

7 | Introduction to Art Bootcamp

The structure of the Open Art Room can be very different from the art experiences that students are used to. They will be expected to make independent decisions and use their own ideas, which is new and challenging. The following unit is designed to do two things to support the transition to the Open Art Room: teach students the Artistic Thinking Process as a framework for independent decision making, and provide key information about available media.

Use this bootcamp unit to introduce the Open Art Room to a beginning art class, or with more advanced classes when transitioning from a traditional teaching style. This unit provides the foundation, but we don't linger here. The really good stuff, where the majority of your time should be spent, is in the next section, Artistic Behavior Unit Plans.

National Standards

- VA:Cr1.1.1a
- VA:Cn10.1.1a
- VA:Cn10.1.1Ia

Learning Goals

- Know how to select and use the materials of the art room to create art.
- Understand how to apply the Artistic Thinking Process to develop ideas into finished artwork.

Bootcamps are designed to teach students the skills needed to make choices independently by developing a working understanding of available media and knowing how to apply a process of developing ideas into finished art. Bootcamps are organized by media. Techniques are taught in short, focused lessons that often involve group work, and are then applied in student-directed projects. Over the course of the Bootcamp unit, students learn a variety of methods for developing ideas and developing them into finished work.

Mini-lessons are a key aspect of Bootcamps. We use them as quick skill-building activities that introduce media and provide a working knowledge that supports later choice. These one- or two-day experiences typically start with whole group instruction and guided practice, followed by group work. New information is introduced and processed in whole group instruction, then interacted with by students in guided practice. Group work cements new learning as students work together to accomplish the assigned task, talking through concepts and correcting misunderstandings.

Short projects refer to art activities that follow a group of mini-lessons. These experiences are for applying new skills with media and learning components of the Artistic Thinking Process.

Drawing

The goal of this drawing Bootcamp is to build a working understanding of a variety of drawing media in a short timeframe. This knowledge builds the foundation for later choice. Understanding the basics of value can be hard for students to master, so a combination of guided practice and group work is used to provide students with multiple opportunities to interact with key ideas.

MINI-LESSON 1: *Value Study*

Timeframe: 1 90-minute class

Media: Graphite, charcoal

Learning Goal: Understand the basic concept of using value to create form with graphite and charcoal.

Whole Group Instruction and Guided Practice

Briefly discuss the importance of value in creating contrast and form. Explain that graphite is a drawing medium that is used to create drawings in value, and introduce weighted pencils and blending stumps if you plan

on using them. Show a value scale and explain the importance of pressure in creating a range of shades. Demonstrate creating a scale or play a video showing how, showing more than one option for mark-making. Give students five to ten minutes to create their own scale, focusing not on neatness but on creating a range of values with their preferred type of mark-making.

Next, explain that value can be used to make two-dimensional shapes, like circles, appear three-dimensional. Show an image of a shaded sphere and point out the stages of value. Next, demonstrate shading a sphere or show a related video. Ask students to work along with you, then ask them to share challenges they noticed.

Group Work

Ask students to work together in groups of three or four to create a giant sphere with all the stages of value labeled. Tell them that they will be using charcoal and briefly explain how it works. Have students work to create their sphere, making sure to ask guiding questions as they work, such as: “Where do you plan to place the reflected light?” or “Can you show me where the light source is coming from?”



Students work collaboratively to master the process of creating form through value.