot glue, E6000 adhesive, Mod Podge or school glue, heavy drawing paper, magazine and newspaper clippings

Procedures

1. Introduce the work of Romare Bearden and Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Discuss their themes and use of objects to compose portraits.
2. Demonstrate for students how to draw a head and the features of a face in correct proportion.
3. Ask students how objects in nature could be used to replace features and textures of the head and face.

4. Ask students to bring in objects from nature such as those listed above to share with the class and to use in their own portraits.

5. After drawing the face and using magazine or newspaper clippings for texture, students can glue on the natural objects of their choice using a strong glue, such as E6000 or hot glue, to compose their portraits of nature.

Assessment

Students are assessed by the creative and skillful way they combine objects of nature with clippings and other mixed media to make their portraits. They also write a short paragraph comparing and contrasting their work to the work of either Romare Bearden or Giuseppe Arcimboldo.

Melody Weintraub, art teacher at Briarcrest Christian School in Eads, Tennessee.



Weavings To Go **Middle School**

The Essential Question

Can art be functional? Explain what you perceive the difference is between art and fashion.

Objective

Students will learn that art has limitless possibilities and that many things they create can have functional purposes.

Materials

cardboard weaving loom, warp thread, yarn, tote bags

Procedures

1. Introduce students to weaving, explaining where fiber art originated and how weaving has gained popularity in recent years. Compare and contrast modern weaving and weavings made throughout history. Discuss how art can be functional.
2. Using a cardboard loom or recycled piece of cardboard, teach students a variety of weaving techniques such as the rya knot, tabby weaving, and soumak weaving. These three techniques are easy to teach in a classroom setting and allow students to gain a better understanding of the weaving process.

3. For their own weavings, allow students to explore and experiment with a variety of textures and materials, such as thick yarn, fabric, plastic, or wool.

4. Once their weavings are complete, students carefully remove them from the loom and sew them onto tote bags or any functional, reusable bag.

Assessment

Students are assessed on: following procedures, experimenting with a variety of materials, and successful completion of weaving. Students will participate in a small group or class critique.

Kristina Latraverse, art teacher at Hoover Middle School in Long Beach, California.



Painting with Paper **Middle School**

The Essential Question

In what ways are collage and painting similar? How is color used in a painting compared to how it is used in a collage?

Objective

Students will learn how to create and mix colors using various shades of colored paper.

Materials

various magazines, card stock or collage board, white glue (mixed with water), paintbrush for glue application

Procedures

1. Introduce students to the works of contemporary collage artists. Analyze how they effectively use printed images within their work to produce a successful composition.
2. Using a color reference photograph, have students collect the colors they find in the photograph by looking through magazines. Instead of searching for solid colors, challenge students to ignore the printed images on the page and focus on only the colors they see.

3. Students assemble their colors to create their image, paying careful attention to variations in color.

Assessment

During a class/individual critique, challenge students to look for images cut from magazines within each completed work. How do the images impact their collage?

Kristina Latraverse, art teacher at Hoover Middle School in Indialantic, Florida.



Abstract Stained Glass **Middle School**

The Essential Question

How can students use knowledge learned about Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style to create their own abstract stained-glass window concepts?

Objective

Students will create an abstract stained-glass window design in the style of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Materials

pencils, sketch paper, black construction paper, craft knives, cutting boards, white colored pencil, colored cellophane, glue sticks, clear tape

Procedures

1. Introduce students to Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style stained-glass windows. Discuss how Wright used geometric shapes, balance, and symbolism to create forms that are complementary to the environments they inhabit.
2. Students create sketches of the "view" they would prefer to see when they look out their classroom windows. We discuss how to translate these views into abstract compositions.

3. Students draw their final abstract scenes onto black construction paper using white colored pencil and add a 1" (2.5 cm) border around the composition. Instructions are given to ensure these drawings meet the needs of cut-out silhouetted stained glass (all lines are as thick as a pinky finger; all lines connect to either each other or the outside border.)

4. Students cut out their shapes with a craft knife and glue colored cellophane to the side of the drawing with the white colored pencil lines.

Assessment

Did students creatively determine their preferred window view? Did students utilize the proper techniques of Frank Lloyd Wright?

Kari Giordano, art teacher at Mt. Everett Regional School in Sheffield, Massachusetts.



Drawing from Memory **Middle School**

The Essential Question

How does drawing from memory differ from drawing from observation?

Objective

Students will explore drawing from memory and drawing from observation (controllable factors) while experimenting with factors they are unable to control (foil printing and ink dripping).

Materials

9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) drawing paper, black permanent markers, washable markers (variety of colors), foil, drawing ink, spray bottle with water

Procedures

1. As a pre-assessment challenge, have students draw a squid or an octopus from memory.
2. Introduce students to different ways of drawing (from memory, imagination, observation). Using a documentary or video clip, have students watch how cephalopods (octopus/squid) move. Ask them to pay attention to line and shape.
3. Ask students to draw a cephalopod using pencil and drawing paper. Then ask them to outline it with permanent marker.

4. To complete the background, students use washable marker to scribble on foil. Once the foil is covered in washable marker, spray it with water (about three sprays). Press the paper, drawing side down, on the foil. Let it dry.

5. Once dry, drip drawing ink on the papers to create uncontrollable effects.

Assessment

Students are assessed on following procedures, drawing from memory, drawing from observation, and composition. Students should show an understanding of their finished work by participating in a small group or class critique. Discuss controlled results, uncontrolled results, and different drawing techniques.

Kristina Latraverse, art teacher at Hoover Middle School in Indialantic, Florida.

Artwork by Binh G.



Global Expressions **High School**

The Essential Question

How does our environment affect the way we feel?

Objective

Students will create an illustration based on the current state of the environment.

Materials

India ink, paper, pen, erasers, 90# white sulphite paper

Procedures

1. Students research current events in which the environment has affected the lives of people.
2. Using their sketchbooks, students create a collage of found imagery from newspapers, magazines, and the internet.
3. Next, students draw various gestural drawings of people's expressions.
4. Students overlap their drawings to create a final composition.
5. Students replace color by outlining in black and white.

Assessment

Students will participate in a class critique.

Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Artwork by Elena B., grade twelve.



Endo-Exotopic Sculpture **High School**

The Essential Question

How do artists determine what resources and criteria are needed to formulate aesthetic investigation?

Objective

Students will create a freestanding nonobjective sculpture from limited resources.

Materials

balsa wood, craft knives, cutting mats, wood glue, brushes, acrylic paint, water, water cups, paper towels

Procedures

1. Students select five pieces of balsa wood of various dimensions. Each student is given a craft knife, cutting mat, and wood glue.
2. Students either plan and design a structure or create intuitively with the materials. All five pieces of balsa wood must be used to assemble the sculpture.
3. Students choose a color scheme to paint the surface of their sculpture.

4. When their sculptures are complete, ask students to observe and draw their sculptures in two-point perspective.

Assessment

Students will participate in small group discussions to share their sculptures.

Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.



Shape-Integrated Painting **High School**

The Essential Question

In what way can abstraction change the context of an image?

Objective

Students will create an abstract acrylic painting using overlapping shapes and patterns.

Materials

acrylic paint, 90# white sulfite paper, brushes (round and flat), water cups, paper towels, pencils, erasers, rulers, stencils, tag board

Procedures

1. Ask students to think of various subject matters that inspire them. Which part of that subject matter do they want to highlight or emphasize?
2. Students determine which element best complements their subject matter and create a pattern.
3. Students determine the placement of their subject matter on paper.
4. Students create stencils to use for drawing a pattern on their papers to create a unique composition.

5. Students determine their color scheme and begin painting. Overlapping shapes will become another color once they intersect with the subject matter.

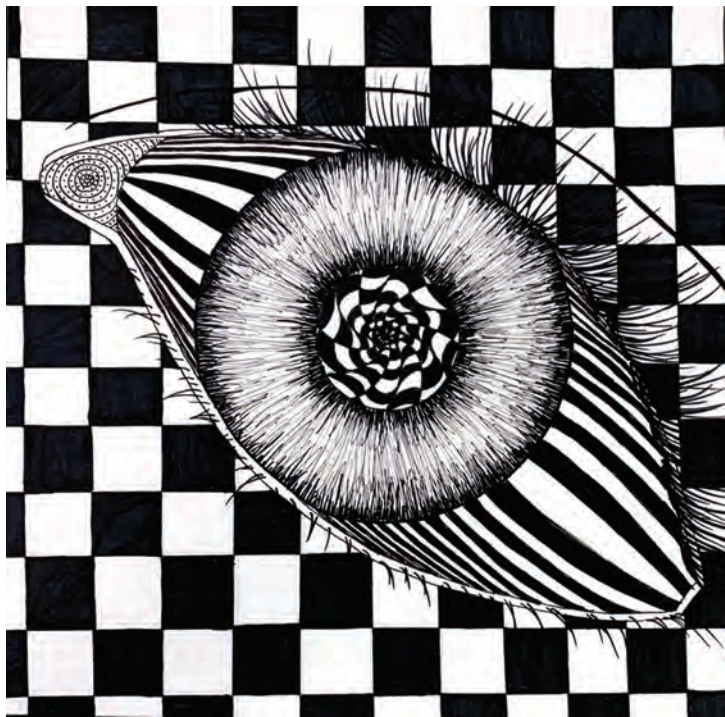
6. Students mount their finished artworks on tag board and sign their names.

Assessment

Students will reflect on how abstraction can alter an image and discuss with another classmate. Both will respond to what they have heard by sharing with the class.

Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Artwork by Erik M., grade eleven.



Optical Illusion **High School**

The Essential Question

What inspires people to make art?

Objective

Students will sketch an optical illusion, paying close attention to positive and negative space.

Materials

regular and fine-tipped black permanent markers, pencils, 12 x 12" (30 x 30 cm) drawing paper, erasers, rubber cement, white charcoal pencils, 14 x 14" (36 x 36 cm) black railroad tag board

Procedures

1. Introduce students to the work of artists Victor Vasarely and Bridget Riley. Ask students to analyze the elements of art and principles of design in each work. Tell students that they will apply these elements and principles to their preliminary optical illusion sketches.
2. Ask students to execute two to three preliminary sketches in their sketchbooks and present them to you. Ask them to choose one preliminary sketch to create into a final design.

3. Students should apply an understanding of positive and negative space into their final designs.

4. Once they are satisfied with their compositions, students should mount their work on black railroad tag board and sign their names.

Assessment

Students participate in a group discussion and critique, presenting their work and explaining how it demonstrates an optical illusion.

Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Artwork by Evangeline J., grade ten.



Joyful Still Life **High School**

The Essential Question

What motivates and sustains artists in their practice?

Objective

Students will create an oil pastel drawing from direct observation.

Materials

oil pastels, 14 x 11" (35.5 x 28 cm) pastel paper, pencils, erasers, paper towels

Procedures

1. Ask students to think of an object that has provided them joy during remote or virtual learning and to specify what drew them to the object.
2. Students create thumbnail drawings of the object in their sketchbooks, focusing on varied angles and perspectives. Next, they choose the thumbnail that best captures the essence of their object to enlarge as a final drawing.
3. Students observe their object from the selected angle and draw the object on pastel paper.

4. Ask students to focus on and emphasize what they see in the object that makes them feel joyful.

Assessment

Students will participate in weekly online critiques with the teacher.

Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Artwork by Emily F., grade eleven.