Art curriculum: Self-expression by connecting to real world events

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Art Curriculum: Self-Expression by Connecting to Real World Events

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Art Curriculum: Self-Expression by Connecting to Real World Events

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Abstract

Self-expression in art to connect with real world events is an art curriculum intended for any art teacher across America. The rational for the art curriculum project is to encourage students to learn how to express themselves visually. Actively experiencing history in art as well as the logic of certain artists' reasoning will promote understanding of the real world. Although it would be very easy to have the students follow directions, step-by-step, where the entire class will get the same or similar outcomes. These "cookie-cutter" pieces inhibit students' development as a human being. We, as teachers, need to notice the awkwardness or discomfort that students may exhibit when approached doing independent tasks related to their self-identity. Our job is to draw out their self-awareness by preparing lesson plans that help students relate to the world around them or inside them. Usually at the early stage of adolescence, students are encouraged to study and provide their best performances in core subject such as English and Mathematics, but art and music are not as valued. Specific lesson plans have been designed to focus on the great artistic masters with the inclusion and development of self-expression. The art curriculum will encourage high school students to express their understanding of the world and express it through their vision.
Introduction

During my time at Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (WPSD), I developed the Capstone Unit Plan that correlates with my idea for self-expression by connecting to real world events. I utilized and taught a piece of my Capstone Project to two classes of eleventh graders to pilot my project. I feel my time as a student teacher at WPSD has given me a great connection with the students and provided the opportunity to try a part of my Unit Plan. After a few weeks of getting to know the students, they appeared to be comfortable with me and willing to openly express themselves. Trust between students and teachers is what makes a comfortable and successful relationship between the two parties.
**Project Overview**

Connecting to the real world by using self-expression is the focus of curriculum planning materials. The product consists of four detailed lesson plans for a Unit Plan. The Unit Plan of self-expression and connection to the real world will be produced and saved on a CD. Copies of CDs will be distributed to any art teacher.

The Unit Plan focuses on three specific artists from different time periods. Cave artists, Michelangelo, and Marc Chagall all will be studied. Each artist will be introduced in the context of his or her time period. All art has some form of the person who created it in the final piece. Every painter, sculptor, designer has their own visual vocabulary. As students are assigned projects, the actual focus on the artist as a person is the final project. Students begin the semester looking outward, recreating of an experience such as the cave artist. Students are then assigned a personal interpretation of a story. Much like Michelangelo’s interpretation of the book of Genesis on the Sistine Chapel ceiling and through the influence of Chagall, students are asked to exposed their personal dreams. Looking at the differences between the three artists’ work is a great way to compare and contrast the different subjects, time periods, and painting styles.
Importance of the Project

Why is self-expression so important? As a result of the Congress of Milan in 1880, an overwhelming number of hearing people who attended voted to start the oralist movement. Deaf people were excluded from the vote so throughout the end of nineteenth century to the start of twentieth century, most deaf people were instructed not to express themselves through sign language, but orally. (Marschark et al, 2002, 32). The concept of self-expression, while connecting to the real world, is so important in the field of education because it promotes self-understanding with an understanding the world as well.

In addition to comprehending world events, some deaf students are not usually familiar with what is going on globally due limited access to information, either their ability to read English in the newspaper or catching the news on television. Our job as teachers is to expose students to contemporary events as well as the historical past to encourage independent thinking. Learning to express one’s self visually through art also engages many parts of the students’ capabilities such as motor skills, critical thinking, through hands-on experiences. Generally, people who are deaf depend on their visual capabilities as their primary sensory input mode for information. From my student teaching experience, I found that students in art were hesitant to concept of expressing in art mainly because they are accustomed to following directions. To promote independent thinking by using his or her own experiences in the real world will enable a better understanding of self as he/she experiences life.
Project Objectives

From my student teaching experiences, too often students have a difficult time expressing themselves in the way they would wish. Students write poetry, write stories, and only those with skills in art could express themselves visually through creating art. This statement does not mean that only students with art skills can convey creative ideas, even those who are unskilled in drawing or creating art can still express themselves. However, even the most skilled artists can have a difficult time with true self-expression. The purpose of this capstone project is to allay some of the fears of the students while doing new tasks by involving themselves in the projects. Art is not the only subject for which students feel uncomfortable.

One thing for parents and educators to be aware of, students from toddlers to young adults have one important focus: themselves. Child Development, research has proven that children from a young age, blossom into understanding the world; their first thoughts are of themselves, their needs, their desires, and their wants (DeHart, et al, 2004). Naturally, as a child become teenager, self-identity and “belongingness” matter the most. When the adolescence years approach, they start to compare themselves to other people so they may feel intimidated or confident sometimes within minutes of each other, depending on their personalities. Therefore doing projects about themselves may help in the process of understanding their world better. Learning about themselves while connecting to the outside world continues to be the best lesson. From a young age when a
parent teaches a child vocabulary with constant encouragement, he or she becomes connected to the world even better. If teachers infuse a "me" project which also connects to the real world, it may help the student see he or she also connects to certain current events in the world, or family members and friends.

Focusing on self-expression through various materials, and developing a connection to real world events is also the key to self-expression. Events that happened in students' lives define them. It is important that in the field of education, art expression is required, for students to have a better sense of their identities.

Performing similar life experiences of a Cave artist or Michelangelo on the Sistine Chapel is a great stepping-stone for students' imagination. Marc Chagall's dream-like French cubist artwork and countless other artists who have been known for personal expression of their identities illustrated in their work. For example, Marc Chagall's *I and the Village* (1911) is entirely based on his memories of his homeland in Vitebsk, Russia. The juxtaposition of different images working toward a focal point of farms shows that he used what he remembered as a child but also infused some of his personal thoughts and dreams that causes the audience to feel like they are intruding on a personal dream. Even though this image does not explain clearly what occurred, it does show the artist's mind trying to deviate from the real world.
The main objective for the students studying art is to experience first hand by doing the same thing as the three artists did.

- Cave artists with animals as subjects
  - In the art classroom, tables will be overturned with brown rolled paper taped on the underneath sides of the table creating solid place on which to paint. The top will be covered as well. They will write a story about something they experienced with animals and convey that inside the dark “cave” using a small flashlight for viewing. This private space provides refuge from others’ critical eyes. The students feel comfortable painting in this safe space.

- Michelangelo and his Sistine Chapel ceiling
  - To work with the influence of Michelangelo, students will have to stand up and paint on canvases which are hung horizontally over their heads. Students use a predetermined English or library book they are currently reading and decipher a scene from the book. Michelangelo used the stories from Genesis to convey pictorial images on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Each student will create his/her own scene according to what he/she envisions. The layouts of Michelangelo’s ceiling will be studied, discussed, and applied so that each student can put the puzzle of the canvases together to create one large piece of work.

- Marc Chagall’s stained-glass work is a reminiscent of childhood memories
Students will work independently on this activity because the project focuses on their childhood memories. Sometimes students can have a hard time talking about themselves. By using different techniques of art and a variety of media to create their art, students will be encouraged to express freely.

All three approaches to self-expression will serve as a mode for making connections to the real world, and opening their minds, and viewing it in a different way.

In addition to connecting to the real world events, the study of art history between the cave painting of Lascaux, Renaissance’s Michelangelo, and Surrealism/French Chagall with Cubist is a great inspiration for creativity, self-expression, and comprehension of the three very different periods of humanity. Students will learn about history and give their interpretation by creating their own work about self and experience working in a multitude of media.
Review of Literature

The review of literature has been focused on my capstone project of connecting to the real world and self-expression. This will be a description of how children/adolescents react to doing certain art activities with experienced teachers and how the mind works through creativity. Self identity is also a key issue when it comes to interacting with adolescents. Children have a different way of learning as Howard Gardner has stated through the eight multiple intelligences (Silver, Strong, & Perine, 2000, ). Any of the intelligences of Linguistics-Verbal, Logical-Mathematical, Spatial, Musical, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and finally Naturalistic can be utilized for learning to occur. However for the field of art, spatial, intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences are applied most. Spatial intelligence is associated with the arts involving “a high capacity for perceiving, creating, and re-creating pictures and images”, Interpersonal focuses on working in groups and cooperating with other people well, and Intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to analyze oneself and one’s own “emotional states” (Silver, Strong, & Perine, 2000, 8).

The Arts Improve Students’ Performances in School

Research by Zemmelman, Daniels and Hyde discusses the importance of not restricting children in the use of learning materials or limit their art education. In the final report of Champions of Change which “documented a range of positive effects for students with high arts involvement in their schools:
- The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached.
- The arts reach students in ways that they are not otherwise being reached.
- The arts connect students to themselves and to each other.
- The arts transform the environment for learning.
- The arts provide learning opportunities for adults in the lives of young people.
- The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful.
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world or work. (1998a in Zemmelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005, 200).

The results of this evidences has shown positive results that “arts as a tool of engagement and learning across the curriculum” does indeed “draw [students] deeper into academic works, helps them achieve more, and may even improve their scores on high stakes tests (Zemmelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005, 201). As the researchers study why students’ academic performance improved as a result of art involvement, they discovered the students had fun and were more attentive in arts activities (Zemmelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005, 201).

Ways of How Students May Learn

Karkou and Glasman discuss the fact that “the arts teacher was often seen as the provider of artistic material/stimuli that addressed students’ personal issues and provided support for their personal development” (2004, 58). In an article
authored by Lund, an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Stockton State College in New Jersey and Kranz, a Director of the Counseling Center at Eckerd College in Florida, discussion was based on the model of a professional artist, 1) the process of creating work, 2) establishment of students' artwork, 3) having artwork criticized and analyzed, and 4) the termination of the exhibition. After experiencing the process, they mentioned that "just as in psychotherapy the therapist must anticipate the termination process from the patient's point of view and be able to guide patients through it, the art educator must anticipate the artist's experience and prepare artists for what will most likely be a recurring cycle through which they must thereafter guide themselves" (Lund & Kranz, 1991).

Basically, art educators should be able to see from students' point of views as they are creating artwork to help them be better teachers and advisors. Some theories are discussed in the statements of Karkou and Glasman that there are several ways to educate students the meaning of art. As oppose to the previous statement, "Witkin (1974), a strong supporter of the child-centered tradition of arts education, argued that the emotional world of the child expanded and became enriched through active participation in creative activities" (Karkou & Glasman, 2004, 58).

*Lesson Plans and Self-Expression*

At Hoover High School where Andrew Procter, an alumnus, is currently teaching, introduces students to a medium that was foreign to them, clay, adding
motivation for the project. Students enjoyed the project called the art-historical teapot. “Each student [was] required to create a teapot based on a specific artist. Student feedback related to this project was very favorable: ‘I have enjoyed trying to get into the mind of my artist, and ask what would his teapot look like,’ said Ginger Stout, 18” (Procter, 2003, 99). A comment from another student Britt Marett’s “Dali-inspired teapot,” which shows the connection she had made from creating art in the real world: “Working with clay has taught me to be more moldable as a person” (Procter, 2003, 99). A 16-year-old student, Tabitha Bently, explains while she created a clay matchbox, “I’m trying not to be the person who fits in with the crowd, trying not to be ignored” (Procter, 2003, 99).

According to Whitney, an artist, Sellar, a teacher from Mintabie Area School, and Paige, a Lecturer in science and mathematics education at the University of South Australia, there are several ways that students can apply the arts to their experiences outside of school or inside certain environments. “In today’s world visual arts are also being used in the same practical sense [such as in the past, the materials from the natural environment were used in such ways as fashioning tools, create images which related to people’s spirituality] as well or as a means of communication, a form or self expression and identity building” (Whitney, Sellar, & Paige, 2004, 25). Seeing the world as it is isn’t limited only to a visual arts experience, but also scientific discoveries such as:

“Rather than describing ‘what was’, they were exploring and creating ‘what could be’. Exploring and creating ‘what could be’ instead of stating the
facts, this is a great way of using art and science to create a unique learning environment for students in which they were both 'knowers' and sensitive 'creators' of their environment” (Whitney, Sellar, & Paige, 2004, 26).

Learning about art can be applicable in the real world whether it be science or other courses for learning. This process of using the environment as the learning center helps “develop lasting relationships with their environments, and develop understandings of the natural world and dispositions to create ecologically sustainable spaces in which to live” (Whitney, Sellar, & Paige, 2004, 26).

Dr. John Healy, a Teaching Editor of *TeachingK-8* and an art teacher at Woodland Middle School in East Meadows, New York, stated that “creative experiences promote our understanding of our individuality and accentuate the value of our uniqueness to others” (2002, 52). Since no one has the exact same experiences, this is where the individuality is expressed. Self-expression is important to a child’s growth of mind and owning a sense of individuality (Healy, 2002, 54).

**Communicating in Art**

According to Withrow, artistic skills are important to what people need to focus on when it comes to art (2004, 34). The use of any color, line, style, and shape for students are important because it gives them the choices of using what they feel comfortable with (Withrow, 2004, 34). According to Withrow, a part of the Department of Counseling and Educational Development at University of North
Carolina, the emotions of art for mental health acknowledges that there are two sides of the brain which practice differently when it comes to art. Looking at the left side of the brain which specializes in verbal skills, is “analytical and critical, able only to tell us what we think we feel” and “the right brain which communicates in images, is symbolic and emotional, and can tell us what we actually feel” (Withrow, 2004, 34).

In a study by eleven graduate students registered in art therapy worked under supervision with eleven unselected children with learning disabilities. The graduate students used special art techniques to study the children assessing their possible outcomes at the end of the creating art. (Silver & Lavin, 1977, 27). An individual with a learning disability explained his drawing related to the experiment:

A picture about his grandmother whom he visits every Sunday. He drew her at a stove making hamburgers for him, then added the path with a car driving on it and a house at the end of the path (Silver & Lavin, 1977, 31).

As a result of this the experiment, his scores in ability to form visual groups improved from 1 to 2.50 points. In spatial orientation, his score in drawing from observing four objects on a table improved from .91 to 5. (Silver & Lavin, 1977, 31). At the end when parents filled out the questionnaires regarding of the art experiment on their children, almost all parents gave the highest rating for their question whether their child enjoyed coming to the class (Silver & Lavin, 1977, 33).
There are different stages in life that children and adolescents will endure. Regarding the adolescent years, their primary focus is about themselves. Erik Erikson, a psychologist, has confirmed that the ultimate task of adolescences is to establish “a personal identity” (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2004, 488). Identity development involves “an understanding of the self, of one’s relationships with others, and of one’s values and roles in society (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2004, 488). Harter states that “through interactions with others, performance at school, and experiences in the larger world, teenagers’ tentative beliefs about the self are increasingly confirmed and they become less self-conscious” as they get older (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2004, 494).

Britt-Maj Wikstrom, an Associate Professor at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm Sweden, did a study to explore children’s ability to express thoughts and feelings as well as the subject and mood of the art piece. The hospitalized children were given expressive art supplies to create something out (Wikstrom, 2005, 480). “The meaning of esthetics has been formulated by ancient philosophers who saw a natural link between art and life” and seeing in this way, art is a natural link to life (Wikstrom, 2005, 480). Nursing researchers have discovered that the meaning of esthetics in “visual art, music, dance, and poetry are not isolated activities in nursing care but are important parts of an entirety” (Wikstrom, 2005, 480). Even the role of a nurse is intertwined with the arts.
It is important to not put pressure on students with statements such as: this is the way things "should" be done. Telling students to follow restrictive guidelines can lead to fear of not doing things right (Zemmelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005, 195). When teaching art, technique is not what matters most, instead it is the action of creating that is the goal. For example, Sutley, an art teacher at Somerville Middle School in New Jersey, stated that "For students who don't consider themselves particularly adept at drawing, the unsophisticated, unbalanced, gravity-free requirements of the project [of creating Surrealistic-like and Chagall-like types of work] enable them to draw what they feel without the burden of concern about realistic artistic devices" (2006, 51).

Scharf, a photographer, has his own ideas about self-expression, he states "Style is the 'what' of the image itself, not how it was made, the tools you used, or your social style. It is how you see and reproduce an image through self-expression—the recurring underlying themes and patterns" (2006). It is not the technique that is looked upon at but instead what the result looks like based on one's own style. The importance of a work of art that is "as unique as handwriting", something no one else has is greatly emphasized in his writing (Scharf, 2006). Self-expression is what separates artists. No one ever has the same experience in life. Each artist brings these unique experiences to their work.

Children in general view and create art in different ways and younger children are much more likely to express themselves more freely than older children. As children grow older, they let influential situations affect them. When
they begin to slowly understand how the world works, creativity can either be suppressed or flourish, depending on how they are taught. Jolley, Fenn, and Jones, members of the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Health and Sciences in Staffordshire University, UK, stated that there is a theory that considers “the influence of children’s increasing desire to draw their world as they see it and states that the pursuit of drawing ‘photographic’ or realistic representations stifles the child’s natural expression” (2004, 548). This stifling can continue even beyond adolescence. If a person has not had any prior art experience, they too can feel that the only good art is that which looks real and this limits their creativity. Stephenson, an art therapist on geriatric unit at St. Luke’s Hospital in New York, explains that the age of the elders are different from the children and younger people so art therapist have alter their approach with geriatric individuals (2006, 25). Such differences between the younger people and the elders “occur on the physical, creative, and psychological levels” however and “luckily, one of the greatest strengths of the creative arts is the numbers of ways they can be adapted so as to be appropriate for anyone, regardless of age or ability” (Stephenson, 2006, 25).

**Discussion**

Connecting art to the natural world is natural and expected. To deviate from doing the same type of work everyday in school, art teachers and teachers in general need to look outside of the box and discover that there are new lessons to
be learned. Younger children are more likely to be free with self-expression not being afraid to express. Whereas adolescents are going through changes in their lives where they think their identities are the most important focus. Self-expression is usually more difficult for adults who don’t want to be judged. Not all children are book-smart, so the visual aspect of a lesson and linking what is important to learn in school to the outside world is beneficial for children’s well-being and expressive identity.
Results

During my student teaching experience in January/February of 2007, I designed the Unit Plan relating to my capstone project idea for self-expression by connecting to the real world. The product of my classroom curriculum is specifically designed for the older students in high school art. Because of limited time and resources, I’ve decided to do the lesson plan with self-expression with the parallel of learning about Marc Chagall.

A Brief Explanation of the Chagall Project

Marc Chagall’s artwork will be used as an example of how childhood memories of his life can be visually translated into connections to the real events. This is an great opportunity to model for students that some memories have certain meanings to the person even while it is derived from real world events. Marc Chagall’s life story and artwork as well as other great master artists’ artwork, will be used to ignite the Unit Plan of self-expression while connecting to the real world. There are three parts to the unit plan. The students will be learning about the environment and location of what they had to go through for their artwork such as Cave artists in the dark caves with torches, Michelangelo’s painting on the ceiling, and Marc Chagall’s expression about his life story. After learning the basic history of each artist, the students will then involve their personal selves in the project as they learn about the artists. Exposure to different stories, plans, and memories of other artists’ artwork is a good way to start discussing about the different things that happens in real life. Marc Chagall was poor while growing up in a small Russian
village with farms, cows, circus folks. His exposure to happy things in his poverty-stricken life led to his many interests of poetry, music, and art. As a class, we will discuss about the factors that happened when he was young and how that affected him as an adult. For Marc Chagall’s project, the classroom materials required to create the project requires Black poster board, hot glue, and wax crayons/oil pastels. The purpose for these specific materials is to expose them to different art materials other than typical white paper with paint.

The Outcome

I taught two classes of the eleventh graders which I will label: 11A and 11B. The 11A art class had an 80-minute block to work, whereas the 11B class only had 40 minutes. Naturally, the 11B class took longer than 11A to finish the Chagall project. However, the results were similar. Both classes were thoroughly involved with discussing Marc Chagall as an artist. Most of them were enamored with the idea that Chagall’s work wasn’t realistically “normal” and was different. By discussing their experiences individually, as a result, I found that many of the students felt they were more connected to their own artwork. Students could abandon their fears of not being able to draw realistically, because Chagall’s approach was much more abstract. There is no realism in the work of Chagall. From my personal experience, students showed huge promise in doing the project. Encouragement became a huge motivator for students trying to experiment, break old habits, and ideas related to their work and art skills. This support from the teacher and peers helped some of the students who are shy or withdrawn blossom
as they started working. The coming-out-of-their-shells meant these students became much more involved. With my questioning students about each part of their works, they wanted to explain and to clarify things. This generated more and more ideas about how to include another memory.

As a result, the experiment of using a piece of my Unit Plan was successful. Some of the students ended up enjoying showing their personal feelings on a piece of paper, some of them who were shy in the beginning began to talk more in classes. One of my students said, that it feels like all the energy inside of her that was boiling over and was assuaged by working on the project.
Discussion

Looking back at my experience, I found that I wished I had included at least one Deaf artist in my lesson plans because some of the students inquired if Marc Chagall was deaf. Incorporating a modern Deaf artist would have enabled deaf students to feel connected to the issues of the world as a deaf person. The process would have easily enhanced their personal identities as deaf persons.

Aside from that, I feel that if I had utilized the entire Unit Plan, I would have been successful, however not in the manner of time. Time is always a concern during school especially when the two eleventh grade classes have different time schedules. School assemblies, standardized testing, snow days, required speech classes are required some students to be pulled out of art class once a week. This was a common problem for all teachers at school. The Marc Chagall stained-glass project alone took about three weeks for the 11A class and about an extra two to three weeks for 11B class. I predict that if I had done my entire Unit Plan based on that experience of cancelled classes, it would probably take me about three months to fully complete the project with the eleventh graders. However I feel that this is a really important lesson to learn for students to know and discover about themselves as well as the world around them.
References


Purpose of Connecting to the Real World by using Self-Expression

I found from my student teaching experience at residential schools for the Deaf, the numbers of students per class ranges from 4 to 10 students. For the capstone project, I decided on the average class size with seven high school art students. All students have elected to be in the art classroom with their own intentions.

Art classes at residential schools for the deaf, the students usually meet only 2 to 3 times a week. For the purpose of this project, it will be three class sessions per week.

The unit plan consists of four lesson plans with a focus on self-expression by connecting to the real world. The plan design revolves around artwork of different kinds. The first lesson will begin learning about the very first artists of our history, the nameless Cave artists. Next will be Renaissance artist Michelangelo with his ceiling work on Sistine Chapel and the third artist, Expressionist/Cubist Marc Chagall and his stained-glass murals. After each time period, we will come together to distinguish and discuss the differences and similarities between certain murals that have had a profound impact on people.

During each time period with different artists, students will experience (1) a brief art history lesson, (2) discussion and brainstorming about how each artist painted or created their work, (3) hands on activity/self project. Some activities will include group work on a project, working independently on their pieces. I have designed four lesson plans. The first three focus on artists and process used to create certain artwork. The fourth lesson plan involves students writing their opinions. Understand that each lesson plan does not have a strict time limit because each
plan is continuous meaning that one lesson plan for one artist. Each lesson plan will go on for as long as it requires or until about 75% of the students are done with their work.
New York Standards
The Arts

Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts
Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles.

Standard 2: Knowing and Using Art Materials and Resources
Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

Standard 3: Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art
Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

Standard 4: Understanding the Cultural Contribution of the Arts
Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.
Bloom’s Taxonomy

At end of the unit plan, the students will:

Knowledge
- Identify the terms imperative for the ability to discuss examples of Cave Art, Michelangelo, and Marc Chagall’s artwork. Identify time period, location, discovery of the Lascaux Cave
- Identify the techniques used by each artist.

Comprehension
- Grasp the idea of how the environment and/or description of artists’ lives are all part of the artists’ final artwork.

Application
- Apply knowledge learned from art history lesson to the activities
- Utilize different and unusual materials provided to create artwork
- Apply own personal stories and/or techniques learned during activities/projects.

Analysis
- Pick an artwork and relate it in his/her own view.
- Find differences and similarities in the creation of art and environment between the three arts: Cave Art, painting of Sistine Chapel, and Chagall’s stained-glass.
- Critically think about how each artist was influenced by the art of the past and their present culture.

Synthesis
- Create personal stories and vision after or during each activity.
- Write a story about experiences with animals before cave painting.
- Answer an opinion paper at the end of unit plan.

Evaluation
- Teacher’s feedback
- Self-evaluation in own writings
- Also accessed student’s one or more multiple intelligences:
- Intrapersonal (depending on one’s inner feeling to discover self-understanding by creating projects and writing self-evaluation)
- Interpersonal (how the student works with others on a group projects)
- Spatial (to create an image in one’s own style)
- Linguistic (the ability to write a story about own animal story)
- Bodily Kinesthetic (focusing on how to control art medium and materials)
Cave Art

Anticipatory Set: The purpose of Cave Art project is to experience what the Cave people experienced when creating in dark, cold, and damp caves. Before the actual project, students will be required to brainstorm what the cave people were experiencing at the time. Questions such as what supplies would they need before entering the caves that are cold and damp? And where would cave artists get paint and paintbrushes?

During our discussion, we will discover that fire was necessary, but because of safety in a school environment, a flashlight will be substituted. Resources from the natural environment were used. Teacher will bring in natural materials such as mud paint and charcoal. Field trip may be planned to visit a local cave and perform painting on wallpaper inside the cave with implements. However, if a field trip cannot be approved, then the brown craft paper will be taped on the undersides of two long rows of overturned art tables.

Before starting the project, teacher will check student files to see if anyone has any allergic sensitivities from touching natural resources for painting. Students will use teacher’s materials brought in from the natural environment such as mud, red clay, and charcoal. Also students can use the art brushes or drinking straw to blow paint on the canvas as a substitute for hair twined brushes on hollowed animal bones.

Objectives
1. The students will be able to identify what the Cave artists needed in order to make art.
2. The students will identify the time period of Cave artists.
3. The students will participate in cave art experience by using their expression visually translated onto paper.

Materials
- Brown craft paper roll
- Paintbrushes/drinking straws
- Red clay, mud, charcoal
- Handouts
- Lascaux (site of famous cave paintings in France) picture book
- Overhead Projector
- Flashlights

**Preparation**

First class: Lascaux picture book, overhead projector, and handouts ready for the class.

Second class: Teacher sets up tables to prepare for their “cave” experience

**Procedures** *(This entire lesson plan will take a minimum of three class sessions)*

*First Class Session (one class session)*

1. Ask students who they think was the very FIRST artists of this world?
   a. Write their comments on board (making sure everyone has the chance to respond)
   b. Answer: Cave Artists

2. Tell the story of how one of many caves, Lascaux cave, was discovered in France. Indicate on a world map where Lascaux is located in France.

3. Begin to brainstorm a list of what the Cave artists would have needed at the time to create art. Imagine: Walking in a cold, dark, damp cave.
   a. What things do we, primitive people with no electricity, gas heat, plastic, cars, and stores, need to make art in a cave? (Write comments on board)
   b. What time period did this occurs and what would the weather be like? (Write comments on board)
      i. **10,000-30,000 years ago** at the end of Ice Age during **Paleolithic** period.
ii. **Ice Age**: Earth was almost completely *covered* in ICE!

c. How did people survive in the Ice Age?

i. Fire for warmth

ii. Weapons for protection and hunting

iii. Foraging (gathering food)

d. **What were the** animals *used for?*

i. **Fur** for clothes to keep warm

ii. **Meat** for food to keep full stomachs

iii. **Bones** for weapons to fight off intruders, people or animals

iv. **Bones** for plates, bowls to eat from or handles for weapons, to make small sculptures and to make things look pretty

4. Show examples of artwork from Lascaux cave under electronic overhead projector.

   a. How did Cave artists paint and/or create if there was no stores to shop for tubes of paint and brushes?

      i. Natural resources: mud, red clay, charcoal from fire

      ii. Animal bones and fur for paintbrushes

5. Open discussion about the Cave Art and continue showing pictures of the artwork that was located in the cave. Explain next class, activity will include acting as Cave Artists. At the end of class, students are to write down what things can be substituted for such items as fire, etc.

*Second Class Session for In-School Classroom Learning (this portion will take 2 class sessions)*

6. Tables are set up according to plan and natural resources are provided.
   Before teacher and students go inside the “cave” and paint, they are to write an animal story that personally happened to them. For example, I drove home one day and I saw a deer eating grass by some trees and a groundhog was not very far from the deer. Teacher will illustrate this story on the paper
by painting a deer with the groundhog. The students can paint anything they want as long as it’s about animals.

7. Rules have been established. If students fool around or act immature with the supplies, the materials will be given back to the teacher. Explain expectations: the students are to stay in their areas when working on the long brown paper. Students cannot mark or fool around on other people’s artwork. Students can move to another empty space on the paper but not on other students’ space.

8. Students are to wear smocks. Students with their own situations will go in the cave and begin to work on their project. Seven small flashlights (their oil lamp) will be provided for them to take into the “cave.”

9. Teacher will supervise the activity and check for any student questions

10. When students are done, teacher will take apart the brown paper and post it on a wall so the students can see what they all did in a dark cave.

11. Writing to Learn: How did you feel when you worked inside the cave? Was it easy or hard for you? Why?

**Assessment**

- Were the students able to identify the necessities that cave people needed to create art?
- Did the students follow teacher’s expectation of staying in their space while drawing?
- Did the students pick an animal story that was important to them?
Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Ceiling

Anticipatory Set: The purpose of the Sistine Chapel is to experience what Michelangelo experienced painting by painting on a mock ceiling. The students will be given the chance to paint like Michelangelo by painting canvas hung on clothesline standing on drop cloth. I will also work with the English teacher to see what book the students have read or are reading about. The story of the book will be portrayed on the canvas “ceiling”. The real world connection will be about performing what Michelangelo did, how to apply a story into art like the artist, and the self-expression will be about how each view a part of the story.

Objectives

1. The students will be able to identify the different positions Michelangelo had to paint on ceilings.
2. The students will be able to identify the artist, Michelangelo, to the artwork, the Sistine Chapel.
3. The students will be able to define Michelangelo’s scaffolding.
4. The students will be able to critically think about how each scene should go together.
5. The students will be able to cooperate and work with one another.

Materials Needed

- Story of Michelangelo
- Canvases
- Non-toxic tempera paint or acrylic paint
- Cardboard or drop cloth (for the drips)
- Paintbrushes
- Goggles and mouth masks for safety
- Clothesline

Procedures (total of 4 to 5 class sessions)
First Class Session (this part takes one class session)

1. The class will begin by talking about a certain artist named Michelangelo and his famous work on a chapel. He painted the Sistine Chapel from 1508 to 1512. I will show different examples of his work such as the sculpture of David, his paintings, and finally his ceiling paintings.

2. All the students will break up in groups and discuss how in the 16th century that a small man of 5'4 can work on a grand church's ceiling.

3. Write students' answers on the board.

4. After that the class will discuss the technicality of him using the scaffolding like how window cleaners use scaffolding to clean windows and do housework on sides of the building.
   a. In order to reach the chapel's ceiling, Michelangelo designed his own scaffold, a flat wooden platform on brackets built out from holes in the wall near the top of the windows, rather than being built up from the floor which would have involved a massive structure. The scaffolding did not occupy the entire area of the ceiling. The painting was done in two stages.

5. Explain what the pictures represent in the ceiling because there are different stories that reinforce the church's theme from the Book of Genesis. His own personal expression was included as well as he worked for four full years on this project! The nine scenes are painted from the Book of Genesis such as the story of first creation and Noah's Ark.

6. Show and explain the layout of what Michelangelo did was established before he painted the actual ceiling.

Second Class Session (This part should take about 3 to 4 class sessions)

7. Discuss the book that the students have been reading in their Language Art class and list seven most important scenes from the book. Each student must have a scene to design (in total of 7 for the entire class).

8. As a team, design the layout of where each scene will be placed.
9. Create a sketch of what students want to include from the book on a big piece of newsprint. (a painting per squared canvas and then when put all seven painting together, the story will connect to each other)

10. Clarify the rules of safety: safety goggles, smocks, drop cloth on floor, and masks (to prevent paint dripping in mouth).

11. Establish the large unstructured canvas for each student on top clothesline with safety goggles.

12. Start painting in his/her own scene that was chosen by each student.

13. Students will later assemble the paintings of each student by cutting pieces and putting it together.

**Assessment**

- Were the students able to describe Michelangelo and relate him to Sistine Chapel?
- Were the students able to identify scaffolding?
- Were the students able to identify the position Michelangelo had to paint?
- Were the students able to critically think about how each scene should go together?
- Did the students cooperate and work with one another?
Marc Chagall

Anticipatory Set: Even though Marc Chagall used stained-glass, the class will be using something experimental. We will be using hot glue on black poster board with bright oil pastels. The purpose of this lesson plan is for the students to use what they know about themselves only and applies it in their artwork. The real world that students have experienced is with themselves along with other important people in their lives. The point of integrating themselves in an artwork instead of copying what students see is imperative to building their self-identity.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Students will be able to identify Marc Chagall
2. Students will be able to recognize the visual style of Marc Chagall
3. Students will be able to create an artwork using their personal ideas and memory
4. Students will be able to identify what a focal point is.

Materials

- Scrap paper, at least 8.5" x 11"
- 12" x 18" black or dark blue poster board
- Pencils
- Hot glue
- Oil pastels (Cray-Pas)
- Toothpicks/skewers for scratching
- Tissues for blending
- Printed example of Chagall’s work
- Chagall book
**Procedure** (this should take about five class sessions to work on their individual projects)

1. Ask students how many of them remember specific things from their childhood? Or is it completely muddy?
2. Write “Marc Chagall” on the blackboard and ask the students if they recognize the artist’s name.
3. Explain Chagall’s historical background and of his childhood memories. He was born in 1887 and died in 1985. He lived through the period of WWII. He does not only work in stained glass but also in painting, sculptures, and drawings.
4. Show the book and works by Chagall (such as his paintings of "I And The Village" and "Birthday" and the stained-glass of the murals) and lead the class in a discussion. Ask the students to describe what they see, which elements are realistic, and which could only happen in a dream.
5. Ask students to interpret what they see in Chagall’s work. Let them know that there is no right or wrong answer because Chagall didn’t talk about his work in details so that his work was mysterious to viewers.
6. Explain to the students that they will be illustrating a story from their life. Ask them to choose an event that has already happened to them or that they would like to happen in the future. Brainstorm possibilities, such as:
   a. Moving to or from a town
   b. Future careers
   c. Favorite activities
   d. Death of a loved one
   e. Divorce
   f. Baby stories
   g. Dreams
7. Remind students that the subject matter can be happy or sad, but it needs to be personal. **Note: this can be a difficult subject. If one is overly emotional about**
this and asks to withdraw following the assignment and draw something else, it will be allowed.

8. Show two different examples of my own drawing of childhood memories on the blackboard and ask which one of the drawings seem to fit Chagall's style (one drawing will be items that are separated whereas the other drawing is all infused into each other) (the purpose of this part is to make sure that the students see the differences between the examples. The “Chagall” example is rich and infused in each other whereas the other is just separated drawings of favorite things.)

9. Ask students to sketch their idea onto the scrap paper. Refer to Chagall's works and how he painted objects floating around, upside down, etc. Point out that this is not a strictly realistic drawing, but it should have a focal point, preferably in the middle of the page.

   a. Remind students that this should be a symbolic picture, and it doesn't necessarily have to make perfect sense to the viewer as long as it tells the story. (Examples: one student may have gone through her parents' painful divorce, drawing herself in the middle, with a parent on either side tugging her hand, and a broken heart over her head. Or one may illustrate a well-remembered trip to an amusement park, with a roller coaster winding around the page.)

10. When students are ready to show me their sketches for approval, they will copy their idea onto the black or dark blue paper. Pencil lines has to be very light so it won't etch into the paper.

11. It is during this time that I will do a demonstration of how to use hot glue on the black/blue paper to prepare the students on how they will want to do their drawings. The hot glue is an experimental technique to create stained-glass effects. I add oil pastel and explain they could put hot glue over oil pastels as well.
12. Next, ask students to trace and/or fill in their pencil lines with glue. The glue should dry clear, allowing the black paper to show through, giving the picture a stained-glass effect.

13. When the glue is dry, have students begin coloring with oil pastels. Oil pastels look best when colored with exerted pressure, although coloring lightly and rubbing with a tissue can create an unique background. Blend color for best effort in the appearance of the picture. The focal point of the illustration should generally receive the brightest, richest coloring effects and gradually fade off to the corners.

14. Some other techniques to try are patterning (lay down a background color, then draw lines or dots on top), smearing, and scratching (lay down a heavy color/colors, then use a toothpick to scratch lines or details).

Assessment
a. Student chose personal idea to their work
b. Students connected to the real world by choosing events that happened in their lives
c. Did their symbol communicate the meaning?
d. Student showed surrealistic work (not realistic)
e. Chagall used bright colors as the students should too
f. Focal point is clear
Review of the Three Artwork

Anticipatory Set: Connecting to the real world by revisiting the artworks of Cave Art, Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel and the stained glass mural of Marc Chagall that we discussed for the Unit Plan. The students will understand that the different time periods affects how people look at the world and noticing that humanity evolves in many different ways.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to explain what a mural is
2. Students will be able to critically think about the differences between the three different pieces of artwork
3. Students will be able to independently think about their own experiences.

Materials Needed

- Cave Art, Sistine Chapel, and Marc Chagall’s handouts.
- Self-evaluation
- Pencils

Procedure

1. Explain what a mural is.
   a. Cave Art, Sistine Chapel, and Marc Chagall’s stained glass.
2. I will give the students a collection of questions regarding to what they learned. This will not be graded based on points. Instead students must participate in writing. They may use their old handouts from each lesson of each artist.

Assessment

- Did the students explain what a mural is?
- Did the students answer the questions by themselves relating to their own opinions?
1. Do you think all of the three artworks we learned about were all murals? Why and why not?

2. What are the difference between the images of Cave Art, Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel, and Chagall’s stained-glass?
3. Why do you think the Cave Artists painted all the beautiful animals? What were they doing in their lives that made animals so important?

4. Was it difficult for you to come up with a scene? Why?

5. Did you like painting lying on the floor? Why or why not?
6. Marc Chagall had a fascinating life and he showed them through his artwork. Did you have a hard time thinking of memories and/or dreams while you worked?

7. What did you learn about yourself from doing the projects?
Cave Art

10,000-30,000BC
One of some famous OLDEST cave art in the world is located in Lascaux, France.

The Discovery of Lascaux

The world never knew about the Lascaux cave until 1940s! The discovery happened when four teenagers, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel and Simon Coencas, were walking on ground when they heard a pebble drop somewhere far away. They looked around trying to find where it could have occurred. It wasn’t until they looked down and realized that there was a small hole where the pebble went through. The hole was big enough for one of them to go through and discovered that the small hole actually was a big hole, a cave! After they explored, they told their teacher how they saw many old rich paintings of animals. After that, the hole was dug to make it bigger so that people could visit. Countless people came to visit one of the most famous discoveries of ancient art.
10,000-30,000 years ago, Cave dwellers lived in a cold environment. It was during the end of Ice Age. The Ice Age had most of the world covered in ice! However by the end of Ice Age, parts of Europe and Asia were covered allowing some warmthness to come out a bit.

Cave people survived by using their advanced brains:
- Fire
- Hunting/Weapons
- Foraged (collect plants, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds during warm seasons)
- Clothing

Animals were the lifesavers of the Cave dwellers because parts of their bodies provided
- Fur for clothes to keep warm
- Meat for food to keep full stomach
- Bones for weapons to keep them safe
- **Bones** for plates, bowls, or handles for weapons to eat from or make things look pretty

http://www.public.iastate.edu/~cford/342neandertal.jpg

Some theories show that the reasons why the Cave artists painted animals in rich colors, natural-like form is because they studied animals because they were what made them survive and/or the spirituality of the animals. Animals were painted in **full** and **rich** color and form.
Color

The color the cave people used were very "earthy."
The "earthy" color looked like it came from earth’s mud, dirt and the black after fire (carbon)

http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/img/da-plafond.jpg

Notice that animals are more full figured than the humans. Why do you think that?

http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/img/8d103.jpg

All of this information can be viewed on http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/en/

Enjoy!
Sistine Chapel from (1508-1512) by Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni.

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3b/Sistine_Chapel_towards_altar.jpg
the details of Sistine Chapel

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/58/Chapelle_sixtine_plafond.jpg/800px-Chapelle_sixtine_plafond.jpg
Michelangelo was a man of many hats: he was an Italian Renaissance painter, sculptor, architect, poet and engineer. And he was only 5’4! To be able to paint the high ceiling of Sistine Chapel (look at picture on front), short Michelangelo designed his own scaffold, a flat wooden platform on brackets built out from holes in the wall near the top of the windows. He didn’t want to build from the floor because that would have required more work and bulky support.

His gigantic sculpture of David is one of his most famous works.
Marc Chagall
French Cubism
Marc Chagall stained glass windows at the Art Institute of Chicago
Marc Chagall was born in **Vitebsk, Russia** on July 7, 1887.

His family and people who lived in Vitebsk were Jewish. Chagall's father was a herring merchant with a small income and had to support 10 children in a small house. They were very poor.

Even though they were very poor, the family never went hungry and his childhood was **happily** filled with rich experiences of the surrounding rural countryside, suburban blocks with small wooden houses, and backyards filled with children and animals. Chagall's hobby as a child was playing the violin and singing. He also drew and wrote poetry.

In 1910, he moved to Paris where he befriended with Pablo Picasso, the father of Cubism.

Chagall developed his **own style** that made him famous. His type of style is called **French Cubism**. Even though he was born a Russian, his painting was in French style.

He began painting **memories** from his Russian homeland by using bright and vibrant color in dream-like state. He always included familiar houses, familiar village people, and animals that were from his life.

The figures in his paintings are alive with movement and expression, making music and walking as if dancing. Even though Chagall lived through poor condition, suffering, and death, his vision of his village life showed happiness.

In his work, acrobats and circus folk line the street and village town-scape, as well as a scampering black cat. Folklore, fantasy, circus, and animals populate Chagall's paintings for the next seventy years.

Meanwhile, he lost his wife, Bella after 30 years of marriage. He grieved for a long time and painted many art relating to Bella.
I and the Village, 1911 oil on canvas.

Characteristics of his work:
- bright pure color
- dream-like quality of work
- childhood memories of his Russian homeland
- used size to make things more important

"Despite all the trouble of our world in my heart, I have never given up on the love in which I was brought up or on man’s hope in love. In life, just as on the artist’s palette, there is but one single colour that gives meaning to life and art—the colour of love”

~~Marc Chagall

All of these information can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marc_Chagall