2015

Let's Collaborate! Process-based Sculptures

Lena Isenberg

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Let's Collaborate!
Process-based Sculptures

Lena Isenberg
March 14, 2015

Grades: 6-8
Class size: 20
Class Duration: 90 minutes
Number of classes to complete: 12

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Throughline

Classroom collaborative art-making can uncover the tension between existential perspectives and community consciousness.

Generative Topic
Who gets the final say – you, me, or us?

Lesson Description
To begin this lesson, students will study action painting from the Abstract Expressionist movement. Students will watch videos of Jackson Pollock and Dale Chihuly painting, and compare their processes. Students will also view Pollock and Chihuly’s art-making processes in the context of existentialism. They will understand that an artist’s actions are what give his or her life meaning. Taking inspiration from these artists’ processes, students will create collaborative sculptures in response to their materials. While creating their collaborative sculpture, students will be challenged by the dynamic interplay between individual ideas and group decision-making.

Resources


Understanding Goals

UG 1. Students will understand the relationship between action painting and existentialism.

   Performances of Understanding
   - Intro: Students will understand that following WWII, existentialism influenced the process and philosophy of Abstract Expressionists.
   - Guided: Students will understand the similarities between Jackson Pollock and Dale Chihuly's process.
   - Culminating: Students will understand that an artist's struggle with materials can serve as a lasting mark of his/her existence.

   Ongoing Assessment
   - I will assess students written responses in which they explain how existentialism influenced Abstract Expressionists, compare Pollock and Chihuly's process, and explain how an artist's struggle with materials can give their work and life meaning. This will be a formal assessment.

UG 2. Students will understand the difference between abstract and non-objective art.

   Performances of Understanding
   - Intro: Students will understand that abstract art can be categorized as objective or non-objective.
   - Guided: Students will understand that the line between objective and non-objective art is often blurry through the process of debate and discussion.
   - Culminating: Students will understand that they can apply these concepts by creating a collaborative non-objective sculpture.

   Ongoing Assessment
   - I will provide feedback during their debate and discussion about where the line is between objective and non-objective art. I will also provide feedback while they design their non-objective sculpture. These will be informal assessments. I will assess their ability to identify abstract art that is objective and non-objective. This will be a formal assessment.

UG 3. Students will understand that individual and collective expression in art often mirrors individual and collective expression in society.

   Performances of Understanding
   - Intro: Through discussion, students will understand how Dale Chihuly's process incorporates individual and collaborative art-making.
Guided: Students will synthesize their understanding of Chihuly’s process by using individual and group decision-making while making their own sculptures.

Culminating: Students will apply their understanding by identifying other activities they have completed that required individual and group decision-making.

Ongoing Assessment

I will provide feedback on students’ ability to identify how Chihuly works individually and collaboratively. This will be an informal assessment. I will assess students’ ability to balance individual and group decision-making based on observations of them working and on end of class reflections. These will be informal assessments. I will assess students written responses in which they draw parallels between this collaborative art-making process and other disciplines and personal experiences. This will be a formal assessment.
Chihuly Sculpture Field Trip

Kathy David

- Keep your feet on the trail at all times.
- Cacti have shallow roots and sharp needles. Don't touch!
- Do not pick the flowers.
- Walk, don't run.
- Be on time.
- Complete the Treasure Hunt. It's a grade.

Words to Know

Asymmetrical Balance: having parts that fail to correspond to one another in shape, size, or arrangement; lacking symmetry.

Symmetrical Balance: made up of exactly similar parts facing each other or around an axis; showing symmetry.

Radial Balance: when all elements go out from a center point. The elements radiate out in a circular pattern. Radial balance leads your eye towards the center.

Focal Point: the center of interest or activity in a work of art. It may or may not be the actual center of a painting or drawing, but it is always the most important part.

Series: a set of artworks that involve the same subject

Fourth Dimension: can refer to time as another dimension, along with length, width, and depth.

Polyvitro – The name of a plastic polymer that Chihuly created. It is very light.

Neutrals - white, black, and grays have no hue nor intensity and are not colors. They are called neutrals. The term is sometimes used (loosely) to describe low-intensity, almost-neutral color also.

Color Harmonies/Relationships

Monochromatic color – a color harmony that is a single color: a hue and its tints, shades and intensity variations. Example: pink, red, maroon.

Analogous Color Harmonies – a color harmony of three or four colors that are adjacent on the color wheel. The similarity of analogous colors tends to produce a calm, relaxed feeling in an artwork. Example: yellow, yellow-orange and orange

Complementary Color Harmonies - complementary harmonies are based on the contrast of color opposites. When complementary colors are placed side by side in a picture, they make each other look brighter and that creates an exciting, vibrant feeling in the artwork.

Polychromatic – many colors
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INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Enduring Understanding:
Classroom collaborative art-making can uncover the tension between existential perspectives and community consciousness.

Goal:
Your goal is to create a collaborative nonobjective sculpture inspired by the process of action painters and Dale Chihuly. While creating this sculpture, you will need to explore form, balance, rhythm, color, and light.

Guidelines:
The sculpture must be free standing. (proper internal supports/weight distribution)
The sculpture must be viewed from all sides. (front, back, sides)
The sculpture must incorporate external or internal lighting. (light placement)

Materials: (you can go beyond this list)
Plastic water bottles
House paint
Wire
Chicken wire
Styrofoam spheres and rectangles
Cardstock
Tissue Paper
Mod Podge
Hot glue
Scissors

DEADLINE:

Timeline (Design, Create, Assemble)
Week 1
View high school in-progress sculptures, take notes of design/assemblage
Choose a designer for your team, or create a few designs and vote on them
Choose your inspiration for your sculpture
Draw four thumbnail sketches, showing the sculpture from different perspectives
Pick your favorite design and make a detailed drawing of your sculpture

Weeks 2 and 3
Prepare base and support structures
Paint and cut bottles
Create any additional pieces
Start to assemble

Weeks 4 and 5
Roles to Choose From

These roles are meant to be fluid and organic depending on your skills, preferences, and the needs of your team.

**Designer**
The Designer is the person who creates the chosen sculptural design. It is the Designer’s job to decide the specific color palette for the sculpture, as well as cutting and painting techniques. The Designer should stay true to his/her vision and gets the final say on design decisions. However, the Designer needs to be diplomatic and get input from the team. The Designer also needs to be open to his/her vision for the sculpture changing and evolving as it is being made. While the Designer’s primary job is to make design decisions, the Designer should also be an active member of the Production Group or the Assemblage Group.

**Team Leader**
The Team Leader must have strong organization and management skills. It is the Team Leader’s job to determine and assign daily tasks. It is also the Team Leader’s job to check in on team members to make sure they stay on task, and to help the Designer, the Production Group, and the Assemblage Group communicate. While the Team Leader's primary job is to keep the team organized and to uphold clear communication between groups, the Team Leader should also be an active member of the Production Group or the Assemblage Group.

**Production Group**
The Production Group is primarily responsible for organizing, painting, and cutting water bottles. The Production Group needs to communicate with the Assemblage Group to determine which part of the sculpture they need to make first. The Production Group also needs to communicate with the Designer and Team Leader if any design elements need to change due to the process of painting and cutting the bottles. Some Production Group members may switch to the Assemblage Group a couple weeks into the project, once there are more bottles to assemble than there are to make.

**Assemblage Group**
The Assemblage Group is primarily responsible for designing and constructing the structural elements for the sculpture. This includes designing and constructing the base, any internal support structures, attaching water bottles, and attaching lights. The Assemblage Group also needs to communicate with the Production Group to let them know which part of the sculpture will be assembled first. The Assemblage Group also needs to communicate with the Production Group, Designer, and Team Leader if any design elements need to change due to the process of assemblage, and the need for proper support and weight distribution, or incorporation of lighting.
Grade Breakdown

**Participation-50% (Individual Grade)**

**Productivity and Attitude**

**YOUR TEAM IS COUNTING ON YOU!!!** You are expected to be an active, productive, and cooperative team member, putting in your full effort at all times. When you get to class, check in with your team leader on the tasks for the day and get started immediately. You are also expected to clean up properly at the end of class.

**Activity Log**

Your activity log must be filled out and turned in at the end of each class in order to get credit for your participation. Everything must be cleaned up before you fill out your activity log.

**Craftsmanship and Use of Materials-12.5% (Group Grade)**

**Utilization of Elements and Principles of Design-12.5% (Group Grade)**

**Creativity-12.5% (Group Grade)**

**Written Reflection-12.5% (Individual Grade)**
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<tr>
<th>Team 1: Name-Assigned Roles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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