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Branching Out **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can young students understand the concept of “branching”?

Objective

Students will demonstrate their understanding of branching by creating a freestanding sculpture with extending, branching parts.

Materials

3 x 5" (8 x 13 cm) mat board for each student, 1 oz. modeling clay for each student, beads, straws, foam shapes, feathers, pipe cleaners, wire cut into 6" (15 cm) pieces

Procedures

1. Have students examine photos of trees, leaves, skeletons, lightning strikes, spiders, and other images that illustrate branching. Ask students to identify parts of themselves that branch (arms, hands, fingers, legs, toes) from their torso. Explain that branching is vertical, horizontal, and diagonal to the main section of each object. Examine sculptures that have branching parts, such as those of Louise Bourgeois, Nancy Graves, or Alexander Calder.

2. Show students how to create a trunk or base for their sculpture by shaping the modeling clay into a freestanding form. Press the bottom of this form onto the mat board. Use a small amount of a second color to add details by pressing small rolled balls or coils, creating textures and patterns.

3. Once students create and attach their bases, encourage them to add branches by selecting, combining, and inserting the craft materials by gently pushing them into the modeling clay.

4. Reinforce art vocabulary as students complete their work by identifying different types of lines created with the wire and pipe cleaners: horizontal, vertical, and diagonal branching.

Assessment

Students demonstrate their knowledge of branching by sharing and describing their work with the class.

By Grace Hulse, art teacher at Fort Garrison Elementary in Pikesville, Maryland.

Continuous Line Design **Elementary**

The Essential Question

What is a continuous line? How can students practice drawing one and use it in an artwork?

Objective

Students will create a composition beginning with a continuous line design.

Materials

12 x 18" (30 x 46 cm) white drawing paper, pencils, erasers, black permanent ink pens, various colored markers

Procedures

1. Using black permanent ink pens, have students fill their paper with one continuous, unbroken line.

2. Using pencils, have students draw large, simple shapes on their paper.

3. Have students color in their shapes with colored markers. Ask students to leave the background black and white for contrast.

4. Once their designs are finished, have students erase any visible pencil lines.

Assessment

Were students able to fill their paper with one continuous line? Were they able to create an interesting and balanced composition?

By Janice Corsino, art teacher at Le Jardin Academy in Kailua, Hawaii.

Coffee Cup Designs **Middle School**

The Essential Question

In what ways can students create unique designs using a coffee cup as a canvas?

Objective

Students will draw and sketch designs, pictures, and Zentangle patterns of their choice on the inside and outside of a plain white coffee cup.

Materials

plain white coffee cups, permanent markers (fine-tipped and regular), watercolors, paintbrushes, containers for water

Procedures

1. Show students examples of cup drawing done both professionally and by students. Tutorials, videos, and examples can be found online.

2. Have students research Zentangle patterns and other sources for inspiration before beginning their designs.

3. Students should start their designs on the outside of the cup using pencil, then switch to permanent marker.

4. After the outsides of the cups are complete, students should design the inside. Color can then be applied to the inner design only, using watercolor.

Assessment

Students will upload finished artwork and write a two- to four-sentence self-assessment, reflecting on what was successful about their process and what needed improvement.

By Annemarie Baldauf, art teacher at Riverview Middle School in Bay Point, California.

My World **High School**

The Essential Question

How can external factors influence students' work?

Objective

Students will create an illustration of what they would like to do for their future careers.

Materials

pencils, erasers, sketchbooks, illustration boards, colored pencils, markers

Procedures

1. Have students create an illustration based on their interest for a future career.

2. Students should determine what media to use to add color to their illustrations.

3. Have students determine what size their artwork will be, ranging from 8 x 10" (20 x 25 cm) to 16 x 20" (41 x 51 cm).

4. Ask students to think about the term “juxtaposition” as they begin illustrating their work.

Assessment

Students will use their smart phones or a digital camera to document their process from start to finish. They will also create a slideshow presentation for the class.

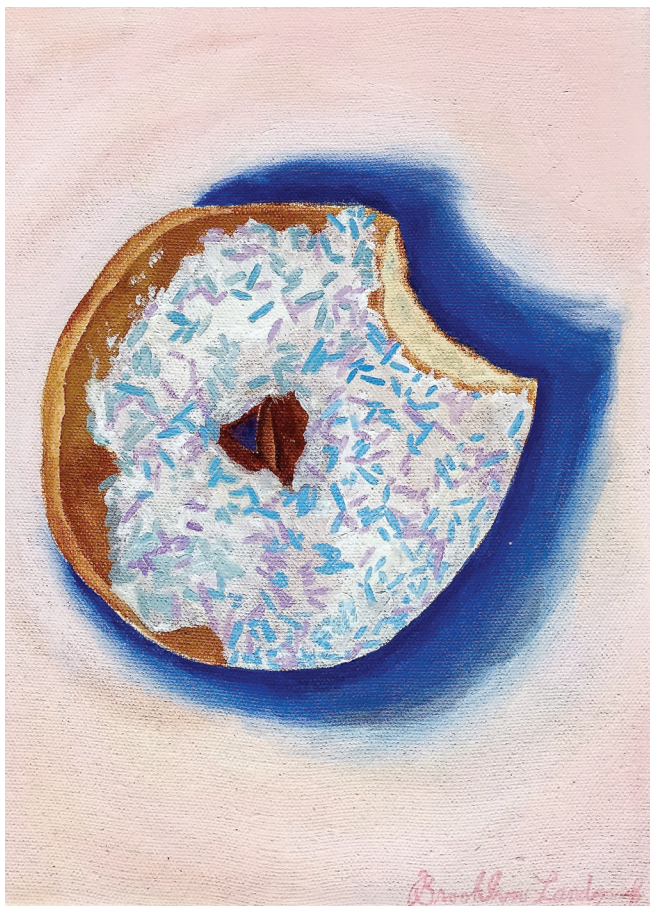
By Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.



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Drum Drum Drum! **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How and why do shapes and sounds repeat?

Objective

Students will develop an understanding of repetition and pattern as they use rollers and handprints to repeat shapes.

Materials

containers with plastic lids, foam pattern rollers, tempera paints, construction paper, glue, sturdy string, awl, chopsticks

Procedures

1. I read the children's book Perkins and Gurney's *Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb* to one- and two-year-olds. They loved the repetition of the words and actions; students tapped on the book with their thumbs just as the monkeys did on their drums.
2. Using foam rollers with cut shapes, students rolled paint and made patterns of shapes that repeated onto construction paper that I had previously cut to fit the containers. Students personalized their work with a print of their hands using excess paint from the rollers. The young artists explored the feel of the paint.

3. The cut paper was wrapped around the containers and students used glue to tack the ends in place.

4. I used an awl to poke a hole on each side of the container, making sure the hole was in the middle. I then looped a string through the holes and tied it off on the inside of the drum. Now the drum could be used on either the plastic lid side or the tin side for different sounds.

5. With their hands or chopsticks, students could repeat their own sounds to create auditory patterns.

Assessment

Students are able to create and identify repeating patterns that are seen and heard.

By Aileen Pugliese Castro, art teacher in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Photo credit: Drum by Daniel, age 1, 2014.

Art of Origami **Elementary**

The Essential Question

In what ways can students utilize Japanese origami in their artwork?

Objective

Students will create a simple 3D composition that incorporates Japanese origami paper-folding techniques.

Materials

various sized sheets of paper (e.g., 6 x 6", 8 x 8"), basic origami instructions, watercolor paints, white school glue

Procedures

1. Have students choose an origami design to create. Instructions for various designs can be researched and found in books or on the Web.
2. Students should practice folding their designs on scratch or recycled paper before beginning.
3. Students take their various sized sheets of paper and decorate them with watercolors and colored markers.
4. Students fold and arrange their origami into interesting compositions.

5. Students secure their finished origami works to a base with white school glue.

Assessment

Were students able to successfully recreate the origami designs? Were students able to create interesting compositions with their origami?

By Janice Corsino, visual arts specialist at Le Jardin Academy in Kailua, Hawaii.

Slotted Sculptures **Middle School**

The Essential Question

Can students use bold outlines and bright colors to make their designs "pop"?

Objective

Students will work collaboratively to create a dynamic, asymmetrically balanced group sculpture.

Materials

corrugated cardboard circles, pencils, acrylic paint, wide-tipped permanent black markers

Procedures

1. In groups of four, have students study artwork from contemporary Pop artist Romero Britto. (Preview samples in advance, as some of Britto's work contains nudity.)
2. Ask groups to answer the question, "What makes a Romero Britto a Romero Britto?" How can they distinguish his work from other artists? Write student responses on the board; see if the class can find commonalities between each group's observations.
3. Explain to students that their artwork will be used in a collaborative sculpture, and that they will need to decorate the fronts and backs of

their cardboard circles. Each student should take a circle and draw a simple picture of their choosing in the cartoonish style of Britto. They should divide their circles, including their backgrounds, into simple shapes. Students then outline their drawings with permanent marker.

4. Students paint both sides of their circle and after it is dry, outline their paintings in the style of Britto, with permanent markers. Outlining before ensures that students will see their shapes through the paint; outlining after will enhance the completed design, creating crisp boundaries between colors.

5. Students will cut two slots into each circle and work collaboratively to fit their circles together to create a 3D freestanding sculpture.

Assessment

Were students able to work collaboratively to create a group sculpture inspired by Britto?

By Rachel Wintemberg, art teacher at Samuel E Shull School in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

Pastry Delight **High School**

The Essential Question

How does life inspire the art-making process?

Objective

Students will produce a larger-than-life painting based on goods purchased from a local bakery.

Materials

oil paint, paintbrushes, turpenoid, canvas, rags, palette, stretcher bars (various sizes), canvas pliers, stapler, gesso, gesso brush, pastries

Procedures

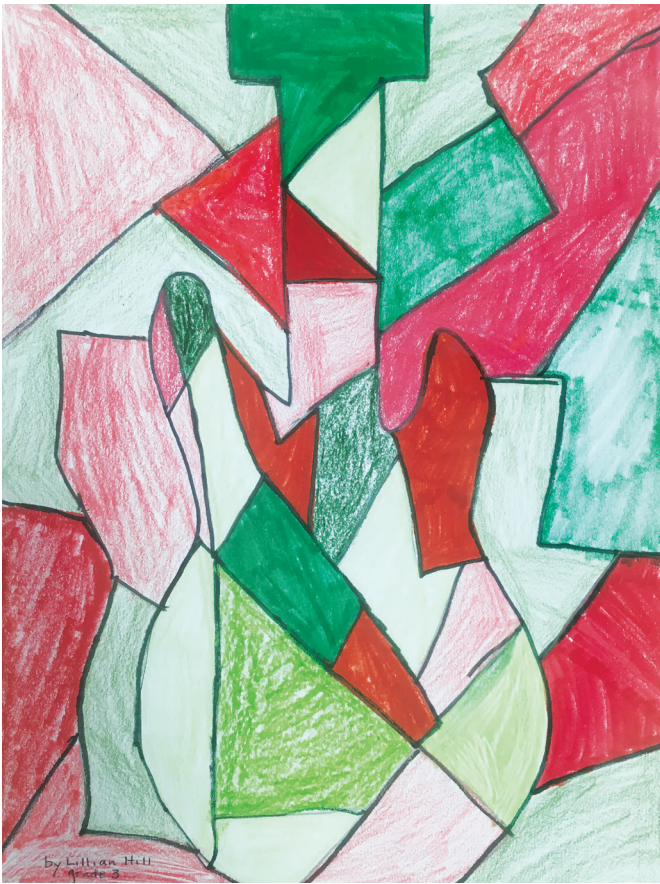
1. Visit your local bakery shop and purchase a variety of donuts. (Be wary of nut allergies.)
2. Students select which donut they would like to use as their subject matter and sketch various compositions in their sketchbooks. One sketch should be chosen for their larger-than-life painting.
3. Students are to stretch their own canvases and gesso them.
4. Students draw their chosen sketch onto their canvases and begin oil painting their donut/pastry based on what they see. Their backgrounds can be any color or design of their choosing.

5. Craftsmanship is a large part of painting realistically. Ask students to focus on the details of their pastry, from the swirl of the frosting to the patterns in the dough.

Assessment

Students will engage in individual small-group critiques.

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



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Koi Fish **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How do cultures and traditions influence artwork?

Objective

Students will learn about recycling/reuse and collage to create artwork inspired by the Chinese New Year.

Materials

9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) white construction paper (with koi fish outline), various magazines, glue, oil pastels, images of koi fish, *My First Chinese New Year* by Karen Katz

Procedures

1. Read the book *My First Chinese New Year* to students. Discuss and compare the traditions for both Chinese and American New Year.
2. Show students images of koi fish. Point out the warm colors of the fish against the cool colors of the water.
3. Demonstrate how to collage using magazine clippings (use small pieces with warm colors).
4. Have students collage their koi fish outlines completely, using warm colors.

5. Show how to use oil pastels to color and blend the water. Add details of movement with white oil pastel.

Assessment

Students will demonstrate an understanding of recycling to create artwork. Students will discuss traditional differences between Chinese and American New Year.

By David Garfield Meade, art teacher at Joseph Rogers Primary School in Rogersville, Tennessee.

Painted Paper Garden **Middle School**

The Essential Question

Using the elements and principles, how can students gain fluency in painting and color mixing?

Objective

Students will create a collage of an imaginary garden using papers they have painted with rhythmic designs.

Materials

recording of Haitian drum music, paper, diluted black acrylic, small round brushes, water, tempera paint (primary colors), large brushes, newspaper, black construction paper, pencils, scissors, glue, oil pastels

Procedures

1. Students create rhythmic line paintings with diluted black acrylic on three separate sheets of paper while listening to Haitian drum music. Discuss how repeating a shape or sound can lead to a pleasing composition. Students fill their first paper with curved lines, the second with straight lines, and the third with both. Allow paintings to dry.
2. Have students paint the first painting with water and then paint over part of the paper with yellow

tempera, allowing it to spread. Add drops of magenta and allow the colors to mix. Create as many variations as you can, combining the colors.

On the second painting, repeat the process with magenta and blue. On the third, repeat using yellow and blue. Allow paintings to dry.

3. Use your painted papers to create a collage of an imaginary garden on black construction paper. Experiment with overlapping flower petals cut from different papers to create contrast, or try cutting smaller shapes of contrasting colors and gluing them on top of your flowers to create interesting designs.

4. Use oil pastels to add finishing touches, such as clouds or grass.

Assessment

Did students gain fluency and control in painting and color mixing?

By Rachel Wintemberg, art teacher at Samuel E. Shull Middle School in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

Photo: Grace Velaquez.

Complementary Colors **Elementary**

The Essential Question

What are complementary colors?

Objective

Students will create art using only one pair of complementary colors.

Materials

9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) white drawing paper, colored pencils, crayons and markers, teacher sample, color wheel

Procedures

1. Show students the color wheel and explain how it helps artists to organize their colors. Locate the primary and secondary colors and then introduce the complementary colors. Tell students that the complementary colors live "across the street from each other" on the wheel.
2. Place paper samples of each pair of complementary colors on the board for students to reference.
3. Model for students what they will be doing (see Objective). I traced a guitar and reviewed with students ways to use crayons, markers, and colored pencils.

4. To help students stay with their color choice, you may want to set up your tables with just the complementary pairs together or have students get only the materials they need to be successful.

Assessment

Students' finished work demonstrates knowledge of complementary colors. Students know how to find complementary colors on the color wheel.

By Sheryl Depp, art teacher at Shady Hills Elementary School in Pasco County, Florida.

Reinventing the Invention **High School**

The Essential Question

How can we improve our daily lives through consumer products?

Objective

Students will appropriate or create their very own consumer product.

Materials

self-hardening clay, clay tools, plastic bag, water bottle, paper towels, acrylic paint, gesso, paintbrush, colored pencils, fine-tipped black permanent marker

Procedures

1. Students complete a Design Process Form, which asks them about their product's target audience, intent of the proposed product, functionality, and enhancement to daily life.
2. Next, students create a series of sketches, brainstorming design ideas for their proposed product.
3. To problem-solve design and functionality issues, students engage in frequent critiques with the teacher and their peers.
4. Students create their product using self-hardening clay, using their sketches as a road map.

5. To finish, students gesso and paint their products using acrylic paints.

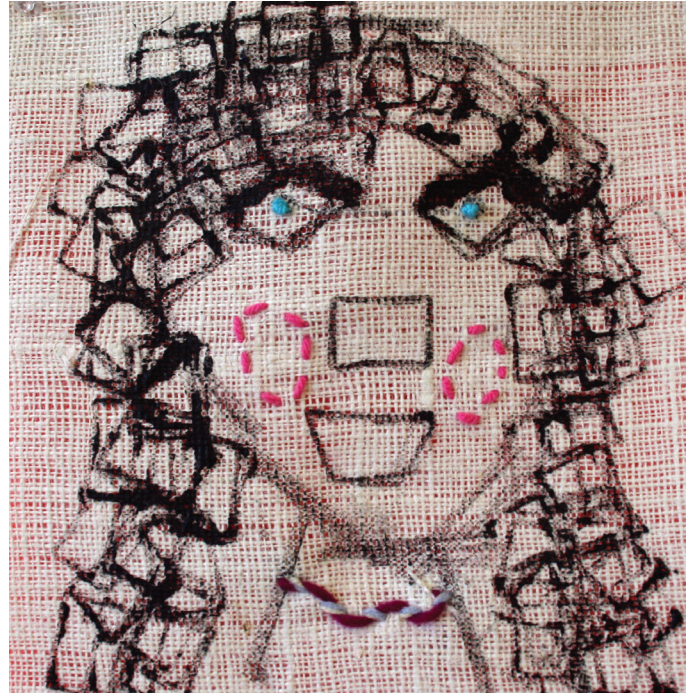
Assessment

Students create an illustration based on their Design Process Form.

By Frank Juarez, art department chair at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.



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Stamp, Stamp, Stitch **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How can experimenting with different media help young artists express visual ideas?

Objective

Students will experiment with print-making and embroidery techniques to create an expressive self-portrait.

Materials

9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) newsprint, 9 x 12" pieces of light-colored burlap, black tempera paint, sponges or pieces of foam, a variety of gadgets for printing, large tapestry needles, several colors of yarn and/or embroidery thread

Procedures

1. Demonstrate ways to print interesting lines and textures using a variety of gadgets, then have students practice stamp-printing a self-portrait that shows an expression on newsprint.
2. Have students choose their best practice portrait and recreate it by stamping the shapes onto burlap.

3. On scrap pieces of burlap, demonstrate simple embroidery stitches such as running stitch, back stitch, satin stitch, and couching, then have students practice.

4. Have students use embroidery techniques to add details and embellish their final stamped self-portraits.

Assessment

Ask students to share their completed portraits and describe the techniques they used. Students should explain how they used media to create an expression.

By Grace Hulse, NBCT art teacher at Fort Garrison Elementary in Pikesville, Maryland.

Clay Idioms **Middle School**

The Essential Question

How can the literal and figurative meaning of idioms be illustrated in three dimensions?

Objective

Students will illustrate idioms and wordplay expressions using clay.

Materials

clay, paint

Procedures

1. Explain to students that an idiom is a phrase or a fixed expression that has a figurative meaning. Examples of common idioms include expressions such as "It's raining cats and dogs," "I have butterflies in my stomach," and "It's not rocket science."

2. Ask students to write down as many idioms or plays on words that they can think of.

3. Each student should choose the most interesting idiom on his or her list, then create a clay figure illustrating the literal meaning of the idiom.

Assessment

To what extent did the student conceive of an interesting and unique idiom? How clearly illustrated is the clay structure?

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

Watercolor Tie-Dye **Elementary**

The Essential Question

How can young students learn to express emotion using watercolors?

Objective

Students will produce an original, expressive composition using the wet-on-wet watercolor technique.

Materials

watercolor paints, painter's tape, watercolor paper, paintbrushes

Procedures

1. Review the color wheel and complementary colors.
2. Have students think of an emotion they would like to express in a painting.
3. Instruct students to place painter's tape directly on watercolor paper, creating intersecting lines and interesting shapes.

4. Demonstrate the wet-on-wet watercolor technique and encourage students to experiment with color blending. Students should apply the watercolors directly over top of the painter's tape.

5. Once their artwork is dry, students should remove the tape slowly.

Assessment

Artwork exhibits positive and negative space and is rendered using the wet-on-wet watercolor technique.

By Lauren Gould, student teacher at Pinckney Elementary in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

Animal Expression **High School**

The Essential Question

How can students effectively express symbolism and self-representation in their artwork?

Objective

Students will answer the question, "What animal best describes you?" by thinking about their characteristics and relating them to an animal.

Materials

white sulfite drawing paper, pencil, eraser, drawing nib, penholder, paper towel, water cup, India ink

Procedure

1. Students should begin by creating a graphic organizer assessing their own characteristics.
2. Ask students to think about animals that may possess the same characteristics.
3. Students will create a preliminary sketch of the selected animal in their sketchbook, then modify the animal to communicate their own artistic style.

4. The final drawing should be drawn in pencil on a sheet of white sulfite drawing paper.

5. Using a penholder and drawing nib, students should dip the nib into an inkwell, then make a few lines on a piece of scrap paper to remove excess ink from the tip.

6. Students should apply the nib to the paper using stippling, hatching, and cross-hatching lines.

Assessment

Students will write a paragraph on why the selected animal best complements their personality, then share with the class in the form of presentation followed by a critique.

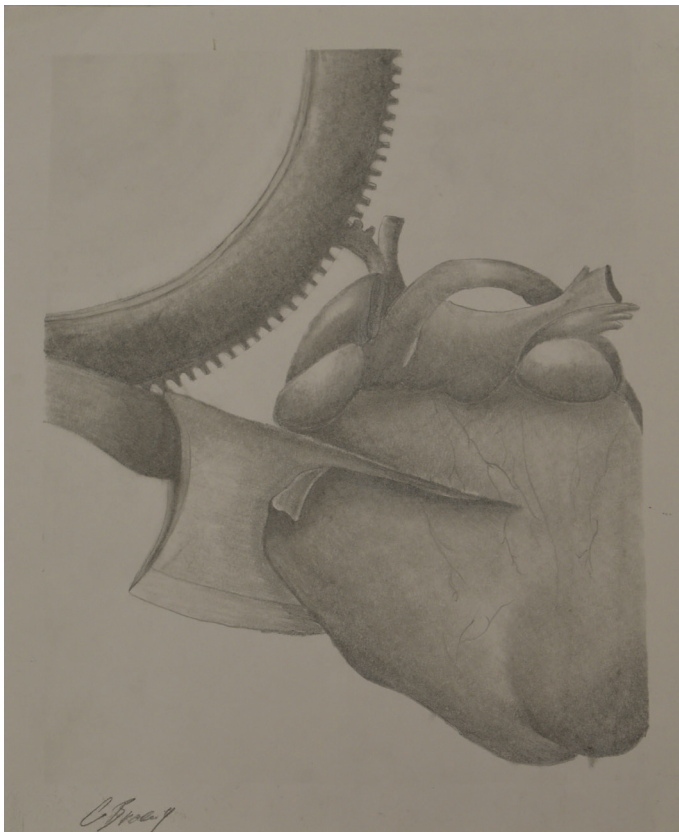
By Frank Juarez, art teacher at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin



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Moving Trains **Early Childhood**

The Essential Question

How do young artists understand and interpret a moving train?

Objective

Students will use recycled materials to build and paint their own trains.

Materials

cardboard, corks, caps, sticks, paint, paintbrushes, duct tape, glue, juice carriers

Procedures

1. Explain to students that trains are used as transportation for commuters, cargo, vehicles, and more. Ask them to describe the colors, forms, and movements of a moving train (e.g., fast, blurry, colorful, and humming).
2. Students start by using recycled cardboard to make the base or shape of their trains.
3. Paint is used to bring the trains to life. Students paint areas for windows and other details to show the engines, cabooses, passenger cars, and freights.

4. Once the paint is dry, corks and caps are added to make a smokestack and other details. Juice carriers are used to represent the moving wheels of a train.

5. Students can add additional cardboard onto their trains to create cargo and passenger cars.

Assessment

Students are able to express a 3D moving form using recyclable materials.

By Aileen Pugliese Castro, art teacher in Montreal, Quebec Canada.

Images: Alison Driver, age 4; Daniel Castro, age 2.

Shadow Homes **Elementary**

The Essential Question

Can students practice basic cutting skills while safely using scissors and craft knives?

Objective

Students will create the silhouette of a home, house, or structure of their choosing.

Materials

black construction paper, colored construction paper, pencils, erasers, scissors, craft knives, white school glue

Procedures

1. Have students brainstorm different types of homes and living spaces (e.g., castles, tree houses, and haunted houses).
2. Students should use pencils and black construction paper to sketch the silhouettes of their chosen dwellings, including structural detail.

3. Using scissors and craft knives, students should cut out their silhouettes. (Supervise students closely while using the scissors and knives.)

4. Have students glue their completed silhouettes onto the colored construction paper.

Assessment

Students participate in a group critique and discussion about their chosen dwellings. They also complete a written self-reflection.

By Janice Corsino, visual arts specialist at Le Jardin Academy in Kailua, Hawaii.

Giant Lollipops **Middle School**

The Essential Question

How can students apply the elements of art and principles of design to create colorful radial designs?

Objective

Students will apply their knowledge of symmetry, balance, color, shape, and contrast to design lollipops.

Materials

cardboard circles, 18 x 24" (46 x 61 cm) heavyweight drawing paper, acrylic paint, thick permanent black markers, pencils, scissors, spray glue, white glitter, masking tape, wooden dowels, clear cellophane, ribbon

Procedures

1. Show students a video clip of the song "Pure Imagination" from the 1971 film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. Discuss the colors and radial designs of the candy depicted in the film.
2. Have students research images of colorful lollipop designs. Point out that they can use like or contrasting warm and cool colors to create interesting visual effects.

3. Students trace the cardboard circles twice onto large sheets of drawing paper. After filling both circles with paint and allowing them to dry, students use permanent markers to create bold outlines.

4. Using masking tape, students affix dowels to the backs of their cardboard rounds. They use spray glue to attach the painted circles to the rounds, front and back, covering the top part of the dowel.

5. Spray both sides of the completed lollipops with glue and sprinkle with glitter. Once dry, wrap the lollipops with clear cellophane and ribbon.

Assessment

Were students able to apply their knowledge of color, contrast, and symmetry to create an aesthetically pleasing and balanced design?

By Rachel Wintemberg, art teacher at Samuel E. Shull Middle School in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

Pick Three **High School**

The Essential Question

What happens artistically when previously drawn objects are recontextualized and recombined?

Objective

Students will pick three previously drawn or painted objects from their sketchbooks and recontextualize them by combining them to create an entirely new work of art.

Materials

a variety of drawing and painting media (depending on your parameters), white drawing paper, graphite pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners

Procedure

Note: This challenge works best when given towards the middle or end of the school year to ensure that students have a wide variety of drawings in their sketchbooks to choose from.

1. Students choose three objects from three different drawings or paintings in their sketchbooks.

2. Students extract the drawings and paintings from their original contexts and plan how to combine them in interesting ways to create entirely new works of art.

3. After students plan how they will combine their objects, they use the drawing and/or painting media of their choice on white drawing paper.

4. Encourage students to use everything they know about good technique and composition.

Assessment

Students self-assess according to a corresponding rubric or checklist.

By Mylinda McKinney, art teacher; written by Betsy DiJulio, art teacher at Princess Ann High School in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Image: Christian Braeunig, grade 11.