A POSTMODERN CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY VISUAL ART EDUCATION: BEET JUICE, LACE, AND TOMAHAWKS

A Project
Presented
to the Faculty of
California State University, Chico

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education
Curriculum and Instruction Option

by
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Spring 2010
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DEDICATION

To my mom,

who seeded the corners of my soul

with a life-long love learning.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my graduate advisor, teacher, inspiration and now friend, Dr. Cris Guenter, for her advice, direction, instruction, passion and laughter on my extraordinary path to completing this project. I also wish to thank my husband Mike Stevens for reminding me ceaselessly that I am his everything, that I can do this, and that I constantly amaze and amuse him. I thank my two redhead boys for every single eyeball roll that spurred me on during this two-year stint. I am grateful to Ed Changus and the late Wes Walsvick, both past principals whom implicitly double dared me to reach aspirations lodged in the clouds; and Kathy Thomas and Sara Plummer, teachers par excellence, who saw and reminded me that teaching in public schools was a gift, and consequently of the lives we had not only touched but saved. And finally, I thank each and every one of my high school students, in both my English and art classrooms, all of whom absolutely rocked my boat for 33 years.
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ABSTRACT

A POSTMODERN CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY VISUAL ART EDUCATION: BEET JUICE, LACE, AND TOMAHAWKS

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Postmodern theory is, at best, ambiguous and at its worst, contentious and nihilistic. Regardless of these characteristics, it has rocketed to the forefront of critical theory in art, education, politics, anthropology and the social sciences. When peeling back the layers of description and conjecture, found is substantial and essential aspects that deserve immediate attention. This project discusses postmodernism, a number of indisputable postmodern components, and their significance in creating a democratic, 21st century education. It focuses upon several major assertions that postmodern theory promotes: the power of mini-narratives and “others,” including feminism; cultural inclusion; the interpretation of reality and truths; the fragmentation of time and space; an evaluation of power/knowledge connections; and in the arts- representation, ambiguity
and double-coding. Ultimately, postmodernism promotes freedom of discourse shared through a variety of communal mediums. Imbuing these elements of postmodernism into art pedagogy, and education in general, would advance an education worthy of 21st century concerns. This project paper is followed by twelve units as may be implemented in a secondary visual arts curriculum. The units vary in theme, theory and media, but all clearly address the significance and immediacy of postmodernism. Finally, recommendations are made with which to further the realization of postmodern theory into visual art curriculums.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

Years in the making, my philosophy of art education has focused on creating meaning in an academic setting. Cognitive, emotional and social development is embraced in classroom instruction using Discipline Based Arts Education (DBAE) woven with the Visual and Performing Arts Standards (VAPA) of the California Public Schools Framework. Late in my career I discovered that, although these approaches provided clear and grounded fundamentals, more could be done to create meaning in the art education that students were receiving. This personal realization began with one abstract expressionist unit conducted unfortunately during my final year of teaching.

My approach, bringing three decades of classroom experience and opinion back into academia, has been a remarkable and enlightening experience. Even with volumes of valuable teaching techniques, knowledge and philosophy, there is still so much more to consider. For a classroom teacher overwhelmed with endless burdens and joys, there is little time to consider new theories. “Consider critical theory, you ask?” “My time is diminished or even non-existent.” “Focus on democratic values?” “Oh, please.” “Ask me to articulate an educational pedagogy?” “What?” The chasm between current educational theory and the classroom teacher is quite vast. Given this, avenues to address this disconnect must be explored.
Herein I create one considerable connection: that of postmodern theory and discourse with potential lessons in a secondary visual art classroom. The intent is to provide secondary classroom art teachers, with what little time is left in their busy days, a jump start, enabling them to intertwine a current pedagogical and democratic theory, that of postmodernism, into their art curriculum with power and discretion.

Schools, classrooms, and teachers need to redefine their educational mission. Some key questions to ask, however, are upon whose shoulders must it sit? Who is responsible for recognizing what this is? As politicians and district administrators grapple with the finances of accountability law, educational reform lies with most urgency in the classrooms, on the refreshingly realized shoulders of the teachers.

The arts in public education are still considered, arguably, the home of imagination and creativity. They blend this creative thinking with formal and fundamental elements and principals of art, the western-European venue of the master artists, and an arbitrary dab of multicultural study: African masks, Mayan calendars, and Native American pottery. This dab is insulting to the rich and diverse cultures about which we are either timid or uninformed.

Today more than ever, America’s school children are gloriously and challengingly diverse. Classrooms are populated with a mix of ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, genders, ages, abilities, learning styles and interests. They are the tsunami of their futures. A shift from modern to postmodern culture and theory is timely and appropriate now.
Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to address and develop the use of postmodern pedagogy in secondary visual art curriculums. The project provides twelve comprehensive postmodern visual art lessons aiming at clarification, methods, and rationales promoting inclusion of postmodern lessons in secondary classrooms for secondary visual art teachers. Each lesson and assessment is aligned with the California Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards as well as the National Visual Arts Standards. Examples and related resources are included. This project will help to diminish the disconnect between academia and the public classroom. To date, there is no such collection in the teaching arena.

The disconnect as stated between current pedagogical thinkers and classroom teachers is vast. Our young teachers, just leaving academia, are fairly well versed in current trends; however, they become distanced from current pedagogical theory several short years into their careers. Equally, the modernist methods of teaching art are simpler to employ in a classroom than are the postmodern approaches requiring individualism and many interpretations. Yet, this is the global culture that teenagers of today are both creating and entering: one of many cultures, each individually vital with many world views. Today our kids deserve our best teaching focused on the skills of persistence, questioning, collaboration, innovation and the like. Postmodern study possesses these attributes. It poses more questions than answers . . . just the habits of mind we must encourage our children to develop.

Postmodernism is a school of thought that follows modernism, literally “after modernism.” Definitively, it is
a cultural and intellectual trend of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries characterized by emphasis on the ideas of the decenteredness of meaning, the value and autonomy of the local and the particular, the infinite possibilities of the human existence, and the coexistence, in a kind of collage or pastiche, of different cultures, perspectives, time periods, and ways of thinking. Postmodernism claims to address the sense of despair and fragmentation of modernism through its efforts at reconfiguring the broken pieces of the modern world into a multiplicity of new social, political, and cultural arrangements. (Fajardo-Acosta, 2006)

Postmodernism emphasizes mini-narratives, a consideration of “others,” a reconsideration and mistrust of reality and truth, a reconsideration of time and place, feminist values, pluralism, and tolerance of ambiguity. It holds the view that social and cultural reality is a human construction. Students today are moving into this postmodern world of personal interpretation and of an overriding mistrust of master-narratives.

Postmodernism, framed in this way, provides them with tools with which to maneuver in an increasingly complicated world. Globalization of economies and cultures requires new approaches to thinking, theory, and success.

Today’s generation of educators, colleagues and peers has little idea about what the near future will demand of today’s graduates. The economic, cultural, technological and even industrial world is changing at a staggering rate. Daniel Pink (2006) asserts we are leaving the Information Age and entering the Conceptual Age, wherein America will lead tomorrow by creating today innovators, empathizers, designers, meaning makers and collaborators. Yet we teach (knowledge) and assess (knowledge) with paradigms of the past, assuming that all is status quo, that globalization of cultures and economies is moot.

While today “postmodernism” is becoming a kitschy moniker, a close study in what it might, or can, embrace will provide a powerful entry into a new vision of
education. Woven into postmodern study of the arts is much of what Pink asserts is needed for the future. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, an organization that focuses on infusing 21st century skills into education, promotes adopting a curriculum that “blends thinking and innovation skills; information, media, and information and communication technological literacy; and life and career skills in context of core academic subjects and across interdisciplinary themes” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007). Art Costa and Bena Kallick identify habits of mind, directly promoting postmodern thinking, and recalling what John Dewey termed “habits of thought” (Costa & Kallick, 2000, p vii).

This project presents to high school visual art teachers—rural, urban, busy, comfortable, leery and lazy—a method to postmodern madness. In this project, there is a parallel exploration and discovery of postmodernism for visual art educators and students. This includes all the information needed to understand how we are teaching visual art today, followed by why and how we must evolve our focuses into teaching for tomorrow.

This project provides secondary art educators an instructional framework and lessons which draw from postmodernism theories in the classroom. The project will contain a clear and comprehensive definition of postmodern theory as it relates to secondary art classrooms. Included will be six short sections: 1) the purposes of art education woven with the Visual and Performing Arts Standards of California Framework, 2) an explanation of Discipline Based Art Education as grounded in modernist thought, 3) an outline of postmodern theory, 4) specific movements in postmodern visual arts, 5) classroom approaches to postmodern art making and
critiquing, and 6) rationale and methods of approaching interpretation from many experiential viewpoints. Following these chapters will be 12 classroom lessons focusing on postmodern art making, theory, and interpretation. Each lesson will include rationale, goals, VAPA standards, strategies, vocabulary, needed materials, procedures, and assessment rubrics. Included will be methods of analyzing and critiquing postmodern art, applying and creating postmodern art principles in personal artwork, studying the modernist and postmodernist historical movements, and methods of applying newfound knowledge, both practical and theoretical, to the world outside the classroom.

This project also vitally critiques old Western paradigm of art education: that is, all good art fits neatly into the seven elements of art and seven principles of design. World art often does not fit into these neat categories. Olivia Gude (2004) notes that we continue to “attempt to infuse multiculturalism into a mono-cultural curriculum structure” (p. 7). Postmodern pedagogy relieves the classroom teacher of this narrow focus and opens teaching to an understanding of world views.

Scope of the Project

In postmodern style, this project will invite educators and students to explore, discover, and learn in collaboration. Together, we can investigate how valid or relevant postmodernism is in today’s cultural and global contexts. The current modernist pursuit of truth and reality, often from the perspectives of the white, masculine viewpoint, is antiquated. Postmodern theory offers a corrective to this approach, as it questions taken for granted notions about the meaning of culture and identity. Critically, it also questions
whose knowledge is of most worth and what students should learn in preparing for tomorrow’s graduation.

These lessons will delineate postmodernism theory in a progressive fashion, beginning with the development of basic student art and critique skills and ending with conceptual approaches. The project will be divided into three distinct units: two dimensional lessons (4 projects), three dimensional lessons (4 projects), and installation lessons (4 projects). Each will provide rationale, potential images for instructional use, procedures, interdisciplinary ideas, a distinct language arts component, standards aligned assessment, and caveats to introduction, process and completion.

Significance of the Project

The modernist paradigm of schools and education is outdated, yet we cling to it dearly; change is hard to accommodate, and postmodern visions of education are difficult to test. But as the global society changes faster than we as educators do, our children, deeply immersed and busily integrating the mass media and versions of globalization into their lives, are finding school lacking in meaning.

Schools should be cultural institutions of change. Pedagogy is the vehicle and educators are at the forefront providing future skills, critical social engagement, and creative thinking for a better future. Diversity in all senses is the new norm as information becomes globally accessible; as such, so should education. Students must gain a clear awareness of the diverse manners, the many texts, in which humans communicate. They must learn to expand their literate potential and to create “new identities,” as Jerome Bruner (1992) says, melding their pasts, their presents, and
especially their anticipation for their futures. When student identity is established and validated; when they each understand their individual importance; when education meaningfully responds to this identity, ideally students will have changed, positively, and grown toward a more hopeful future. With a clear sense of self, students may begin to grasp the 21st century skills needed to become active and successful citizens and to build successful communities. Artistic thinking must be a new core curriculum for functioning in our world of cultural diversity.

While much academic theory has been devoted to postmodern theory, culture, and its implications in education, little is accessible to educators in terms of implementation. Included herein is an historical overview of education and art education theory, including the influence of modernism. Included is a description of the main tenets of postmodernism in culture and art. The project concludes with a challenge and methods for including postmodernism in an art classroom.

Ultimately, this project seeks to find its way into art classrooms, and art pedagogy as well, and nurture meaningful change in teacher and student collaboration working towards a vision of a global education and global vision of tomorrow.

Limitations of the Project

This author has recently retired from teaching in a rural secondary visual arts classroom. Although the lessons and ideas here are grounded in many years of experience and thought, only three have been field tested.

The rural location of the high school as mentioned prohibited students from receiving the rich experiences of visits to museums and galleries. As such, the project is
grounded on best attempts to bring these experiences to the classrooms in a variety of visual aid forms.

As there is not a definition for postmodernism that is agreeable to any theorist or pedagogue in philosophy and/or education, there is merely an operational definition included herein with which to employ.

- The theory and project herein were written for secondary education venues.
- Knowledge based learning must coincide with creative thinking.
- Time in the curriculum is finite.

The significance of postmodernism in education is clear, as are the reasons for assimilating the theory into an art classroom. This project further provides a progression of lessons and the rationales for each. However, the intent is not such that each and every lesson shall be presented as laid out, but that the curriculum offers an gateway for practicing teachers, and that they may find lessons that may be accommodated to their individual classrooms and teaching personalities.

Art education is an “ill-structured domain” versus a “well structured domain” (Efland as cited in Gallucci, 1998, p. 45). As such, students may enter an art classroom with a variety of pieces of artistic knowledge and skills. However, most students should have the capability of functioning on a higher level of thinking as outlined by Bloom’s taxonomy, i.e. they can analyze, synthesize and evaluate. Student level of visual literacy should be fluent in critique of visual arts: description, analysis, interpretation and evaluation. Students and teachers should be familiar with the California Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) content strands and underlying standards in which all lessons will be anchored:
- Artistic Perception: Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through language and skills
- Creative Expression: Creation, performance and participation in the discipline.
- Historical and Cultural Context: Understanding historical contributions and cultural dimensions of the discipline.
- Aesthetic Valuing: Responding to, analyzing, and making judgments about works of art.
- Connections, Relationships, Applications: Connecting and applying what is learned in the discipline to other art forms and subject areas and to careers.

(California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit, 2009)

Students thus apparently have knowledge of formal visual art vocabulary and grammar. Although not required to a preliminary understanding of postmodernism, this foundation would enhance the value of a lesson.

Students and teachers have repertoire that enables theoretical discussion; students are comfortable in expressing opinions such that all are valid and important. Class management is optimal.

Definitions of Terms

Deconstruction

A critical approach to analyzing assumptions and “truths” about notions, knowledge, meaning and identity. Seeks to show they are falsely constructed, and wrapped in veils of power and exclusion (Arrowsmith, n.d.).

Gaze

The gaze represents the subjective nature of power: the one who looks is in the position of power (generally male) over the one who is looked at (generally female) (Arrowsmith, n.d.).
Globalization

Cultural homogenization as ‘native’ cultures are swallowed up by Western values. Globalization is also a complex series of economic, social, technological, cultural, and political changes seen as increasing integration and communication (“Globalization,” 2009).

Grand Narrative/Master Narrative/
Meta-Narrative

Totalizing in nature and self-legitimizing, grand narratives claim to contain the ultimate answers and truth. This is a characteristic of modernist theory (Arrowsmith, n.d.).

Interpretation

Interpretation has been considered to have two avenues, one conventional and one personal. Terry Barrett states we must add multiple interpretations, not a search for the single, correct interpretation, but recognition that it is optimal to have many different interpretations. Multiple interpretations encourage diversity (Barrett, 2004).

Intertextuality

A poststructuralist term introduced by French semiotician Julia Kristiva in the late sixties. All text is influence and transformed by a variety of sources, including past literary work, and these relationships are further altered by the audience. This is likewise acknowledged in the cultural arts with the use of symbols, traditions, and codes (Irvine, 2009).
**Marginality**

The place of being on the periphery of the dominant culture (Arrowsmith, n.d.).

**Modernism**

The theory that science lead can lead to all knowledge and truth can be discovered by empirical observation. All the world’s problems can be solved by applying the appropriate methods to the issues (“Modern,” n.d.).

**The “Other”**

Those generally placed in a position of marginality, thus creating a power relationship (Arrowsmith, n.d.).

**Postmodernism**

Literally, postmodernism is after modernism. According to Jean-François Lyotard, a transient “post” everything currently modern (Lyotard, 1984). An aesthetic, literary, political and/or social philosophy. Includes mini-narratives, consideration of “others,” a reconsideration and mistrust of reality and truth, a reconsideration of time and place, feminist values, pluralism, and tolerance of ambiguity. A view that social and cultural reality is a human construction.

**Post-Structuralism**

Emphasizes the “slippery, linguistic basis of all identity, meaning, knowledge and power” (Arrowsmith, n.d.). Everything constructed is culturally conditioned and subject to numerous biases and misinterpretations (Arrowsmith, n.d.). One must study both the object and all those knowledges (historically, culturally, etc.) that constructed the object (“Post-Structuralism,” n.d.)
**Structuralism**

An interest in how meaning is produced. Rather than focusing on the creator, the structuralists analyzed underlying structures such as those of language, of the psyche, and of society as crucial in the development of meaning (Arrowsmith, n.d.).

**Text.**

Culture generates interpretation in what is read as much as the words on the page. The reader and the words together generate meaning.

**Universalism in Art**

Elements and principles provide universal knowledge and truth.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Messy Postmodernism, Education, and the Visual Arts Classroom

Education in the United States has been historically tailored to the workplace of the future; particularly during the industrial age of the nineteenth century. This focus is still the heart and core of public schooling. Classrooms stress the great canons of literature, the essentials of math, physics and natural science, and even in art, the Western disciplines of form and style. Foundations in western culture are needed; since, after all, we do live in this culture. Yet, while these conventions and accepted master narratives should be attended to, so should fundamental inquiry and vital critique of the foundations upon which they are constructed. Application of postmodern theory in today’s classroom will provide powerful investigation and evaluation as required for children entering an age of flux: the age of inquiry. This review will synthesize the meaning and value of postmodernism in relation to 21st century education and art education.

Interpreting Postmodernism

Where everything is possible and almost nothing is certain. (Havel, 1994)

Postmodernism has become synonymous with ambiguity, post-industrialism, post-scientism, deconstructivism, and the absence of certainty (Walling, 1997). Indeed,
any authentic definition of *postmodernism* is indistinct. Due to the contemporary nature of the phenomenon, there is little consensus about what it is and where it fits. The most accurate explanation may simply be that it is a cultural phenomenon that comes after modernism, a trend that French theorist Jean Francois Lyotard defines as an “incredulity toward metanarratives” (Williams, 1998, p. 32). Importantly, it thwarts any past ideological attempts to control other people.

Modernism can be traced to the Renaissance and the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, when rationalist views of science and reason began to displace premodernist theocratic and aristocratic thought. Modernism has since been future oriented, promoting progress as the path for the betterment of mankind and with utopia as the goal. In general, modernism sought to bring new social and spiritual values into a world; man’s search for true knowledge could conquer nature and provide us with material abundance. Modernity broke with the past; modernist paradigms embraced the new. Western thinking and culture were born.

Modernism met its demise in the face of the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust, in the race riots of the sixties, Hurricane Katrina, the genocide in Liberia and Somalia, the melting of the polar caps, drug cartel wars, immigration border walls and patrols, the Vietnam War, the starving millions in Ethiopia, in the alarming lack of equity in American schooling such as those described by Jonathan Kozol in “Savage Inequalities.” Social conditions have evolved, but not always in a progressively equitable or positive fashion. The field of science, alone, has created its own critics when one considers controversial questions around global warming or biological and nuclear warfare today (Schmoker, 1997). In 1979, Lyotard noted that contemporary life had
become a “strange time,” and thus termed it “the postmodern condition.” Jan Jagodzinski writes,

Artificiality and human control with their resultant benefits and problems could be found in all aspects of life. Artificial lighting, manmade materials, artificial elements (snow for ski slopes), the development of self-contained environment buildings (skyscrapers, which sealed off nature, and indoor ice skating rinks and astrodomes, which imitated natural environments, but were comfortable and maintainable year round), packaging that prevented touch, preservatives that increased shelf life of food, hybrid food crops, … Even our wars became depersonalized with the advent of chemical and air warfare and “smart” bombs. . . All these developments have pulled us away from our biological roots; our bodies have been split in two. (1966, p. 66)

In the face of these events and this lifestyle, one must suspect that the modernist’s enlightened centuries-old view, that mankind’s progress towards a utopian world, is a touch misguided. Contemporary thought suggests that science alone does not provide truth, progress, or even a better future. Here lie the roots of postmodernist theory.

Of course, modernism has important attributes that should not be completely disregarded. Often the discourses of the two cultural views are similar or overlapping. When one challenges modernism, one must weave the best with the better yet. Postmodern discourse needs to be challenged critically by educators and students as they move forward. This noted, one cannot deny the opportunities to redraw the boundaries of cultural social, political, and educational arenas in contemporary society using critical theory from a variety of sources. Reason, along side intuition, imagination and morality, must all to be used to understand and know socio-cultural particulars in light of both modernism and postmodernism (Fehr, 1997).

The overriding premise of postmodernism is political; it is a power construct in its source, exercise and consequence. It turns away from “pursuit of knowledge as an
end in itself and turns instead to activities that might serve to empower socially and economically oppressed groups” (Efland, Stuhr & Freedman, 1996, p.12). Considering this power-base, it is apparent that many of the elements of postmodernist theory are indelibly intertwined with each other.

Lines between fact and fiction are muddied. Historical and fictional notions of truth are both valid ways of understanding, interpreting and knowing. Postmodern theorist Michel Foucault says, “I am well aware that I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to go so far as to say that fictions are beyond the truth. It seems to mean that it is possible to make fiction work inside of truth” (as cited in Chagani, 1998, para. 15). Little narratives, placed inside larger cultures, are indeed truths as seen by individuals who receive information from many vantage points and experiences.

Postmodern theory accepts the chaotic and muddled character of life. It replaces truths and knowledge with participation and play. “While modernism mourned the passing of unified cultural tradition, and wept for its demise in the ruined heap of civilization . . . postmodernism tends to dance in the ruins and play with the fragments” (Wheeler, 2009). It privileges cultural differences and alternative thought processes, such as perspectives presented by women, homosexuals, or Native Americans (Efland et al., 1996). It is willing to “embrace, with comparative comfort, multiple, even contradictory, meanings simultaneously; to accept the tension of perpetual uncertainty as given; and to define truth as specific to time and place” (Fehr, 1997, p. 27). Most dominant postmodern features include the “challenging of convention, the mixing of styles, tolerance of ambiguity, emphasis on diversity, acceptance, (indeed celebration) of innovation and change, and stress on the constructedness of reality” (Beck, 1993, What is
Postmodernism, para. 1). Artists and thinkers have reacted to these waves of change in film, music, literature, architecture, philosophy, dance, and art.

Obviously, depending upon the source, one may find any number and variety of characteristics used to define postmodern theory. For the purposes of this review and project, I have chosen the following ten. Note that overlapping qualities exist.

Identity and Individuality is Celebrated

Each one of us is an individual with an identity diverse from others, and we also are individually influenced by our “surrounding cultures, changes within those cultures, and are fragmented like those cultures” (Beck, 1993, The Self, para. 1). Hence, our inner selves, our conversation, opinions, values, and actions correspond to and change with the culture we inhabit. Of importance is that individuals do not necessarily reflect their racial, socio-economic, gender, or religion, but that these traits merely provide a cultural ground upon which an individual may develop, by listening and learning from cultures and experiences outside her own. Postmodernism focuses not on explicitly identifying individuals but on promoting that all diverse voices are heard. Jane Gooding-Brown (1997) writes,

. . . I no longer see my world in terms of ‘right’ answers or single meaning when the notion of difference brings with it different interpretations of self and identity and the world. The particular ways I interpret experiences and meanings of self and identity in the world are socially and historically constituted by all discourses or discursive practices…. The experience of interpretation and the interpretation of experience adds to my own concept of self and identity. (p. 75)

Each experience one interacts with fosters a re-creation of who one is, what one thinks, and one’s vision of purpose.
John Dewey contributes to current postmodern theory when he reflects upon interpreted experiences as fostering knowledge creation. Dewey called this view of reality an “intellectual invention as discovery of an unquestionable truth.” Phillip Jackson terms it, “The Philosophical Fallacy” (1998, p. 3) and continues to explain that experiences, current or historical, are intrinsic as well as extrinsic, thus experience becomes personal and individualistic and not a component of universal truth.

**Mini-Narratives Take Center Stage**

Postmodernism negates the idea of the “grand narrative” or the “meta-narrative” and focuses closely on the little, or mini, narrative (Lyotard, 1984). We are each experts of our own autobiographies. Due to the nature of our cultural and social travails through life, our stories are continually being recreated and reinterpreted and are likely ambiguous and unstable. Our daily needs, circumstances, and experiences dictate the flux in our little narratives- who we are as individuals. Postmodernists believe that there is no grand narrative, or universal truth, or comprehensive explanation of historical experience that explains each of us.

**The Dominant, Western, Eurocentric View of Knowledge is De-Centered**

Knowledge has no center from which it grows and is disseminated. Knowledge is based on the many cultures of “others”; thus, Eurocentricism is radically denied as the only, or even dominant, viewpoint. Feminine, bi-sexual, African, Latino, Asian, Islamic, socioeconomic deprived, aged- all subcultures are dynamic parts of cultural expertise. As such, these subcultures are embraced and celebrated, not merely assimilated, as an integral part of mainstream, global culture. Little narratives become
individual scholarships, each independent and integral to human concern. We are “constantly questioning, observing, theorizing, trying to understand life and make the most of it in (our) own very distinctive situation. The radical democracy of postmodernism leads in this direction” (Beck, 1993, Forms of Scholarship, para. 4).

The Power/Knowledge Paradigm is Challenged

The underpinning theoretical question becomes, How is knowledge possible, what is it and who has it? Historically, “knowledge is presented with an assumed hierarchy of values based on dualisms such as male/female, black/white, culture/nature, emotion/logic, etc.” (Efland et al., 1996, p. 21). Postmodernists assert that knowledge is socially constructed and continually created and that America is in fact the “melting pot” of many cultures and subcultures.

Science, certainty, or any form of reality is mistrusted at a most basic level. Many of these “truths” have been created by those in power, creating oppression in culture and society. Pauline Rosenau suggests that science has been smug, arrogant and manipulative (Schmoker, 1997, p. 29). Michel Foucault notes that “knowledge and power cannot be separated, since knowledge embodies the values of those who are powerful enough to create and disseminate it” (as cited in Beck 1993, Reality, para. 4).

Postmodernists, with tongue (barely) in cheek, note that knowledge typically leads to oppression and progress has lead the way to global warming.

Such is the power-knowledge connection. Power is inextricably tied to “knowing” in postmodern theory (Foucault, 1990). Those who “know” control information and are the elite in any setting; consider politics, western education, society,
and yes, art. Modernists have created a deeply ingrained culture that is simply not available to “others”; postmodernists foster ways in which those who belong to subcultures learn to be attuned to power-knowledge nuance. They create methods of open and inclusive discourse in the arts and literature. They publically recognize that architecture, art design, art criticism and craft are all public contents and contexts; as such they should be open, available and interpreted with honesty and validity by all (Efland et al., 1996).

Postmodern Theory Embraces Pluralism and Multiculturalism

The historical focus of multiculturalism is to educate all students. Grant and Sleeter (1989) purport that multicultural practice encourages minority students to become critical thinkers who may examine their lives and social situations that that they may seize “the social and financial rewards of this country” (p. 54). Furthermore, if students are part of the dominant group, they equally should be “capable of examining why their group exclusively enjoys the social and financial rewards of the nation” (Grant & Sleeter, 1989, p. 54), thus advancing the potential of “others” to enjoy equal opportunities.

There is much cynicism in the way our schools have actually implemented this thinking. Art critic Lucy Lippard (1990) extends that “multiculturalism” has become institutional “nonactivist rhetoric” without the political power it was deemed to contain. Postmodernism revisits multiculturalism with pluralism, distinctly and intimately including everyone and extinguishing power relations. Paul Ricoeur, French philosopher, says that perhaps there is a day in our near future when “there are just others, that we ourselves are an ‘other’ among others” (as cited in Morley & Robins, 1995, p. 25).
An important aspect of including “others’ in school curriculum would be the explicit inclusion of the cultural diversity in little narratives—collectively, a loud voice in not just tolerance but acceptance. That these often eloquent voices have not been heard adds clarity to the system of political oppression and social inequity inherent not just in society but formidably in our schools.

**Deconstruction Theory Allows for Deep, Interpretive Analysis**

Deconstruction takes apart cultures, language, and representation with the goal of unearthing oppressive elements of power in culture and the arts. It is a basis of structuralism theory; it recognizes that irreconcilably incongruous meanings can be drawn from any given text.

Deconstruction involves a ‘turning up-side down’ of old myths that have been taken for granted, and the ‘unpacking’ of social constructs that have become so embedded in society as to appear natural. This is a powerful process when searching for the ‘fragility of meaning’ and the ‘relation of truth to power.’ ” (Efland et al., 1996, p. 28)

“Whatever can be socially constructed can also be deconstructed to expose the social forces embedded within” (Clark, 1996, p. 9). The oppressed are released from the culture into which they are categorically grouped and they become unique and vital voices. In this search for meaning, and of many interpretations, deconstruction is very much a part of postmodernism. Modern stereotypes are diminished.

**Time and Place Are Fragmented**

Postmodernism is rooted in both today and yesterday, rather than in the promises or hopes of a better tomorrow. Fragmentation is most evident in the mass media; it provides news and information cut and pasted from many sources, many places,
and in and out of time. Postmodernism celebrates this chaotic, fragmented version of life, viewing it as encouraging play, experimentation and discovery. Once again, this fragmentation of postmodernism confirms the potential and power of many interpretations. At the same time it makes cautious note of the contemporary ability to distort truth and reality, particularly without careful, analytical critique of the messages of mass media.

**The Constructedness of Reality and Truth is Questioned**

Postmodernism stresses that reality is incredibly complex. It is largely a human creation, to be shaped by our interests, cultures, histories, needs, experiences, and prejudices. Reality becomes knowledge, but reality is interpretive, so knowledge must be recognized as interpretive also. Life is viewed through “cultural lenses” (Beck, 1993). What is known today is often modified by what is learned tomorrow.

Jean Baudrillard, French sociologist, takes the notion of reality a step further, proposing that much of the Western world is merely simulacrum.

The key piece [of simulacrum] is that where images used to refer to something outside themselves, we have now moved into an era in which images seem to refer to things outside themselves but are in fact devoid of any reference — that is, they are simulacra, things which bear no relation to reality, so that there is no “re-presentation” because there is nothing which is “present” in the first place to be presented again (“re-”) in the second. (“Simulacrum,” 2010)

Baudrillard suggests that we constantly face difficulty distinguishing between reality, simulation, and simulacrum, the last based on a degenerated, completely false yet believable reality. One may consider Main Street in Disneyland, Second Life online, or The Matrix movie.
Feminism Reemerges with a New Tone

Feminism has changed significantly in the last decades, from being a socially political activity (women’s liberation) to one of “raising public sensitivity to systemic biases which assume male experience to be universal” (Clark, 1996, p. 11). Postmodern feminism goes beyond how women are (merely) objectified by men to a larger scope: to exploring how women’s lives are affected by many social forces, such as age, class, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation (Clark, 1996). Many similarities are found between postmodernism and feminism: the deconstruction of reason and knowledge forms of social order, and the emphasis on plurality, otherness, and marginality. As such, postmodernism and feminism inform one another (Best & Kellner, 1991). Feminists largely identify with the multicultural attitude and ugly manifestation of the “us” versus “them” as has fostered in American society. They also attend to “the gaze,” which directly addresses the “objectification” of women. The viewer of the “object” (the object a woman in this case) feels a sense of power, particularly in that the “object” is unaware of his watchful eye, or “gaze.” This objective “gaze” thus becomes subjective; it is voyeuristic and she becomes vulnerable. One may see this shift of intent in much of feminist postmodern work, particularly that of Cindy Sherman.

Postmodernism Welcomes Ambiguity and Double Coding

The use of double coding, similar to irony, nourishes multiple meanings to multiple audiences. Diverse symbols systems are used, often not those fundamental archetypes and known semiotics of the modernists. Art and literature are often kitsch, parodic, comic, and satiric, but imperatively may be freely interpreted. Several conditions
must be met for double coding to exist: the artwork being represented (embedded) must subordinate to the primary work, and it must then allow for the perceiver to create new interpretations, often removed from the primary work. Combining symbols of past and present are common. Again, viewers are essential to making art “work.” The Truman Show movie is a fine example.

Postmodernism in the Visual Arts

“Pomo” art, as postmodern art is sometimes called, was loosely established in the 1960s about the time Marshall McLuhan wrote The Medium is the Message, when mass media emerged as a powerful, forceful ingredient of everyday information accumulation. Mass media disseminated art as mass culture, democratically initiating the break down of elitism and high brow art (Efland et al., 1996, p. 29).

In architecture, where postmodernism finds its aesthetic roots, elements of postmodernism are relatively clear. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott-Brown and Peter Eisenman purposely rejected traditional, pure forms and inserted irony, ornamentation, historical reference and paradox (“Postmodernism,” 2009). In painting and sculpture, however, the lines are muddied; indeed it is impossible to provide and identify a definitive break in artistic tradition. The first vestiges of postmodern visual art may have been with the emergence of mass produced Pop art created by the likes of Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, and Richard Hamilton, considered at the time to be “low-brow” and kitsch.
The resulting postmodern painting styles include borrowed imagery, messy collage, and pastiche. This is seen equally in the modernist works of Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns (“Postmodernism,” 2009).

Unlike the modernist white, male artist of the past, traditionally isolated and slaving away, and expounding heady, conceptual, theoretical analyses of their works, a postmodern artist will be employing a variety of eclectic approaches. He may be working collaboratively. He may use film or video. He advocates realism, clutter, montage, collage, pastiche, spontaneity and emotion. His subjects may be human, social, or political, rather than based on stylistic or theoretical foundations. The future is rarely depicted as “better.” Gone is formal Expressionism and the elitist Abstract Expressionism. These have been replaced and embraced by representational forms of cultural and plural expression. Roger Clark explains:

Looking beyond artistic and aesthetic meaning, postmodernism views art as a socially constructed entity, requiring the viewer to look beyond the formalist compositional qualities of a work, decode its symbolic imagery and expose its embedded cultural assumptions. Meaning is also seen as fluid and contextual; a disparate array of interpretations can be derived from any given work since meaning is subject to the varied perspectives of artists and viewers. Less value is placed on the critic’s statement of worthiness and more on the “voices of pluralism.” (1996, p. 3)

Art “texts,” the communicative symbols of signs, are no longer simply aesthetic nor expressionistic, but become sites within which to look for self and identity through interpretation; the images becomes a discursive instrument which must be considered in the social world. Art becomes a link between aesthetic and social venues (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p.77). Finally, this interpretation and understanding as applies to
self and the social world promotes one to “an awareness of the potential for choice or change” (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p.78).

Efland et al. insist that cultural production has to be understood within the context of its culture of origin . . . The use of distinct categories such as ‘folk art,’ ‘primitive art,’ ‘tribal art,’ or ‘popular art’ marginalizes less dominant groups” and removes them from high or “fine art. (1996, p. 13)

Typical of the most basic tenet of postmodernism, even the use of terms such as “fine art” or “high art” is annulled.

About a Postmodern Education

Thinking begins only when we have come to know that reason, glorified for centuries, is the most stiff-necked adversary of thought. 
Nietzsche's word 'Gott ist tot' [The word of Nietzsche: ‘God Is dead]
(Martin Heidegger, 1943/2002)

The democratic mission of public education argues that all students should have access to a meaningful education. Aronowitz and Giroux assert “the existence of public school is one of the great victories” of our nation (1991, p. 23). That this education has come under attack is also democratic -it must change as our western, industrial society has changed. Today education is lagging pitifully behind the cultural and technological world we live in. A new political and cultural understanding of the rapidly changing society that our children are inheriting must be championed. The educational paradigm of merely teaching content is tragically and destructively outdated; new approaches are urgently required.

Recognizing the difference between progressive, or modern, education and the postmodern is vital. Where modernists happily purport that the culturally marginalized
must be assimilated within the established culture, in contrast, “postmodernism asserts no privileged place, aside from power considerations, for the art works, scientific achievements, and philosophical traditions by which Western culture legitimates itself” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 13).

The values that constitute postmodern education are those of empowerment in the most profound meaning of the term. Students can appropriate the canon of legitimate thought without a prior pledge of reverence…Postmodern educators grant the wisdom contained in [canonical texts] but suspend judgment as to their power of universal persuasion in our heterodox social environment. Freedom consists in the capacity of people and groups to transform knowledge in accordance with their own plans. (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991, p. 22)

Educational reform requires a “vision of transformed power relations within schools and the larger society” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 22). This reform must unite modernism and postmodernism in order to advance both the canons of western history with a responsible and active critique of current global considerations.

Aronowitz and Giroux argue:

For postmodern education, it is not a question of substituting popular culture for traditional, high culture topics. Instead, the traditional curriculum must meet the test of relevance to a student-centered learning regime where ‘relevance’ is not coded as the rejection of tradition but is a criterion for determining inclusion. It is the task of the teacher to persuade students that these knowledges contribute to helping them learn what they want to know. (1991, p. 16)

Interrogation, inquiry, stiff questioning of old canons of literature and the arts, indeed of all knowledge, is central to postmodernist theory. Intellectual, “legitimate” knowledge becomes “practical knowledge,” including folk tales and wisdom, practical awareness, custom, and contemporary popular culture (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 17).

For a long time now, schools, like American communities, have not been homogeneous. A full 82% of California high school students are not white; this
population is divided into many diverse groups (California State Board of Education, 2009). The “modernist” attempts to squeeze and educate all the diverse cultures—America’s Hmong, Latino, homosexual, disabled, Black, those of lower socio-economic status—into the western view of culture is misplaced and destructive. In this technological, global environment, all cultures should be granted dignity and equal opportunities. The longer we impose old views of a single intellectualism on our youth, and the longer we fail to consider the crisis in education the “fault of the ‘others,’” the further we shall move away from the inclusive democratic education we envision. The natural, social, individual, and communal world should be in a constant state of inquiry and discovery. Multiple discourses must exist and challenge old, dominant, and outdated rhetoric and procedures.

Postmodern approaches to education may allow for inquiry about ourselves and about difference. Western “cultural capital” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 12) is diminished. Students of color or low economic status, especially those with whom a first language or dialect is at odds with that of the school, are made to feel included. Students who code switch may use this skill as a resource in their own learning. No longer will the function of language be to condemn students to the margins of good schooling. In this multiple voices are recognized and important.

Language, music, drama, art, and all manner of text are literacies with which children share expression. These literacies are also most common and dynamic when characterized by what Giroux and Simon (1989) called “Pedagogy of Pleasure and Meaning.” Willis (1990) notes that “most young people’s lives… are actually full of expressions, signs and symbols through which individuals and groups seek creatively to
establish their presence, identity and meaning” (p. 3). Jabari Mahiri (2004, p. 3) says that our media “commodifies messages and images from youth culture for global consumption while educators often disdain the use of popular cultural materials in schools.” Mixed messages flourish. June Jordan, an eloquent black poet and women’s activist, writes,

I am talking about majority problems of language in a democratic state, problems of a currency that someone has stolen and hidden away and then homogenized into an official “English” language that can only express non-events involving nobody responsible, or lies. If we lived in a democratic state our language would have to hurdle, fly, curse, and sing in all the common American names, all the undeniable and representative participating voices of everybody here. We would not tolerate the language of the powerful and, thereby, lose all our respect for words, per se. We would make our language lead us into the equality of power that a democratic state must represent. (1987, p. 30)

This process of empowerment, particularly in communication, strengthens localism, minority traditions, and eclecticism. This empowerment by students, of

... personal construction and understanding of aesthetic knowledge and knowledge of self allows for greater expansion of interpretations, critical thinking, multicultural thinking and innovative ‘risk taking’ in their everyday experiences. (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p. 81)

Students are freed from being funneled into a solely modernist, universalist agenda and are invited to question, analyze and think critically and creatively using an infinite number of viewpoints and experiences (Hicks, 1990, p. 43). As such, postmodernism is essential, political and fun.

Teaching becomes dialogic, conversational, and it focuses less on truth than on powerful inquiry by both students and teachers. The conversation includes “examples, stories, feelings, ideas, theories, and worldviews” (Beck, 1993, Some Implications for Pedagogy, para. 8). Teachers help students learn how to learn. They use self-directed
inquiry. They address engagement and relevance. New paradigms in education readdress what is essential knowledge and how it is taught.

“Postmodern educators believe the curriculum can best inspire learning only when school knowledge builds upon the tacit knowledge derived from the cultural resources that students already possess” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 15). Teachers “guide students toward an understanding of the influence of social life on the generation of knowledge and construction of self. An understanding of the influence of context in one’s self-creation can be a step toward understanding and accepting difference in others” (Efland et al., 1996, p. 44).

The theories presented will no longer absolve one of understanding concurrent cultures within the dominant culture. With time and experience, interpretation and critical analysis, postmodernism will become a cultural phenomenon that promotes acceptance of others with near-seamless efforts. Schools will create “emerging Anglo-American theory [which] draws on a variety of contributions from continental philosophy, poststructuralist currents, social semiotics, reception theory, neopragmatism, deconstruction, critical hermeneutics, and other postmodern positions” (Lankshear & MCLaren, 1993, p. 380).

bell hooks (1994) writes:

The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In the field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom. (p. 207)
Postmodernism in Art Education: Putting It All Together

Art Educators: Leaders of le resistance.
(Fehr, “Section II,” 1993)

Although art education has moved from an “instrumentalist” agenda, where art was used to promote learning in other content areas, to an essentialist agenda, wherein pedagogues began to demand the value of art for art’s sake, it has yet to be considered an academically rigorous discipline, an imperative in the public school curriculum (Clark, 1996, p. 19). Perhaps the most influential (art advocating) theorist is Howard Gardner, working with Harvard’s Project Zero, who defines the theory of multiple intelligences. Should Gardner’s theory be true, as research is making apparent, then “existing school curricula are failing to educate holistically... and many of our school dropouts may, indeed, be quite intelligent after all” (Clark, 1996, p. 20). Gardner’s theory includes (among other intelligences) bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (drama and dance), musical intelligence (music), and spatial intelligence (visual arts.) Summatively, and as the essentialists argue, the curricular reform must include the arts (Clark, 1996).

Modernists consider art chronologically linear- always looking and trying to define a new ‘ism.” New art builds on old art, the old is classic, but is dated and is often dismissed as such. When avant-garde art emerged, art was intrinsically an elitist endeavor; artists, art critics and those in the art circles were and still are the privileged few who could understand the vernacular with which to dialogue about it. Much as Alan Bloom and J.D. Hirsch did with the importance of universal culture in educational pedagogy, so did the writings of Clement Greenberg, modern art critic, ground the importance of aesthetic formalist intelligence in art content. Art education, specifically
Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), became the bridge with which to bring “high” art to the students. Even abstraction could be interpreted by the universal, common denominators of art elements and principles. DBAE, a program created by the J. Paul Getty Trust in the early 1980s, contributed to this conversation when it introduced four formal and distinct disciplines for study: aesthetics, art criticism, art history and art production. Art students learned formal methods of interpretation. Important to remember, though, is that if one didn’t have a formal education in the arts, in thematic, compositional, and practical Western art knowledge, one was inherently “left out.” Thus was created the “elite” foundation; art could only be understood by those with the western cultural capital to understand, “others” were educationally and aesthetically “oppressed.”

jan jagodzinski, Canadian education professor, cleverly asserts that modernism “affects our curriculum and educational thought like some nebulous transparent cloud and [that] it has become part of our vision; a persistent cataract, which has paradoxically become accepted as providing us with a clearer vision” of the possibilities and potentialities of art education (1996, p. 58). He adds that “trauma is required before a change of consciousness can occur” (1996, pp. 57-58). Postmodernists are concerned that the modernist view of art, and DBAE, among other things, does not include the pluralistic viewpoints that diverse interpretations can and should offer. The modernists are exclusive and excluding.

Support for a postmodern approach to art education is growing. Harold Pearce, another Canadian professor, crediting theory from German philosopher Jurgen Habermas, created a model “to identify and analyze the structure of three basic forms of
knowing that have characterized modern thought and action” in art education. This model provides a visual of the three ways of knowing in the arts.

1. The first paradigm, called “Pre-modern Art Education,” emphasizes empirical, technical knowing as provided by hands on work, products, skills, techniques and the like (Pearse as cited in Clark, 1996, p. 22).

2. Paradigm two, called “Modern Art Education,” focuses on the interpretive, hermeneutic, situational knowing; a learning centered on communication, understanding, interpretation, and realized reality (Pearse as cited in Clark, 1996, p. 22).

3. The third paradigm is that of a postmodern art education. The shift spotlights critical-theoretical thinking and knowing created through reflection, critical action and critical consciousness (Pearse as cited in Clark, 1996, p. 22).

These designations represent theories in stages and include educational pedagogy in social theory. Art curriculum focusing upon the third paradigm emphasizes “relationships between the visual world and the social world, relationships which reveal how injustices within society marginalize certain groups by virtue of their class, gender, or race” (Clark, 1996, p. 24). It is for this reason postmodernism must be considered an essential theory to be included in contemporary education. It is also a premise upon which to promote democratic education and social consciousness.

Richard Kearney, Boston philosophy professor and prolific writer, equates the same third paradigm of art education with terms as parodic, reflective, collagist, Bricoleur, and further states that there are no longer original ideas in art (Kearney as cited in Clark, 1996, p. 26).
The artistic process is demystified in the postmodernist paradigm. Artists rely on metaphors, allegories, and narrative elements; they use parody, irony and humor to mock contemporary culture (Clark, 1996, p. 28). Single meanings no longer exist; instead we speak of “signifiers and deconstructed meanings which produce an infinite array of interrelated and circular interpretations… images [are] deconstructed to reveal antecedent constructs and concepts” (Clark, 1996, p. 28). Recognizable imagery is preferred; artists can now speak directly to those once marginalized by the elitism of modern art. All social groups are invited equally to participate in art. This paradigm speaks to our youth, equally marginalized in modernism’s looming shadow.

Hence, participation from many factions and subcultures is broadened. Artworks move out of the museums and into the streets.

Today, we are developing a newfound interest in not simply “art for art’s sake,” but in studying art as a form of cultural expression rather than simply individual expression, and of learning about the human side of art (Gallucci, 1998, p. 41). In spite of the many conflicting theories about how and what is most important in art study, many educators believe that pluralistic, cross-cultural dialogue and understanding should be integral in current art education (Garber as cited in Gallucci, 1998, p. 42). Elizabeth Garber further suggests that art education include what she calls “borderland,” an interaction between the dominant culture (primarily the grand narratives of white, Eurocentric) and cultures existing adjacent to it (Gallucci, 1998). In this way, we add newfound appreciation to the richness and diversity of American cultural pluralism. Newly embraced is the art of “others,” including traditional art by racial or ethnic groups,
craft created using other than paint and ceramic, and women’s art or homosexual art. Therein we must also include the art created with meaning by our students.

This is postmodern art education: one rejects presenting art concepts “in a single treatment, in a single context, for a single purpose… in favor of approaches that dynamically reflect art’s, and the world’s, interconnected complexity” (Spiro as cited in Gallucci, 1998, p. 6). Essential to this endeavor is an art program that encourages multiple perspectives using multiple strategies that display the complexities of human existence (Gallucci, 1998).

Art is language, as it always has been, and in postmodernism, it is the language of “others.” It includes the cognitive value of interpretation, and it provides an essential role in communication without privileging either writing or speech (Parsons, 1992). Text thus becomes any system of signifying—images, painting, video, literature, et.al, all of which can be “written” or “read” in an equitable fashion (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p. 77). This text and subsequent intertextuality allows for plurality of meaning and interpretation for all subcultures.

Terry Barrett explains understanding postmodern art is a deeply cognitive endeavor. Critical thinking must be present to understand the wide variety of interpretations and meanings in art, especially when the vehicle to meaning is symbolic, parodic and/or metaphoric (Barrett, 2004).

Students . . . traverse complex ‘conceptual landscapes’ not as progressive, top down deductive process, but as deep explorations based on visiting, revisiting, and crisscrossing the landscape from many directions. Such multi-directional, multi-faceted, ‘hyper texted’ learning experiences help foster cognitive flexibility and the ability to transfer individual experiences to multiple disciplinary and curricular contexts. (Gallucci, 1998, p. 46)
Is it important that postmodern theory be included in mainstream art education? Jagodzinski maintains that “Scientism has been thin on spirituality, philosophy and the aesthetic dimension” (1996, p. 71). Clark submits, “Whether one supports the status quo, expanded canons, or ethno aesthetics, art teachers everywhere need to carefully re-examine their current professional practices and ascertain how postmodernism can enrich their pedagogic portfolio” (1996, p. 64). Profound theory and criticism in this review supports Clark’s consideration. “The increasing irrelevance of school art has caught many art educators off-guard. Preoccupied with efforts to stave off assaults from technophiles and educrats fixated on issues of curricular accountability and budgetary efficiency, art teachers have been simply too busy to notice the arrival of postmodernist art” (1996, p. 65).

Of course, as postmodernism weans its way into public consciousness and conversation, so it must wean its way into the classroom. The “reality we construct must be as diverse as the society in which we live” (Clark, 1996, p. 65). Overcoming the stronghold of modernism is a challenge, however, not unlike any school reform. Fehr suggests that as the modern art teacher continues to “ignore the art world, in kind [they] continue to foster a visually illiterate generation.” (1993, p. 214)

Back to the Art Classroom

All this is fodder for perhaps more questions than answers. Efland et al. ask: “How should art be taught in the postmodern milieu? What features and methods would art education likely exhibit? What would be the value of art and of such instruction?” (1996, p. 71). “How does one interpret change, if such notion of progress is regarded as
an illusion?” (1996, p. 55). “Why do we assume that curriculum represents knowledge? Is it possible to teach truth? Can teachers reasonably represent other people in other places and times?” (1996, p. 43). Perhaps these are the very questions our teachers and students should be addressing in a postmodern curriculum.

Strategies of incorporating postmodernism into a classroom will vary as much as does teacher personality and methodology. The first step to any curricular change must be in recognizing common and accepted myths of art education, as outlined by Elliot Eisner (1973-74) and Nancy Freedman (1994):

*Myths Related to Creative Self-Expression:*
Children should be left alone when creating
Art instruction should focus on creativity
Children perceive the world more clearly than adults
Artistic processes are more important than artistic products
Child art cannot, and therefore should not, be evaluated
Teacher talk interferes with creative self-expression
Art should involve a wide range of materials and activities (Clark, 1996, p. 66)

*Myths Related to Modernist Art:*
Art has inherent value
Art is a universal language
Art can be studied outside of production and appreciation
Fine art can be distinguished from other forms of art
Art interpretation is the domain of art experts
All art can be understood using Western aesthetic models
Art instruction should always begin with object (Clark, 1996, p. 66)

It is not difficult to recognize myths included here that cause discomfort, largely because many of these are still considered absolute, incontrovertible truths in art education. It is also not difficult to recognize those we still espouse.

In postmodern fashion and reflecting on these myths, Efland et al. pose further questions to art educators: “Who has the power to shape the curriculum? What shall be taught and to whom? Whose art [is] to be accorded status as ‘high art?’ Whose art is
ignored or marginalized? How are these determinations made? And how are these decisions passed on through instruction?” (1996, p. 97-98). Can art educators accept and address this power-knowledge dilemma?

To what extent can a modified curriculum accommodate new theory? Clark suggests three realities must be woven into the equation:

1. The change must be part of a continuum that begins with minor revisions at one end to substantial reconstruction on the other.
2. Art educators typically espouse a number of perspectives in their personal repertoire of curriculum, and those include an “eclectic assortment of instrumentalist, essentialist, and postmodernist concepts.”
3. We are all products of our own socially constructed cultures; as such, older art educators may be more reluctant to support more deconstructive and reconstructive curriculum than younger art teachers. (1996, p. 67)

Due to media influences, adolescents come to school today with a different level of sophistication than they did just two decades ago (Efland et al., 1996). Not uncommonly, their experiences in the world do not parallel those of their teachers, but are oppositional in profound ways. The old paradigm of teaching knowledge (the “how to get into university” paradigm) is unfortunately still the dominant first paradigm, but 21st century global economies and cultures must force those paradigms to veer. Identified 21st century skills, including critical thinking, innovation, and collaboration, indeed those traits most espoused by postmodern theory, will become ever more imperative as our graduates leave school in search of an inclusive and successful future.

Education must include those real educational truths that cannot be ignored—the inclusion of a democratic education, social justice, teaching the whole child using multiple intelligences theory, addressing globalization, and the like. In postmodern style
again though, providing many beginnings and few endings, a conclusion presents many profoundly important, unanswered questions, as asked by Efland et al.:

How can the classroom art teacher hope to find out who the underrepresented artists are and what they have accomplished without such support? How do we determine how many of the canonical masterpieces should remain in the curriculum? Do we exclude Monet to make room for Judy Chicago? . . . Is adding Hopi Kachinas, Navajo blankets, Appalachian quilts, and a few African-American or Hispanic-American artists sufficient to make the curriculum multicultural? Does it require a fundamental rethinking of the canon and an awareness of the institutional apparatus that forms and maintains it? . . . Some argue that, whether we like it or not, the canon exists to affirm the excellence of great works. How can one be satisfied that the canon is democratic as well? (1996, p. 13)

Trendy and difficult to define, postmodern theory obviously presents many questions and quandaries. At the same time one cannot deny that postmodernism is real and vital. Dennis Fehr eloquently notes,

Some may conclude that ours is the most enlightened of periods. Let us rather hope that a millennium from now, the twentieth century is considered the end of the dark ages. A new syntax is in the making, and art educators are well placed to facilitate the dissemination of this new reality. (1993, “Art Education,” para. 2)

The time is here for practicing teachers, theorists, researchers, sociologists, anthropologists, and political leaders to grapple with a revolutionary and fresh definition of what it is to being educated in America.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Volumes have been written portraying, promoting, and negating postmodern theory. Many of these studies include postmodern pedagogical approaches. Many more address postmodern education in an art classroom. Yet very little has been written about a hands-on, classroom-applicable, comprehensive and clear postmodern practice as it may appear in a curriculum. The twelve lessons herein began with both a passion and concern for offering students the best in effective current educational practice, while keeping in mind how relatively short sighted the view of 21st century skills and learning has been in schools.

Significant research and reading was employed in gathering necessary, accurate and detailed information to complete the twelve lessons. Recently published journals, essays, and books were utilized, as was internet investigations. Interviews with current art education practitioners added authentic viewpoints. Personal and passionate years of teaching in a secondary art classroom created this author as a reflective practitioner.

Research, completed with the goal of building a postmodern secondary art curriculum, began with identifying and clarifying cultural postmodern theory, not based solely on visual art. This led the author to consideration of a postmodern art curriculum employed in a postmodern educational venue. Emphasis in class is refreshingly placed on
mini narratives, “otherness,” many questions and a search for resolutions, ambiguity, representation, and many interpretations. Students and teachers are working collaboratively in a search for best creative practices. The lessons and projects presented are subject to postmodern teaching approaches, and the power of postmodern theory is enhanced.

Content integration into the arts creates the connections that support meaningful learning. Various content areas across the curriculum were researched and included with this aim. The first and primary goal of the twelve lessons is to grow students in the arts with this supporting goal, of connecting the arts to typical secondary school curriculum that includes the social science, history, language arts, math and science. Creation of these lessons included not just best art education practices, but research in other content areas; this background information has been woven into the lessons with the goal of providing practicing teachers the needed foundation to proceed.

Time and attention was given to be sure the twelve lessons were anchored in the California Visual and Performing Arts Strands and their specific standards:

- Artistic Perception: Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through language and skills.
- Creative Expression: Creation, performance and participation in the discipline.
- Historical and Cultural Context: Understanding historical contributions and cultural dimensions of the discipline.
- Aesthetic Valuing: Responding to, analyzing, and making judgments about works of art.
- Connections, Relationships, Applications: Connecting and applying what is learned in the discipline to other art forms and subject areas and to careers.

(California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit, 2009)
Modern art education has been anchored in Discipline Based Art Education, created by the J. Paul Getty Trust Foundation in the early 1960s. It outlines four disciplines:

1. Art Production – Students learn skills and techniques in order to produce personal, original artwork.
2. Art History – Students study the artistic accomplishments of the past and present as motivation, examples of style or technique, and as discussion topics, especially in relation to cultural, political, social, religious, and economic events and movements.
3. Art Criticism – Students describe, interpret, evaluate, theorize and judge the properties and qualities of the visual form, for the purpose of understanding and appreciating works of art and understanding the roles of art in society.
4. Aesthetics – Students consider the nature, meaning, impact and value of art, are encouraged to formulate reflective, “educated” opinions and judgments about specific works of art, and examine criteria for evaluating works of art. (Dobbs, 1997, p. 11)

Postmodern theory in the arts challenges and often denies the existence of modernist foundations. Thus an approach to the four disciplines must be modified and considered in presentation of the material, art making, history, criticism, and especially in aesthetics. This is not to deny that DBAE is important and powerful, but that the inherent value of postmodern art veers from the accepted educational approaches imbedded in current art educational practice. The twelve lessons will include consideration of DBAE as it is applicable to postmodern art.

The author of this thesis/project has a three decades long background in teaching: English, considered by many to be an academic content area, and Visual Arts, often considered by others as not-so-academic. This background equally provides insight into “academic expectations,” management of classroom and content, standards, best
teaching practices, and assessments. Although the author is recently retired, all these insights are well established and soulfully considered in the twelve lessons.

Due to lack of daily classroom teaching access, only three of the twelve lessons have been field tested. When considering the experience and insight behind the creation of this project, this in no way diminishes the power of these lessons.

All lessons follow a prescribed format that includes comprehensive attention to rationale, introduction, materials, procedure, materials needed, and final assessments.

Attention was given to major principles and theories in postmodern art making and critiquing. Most prevalent theories have been clearly outlined and included in all twelve lessons as follows:

- Deconstruction
- Feminism
- Mini narratives
- Questioning reality and truths, particularly in age of mass media.
- Contextualism-situated experience
- Fragmentation of time and place
- Pluralism, multiculturalism, “others”
- Ambiguity, double coding, juxtapositions, irony, parody
- Art is representative, as such interpretive to all

The most prevalent art making principles have been included:

- Appropriation
- Juxtaposition
- Recontextualization
- Layering
- Text and images
- Hybridity
- The Gaze
- Representation

Identified movements in postmodern art have been included:

- New classicism
- Conceptual
- Installation, including video art
- Environmental art
- Lowbrow and graffiti art
- Performance
- Appropriation
- Neo conceptual
- Neo expressionism
- Institutional critique
- Neo or post pop art
- Photorealism, super-realism, hyper-realism

Lesson construction followed an effective and practiced backward mapping curriculum design strategy:
1. Each lesson began with a consideration first of postmodern theory and concept as would be woven into an artistic classroom project. The final project, as envisioned, provided information regarding the knowledge and skills to be learned. Big ideas, significant learning is identified at this point.

2. Questions were constructed with which teacher and students, in postmodern style, could develop the driving ideas and approaches to their work. Introductory presentation and discussion, thumbnails, inquiry, and collaboration would be required to complete this stage.

3. The devil in the details is addressed. Consideration was given to needed materials, time for completion, unexpected, potential problematic issues or details, classroom management, and the like. Applicable and pertinent resources were identified.

4. Assessment rubrics were constructed.

5. Links to former lessons and future, integration with outside content areas, and connections to learning outside the classroom are made. Diverse methods to teaching desired knowledge outcomes were considered.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Bio-weapons, genocide, global warming- hurricanes, tsunamis, and ice storms- terrorism, global economic collapse, environmental destruction- dying oceans and acid rain- AIDS and rampant unstoppable viruses, growing chasms between the rich and poor, and nuclear missiles. We introduce this world “of infinite possibilities” and infinite challenges to our children as they graduate from high school and college. They are facing challenges of which we never dreamt. Yet in our secure, solid and traditional opinions, we teach and test them with no sense of how they may use this understanding in the real world.

Daniel Pink, author of A Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future, outlines today’s global scenario rather well, and this clearly is not the view of the familiar recent past. The most imposing question today is: what must education provide to our children so they may be successful in their personal and community lives? We have definitively left the industrial and even the information age (of knowledge workers); we have moved into what Pink calls “the conceptual age” (2006): an age of creativity, innovation, empathy and collaboration.
Students are navigating the postmodern world of today, whether any of us are cognizant of it or not. I submit that postmodern culture presents a way of thinking that should be introduced in our classrooms and as educators, we need to catch up.

Quarrels about high stakes testing, funding, teacher and school effectiveness, school closures, merit pay, even legitimate content are ongoing, and burrow deeper roots yet for education to abysmally remain in the industrial age. Caught in the midst of this perfect storm is the legitimacy of art education. Defining the job of an art teacher is nigh to impossible, yet included in the description must be advocacy and ongoing social, political and cultural critique.

During the research of this project, I discovered several crucial points of interest and potential action:

1. Art educators clearly recognize the potential social, economic and political power that arts embrace, yet the passion we share is not one of present-day responsiveness. We teach expressionism, but not cultural awareness. We teach to the standards, “historical and cultural context,” but fail to put into practice changing attitudes regarding race, ethnicity, gender, and the like. We are essentialists in the sense that we expound the critical need of the curriculum arts, and although the public by and large agrees, politicians and administrators are ear-weary from hearing the same decades-old rhetoric. To this end, educators should discover and readjust by instilling the contemporary and most relevant tactic of teaching social justice and postmodernism in their classrooms. Once this infectious approach is realized, so will the undeniable power of the arts move to a renewed position of legitimacy.
2. Educators must be as contemporary as possible; they must read, learn, and understand and participate in 21st century education models. Twenty first century skills are abundantly addressed in the media these days. The National Art Educators Association’s (NAEA) website offers state-of-the-art books on art education and social justice, as does that of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Familiarity with The Habits of Mind as presented by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick and Daniel Pink’s book, A Whole New Mind- Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future are both essentially significant. A web search of 21st century skills will provide more information than one may begin to digest.

3. When considering the ways of knowing in art education, art educators must certainly share technical and empirical knowledge, as they must teach the elements of modernism. But they must also instill the postmodern paradigm of knowing created through reflection, critical action and critical consciousness (Pearse as cited in Clark, 1996, p. 22). “The need to transform art education into a more inclusive field of study is no longer being questioned in the literature; instead, various positions are being posited as to the nature of inclusivity and empowerment. Fundamental to this discourse is the postmodernist concept of community” (Clark, 1996, p. 31). Postmodernism directly attends to the future that our students are entering: one of global cultures and global economies.

4. “Voices of the marginalized typically include women, people of colour, ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, physically-challenged, non-urbanites, those living anywhere in poverty” (Clark, 1996, p. 31). Interesting that these lists never include our students, our youth, as marginalized, which they so clearly are. Postmodernism in the
classroom first attends to their identities and their realities. When they have established their rightful communicative role in critical theory, they are able to proceed to critical interpretation and voice with knowledge and authority. The classroom becomes a place of conversation and respect, of understanding and diversity, rather than one of consistency, uniformity, agreement and assimilation (Clark, 1996, p. 32). Side note: The digital expertise of these students far surpasses that of most educators today; the time has come to incorporate their knowledge, their curiosity and their ways of knowing.

5. Critical and educational research needs to be conducted to further identify postmodern theory in the arts and to weave it into the traditional formalism of Western art history. Postmodern art fails to conform to the established linear progression of art movements. It arbitrarily overlaps past “isms” and often diverges completely. It regularly fails to acknowledge technical mastery of materials and methods, yet embraces realist representation. It relies on symbols, codes and text, and purports to be “readable” by the public, but is often, and wrongly, unknowable by those not familiar with postmodern art. Pauline Rosenau states, “Postmodernists urge us to be comfortable in the absence of certainty, [to] learn to live without explanation” (1992, p. 6), but that uneasiness must be reconciled with the structure of content standards in a classroom.

Postmodernism as theory is problematic at best, perhaps because it is so contemporary that there is no hindsight within which to isolate and identify it. And it eludes definition on second front, being that the nature of postmodernism itself denies that any fixed descriptive doctrine, or master narrative, exists. Jean-François Lyotard suggests that there shall always be postmodernism, or post something, in that this “post” is a perpetual afterward (Lyotard, 1984, p. 563).
This quandary equally applies to today’s visual arts classroom. A formalist approach is quite contrary to a postmodern approach, and the fissure is rather unbreachable. Art instruction will either favor the formalist, modern agenda, with historical, technical, formulaic (DBAE) considerations, often lacking social considerations; or the postmodern, with an insistence on socio-political content, but with a failure to relate content to form (Spicanovic, 1998). This may be the underpinning consideration for what is called the anti-aesthetic, anti-art, or (anti) movement. But reconciliation is a must.

6. Although postmodernism offers no ultimate definition, the hullabaloo it cultivates in art and pedagogical circles insists upon serious and immediate attention. This project chooses to focus upon several major assertions that postmodern theory promotes: the power of mini-narratives and “others” including feminism, cultural inclusion, interpretation of reality and truths, fragmentation of time and space, evaluation of power/knowledge connections, and in the arts- representation, ambiguity and double-coding. In addition, and ultimately, postmodernism promotes freedom of discourse shared through a variety of collective mediums. I suggest that imbuing these elements of postmodernism into art pedagogy and education in general would advance an education worthy of 21st century concerns. The time has come that members of pedagogical circles consider implementing fundamentals of (yes, ambiguous) postmodern theory with the aim of promoting democratic educational practices.
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1. Postmodernism: Teachers-on-the-Run Version

Due to the conceptual ambiguity of “postmodernism,” one can immerse herself in the theory and still emerge baffled. I have chosen the following eleven principles as fundamental to postmodern theory and in which to ground the 12 visual art units that follow. These are in no way comprehensive to the infinite and fascinating philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, or cultural interpretations as presented in journals, books, or the Internet. I do, however, consider them a relatively comprehensive overview of postmodernism.

Although an attempt has been made to clarify the differences in these principles, they do overlap each other a time and again, as one may notice when further studying postmodern theory.

Identity and individuality are celebrated

Each of us is an individual and we are influenced by our “surrounding cultures, changes within those cultures, and are fragmented like those cultures” (Beck, 1993, para. 24). Hence, our selves, our conversation, opinions, values, and actions correspond to the culture we inhabit. Of importance is that individuals do not necessarily reflect their racial, socio-economic, gender, or religion, but that these traits merely provide a cultural ground upon which an individual may reflect and/or embrace. Postmodernism focuses not so much on explicitly identifying individuals as it does being sure all voices are heard. Jane Gooding-Brown (1997) writes,

. . . I no longer see my world in terms of ‘right’ answers or single meaning when the notion of difference brings with it different interpretations of self and identity and the world. The particular ways I interpret experiences and meanings of self and identity in the world are socially and historically constituted by all discourses or discursive practices…. The experience of interpretation and the interpretation of experience adds to my own concept of self and identity. (p.75)

Individual life experiences also mold who we are. We perpetually create new selves, as noted, due to the nature of our existence—visiting, talking, moving through daily life, listening and learning of cultures different from our own. Each time we interact with an experience, that experience recreates who we are, what we think, and our vision of purpose. Humans live in a flux of knowledge recreation.

The constructedness of reality and truth is questioned

Postmodern philosophers help stress that reality is incredibly more complex than we easily accept. It is largely a human creation, to be shaped by our interests, cultures, histories, needs, experiences, and prejudices. That reality becomes knowledge, and reality is interpretive, so knowledge is interpretive also. What we know today is often modified by what we learn tomorrow. Reality is often value based. Different cultures, particularly through language, possess different views of reality also.

Cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard takes the constructedness of reality further. He suggests that we live in a world of simulacra, that simulation a false representation of what is true, particularly in American culture. (Consider the hyper-reality of Main Street as represented at Disneyland.) These simulacra, of perceived reality, are created by our culture and media, and that we have lost touch with the real world upon which the simulacra are based. Postmodernism asserts that though there may be a reality, we don’t know or understand it any longer; that all perceived reality is merely opinion based loosely on fact, but not in actuality fact.
The dominate, western, Eurocentric view of knowledge is decentered

Knowledge has no center from which it grows and is disseminated. Knowledge is based on the many cultures of “others”; thus Eurocentrism is denied as the only viewpoint. Feminine, bi-sexual, African, Latino, Asian, Islamic, socioeconomic deprived, aged- all subcultures are dynamic parts of cultural expertise. As such, these subcultures are embraced and celebrated, not merely assimilated, as an integral part of mainstream, global cultural knowledge. Little narratives become individual scholarships, each independent and integral to human concern. We are “constantly questioning, observing, theorizing, trying to understand life and make the most of it in (our) own very distinctive situation. “The radical democracy of postmodernism leads in this direction” (Beck, 1993, para. 36).

All interpretations are accepted, not simply those of the culturally educated elite. Because postmodernism bases so much of its philosophy on the vagaries and diversities of reality and knowledge, then as realities change, so must knowledge. As such, knowledge is in no way static in either time or place. Convention and expertise are continually challenged.

The Power/Knowledge paradigm is challenged.

How is knowledge possible, who has it, and what is it? “Knowledge is presented with an assumed hierarchy of values based on dualisms such as male/female, black/white, culture/nature, emotion/logic, etc.” (Efland, Stuhr, & Freedman, 1996, p. 21). Postmodernists, with tongue (barely) in cheek, note that knowledge can lead to oppression and progress can lead to global warming. Science, certainty, or any form of truth is mistrusted at a most basic level. Many of these “truths” have been created by those in power, creating oppression in culture and society. Pauline Rosenau suggests that science has been smug, arrogant and manipulative (Schmoker, 1997, p. 29). Michel Foucault notes that “knowledge and power cannot be separated, since knowledge embodies the values of those who are powerful enough to create and disseminate it” (in Beck, 1993, para. 18).

Such is the power-knowledge connection. Power is inextricably tied to knowing; Those who “know” are the elite in any setting; consider politics, western education, society, and yes, art. Postmodernists strive to break down this power-knowledge link in several ways. Modernists have created a deeply ingrained culture that is simply not available to “others;” postmodernists foster ways in which those who belong to subcultures learn to be attuned to power-knowledge nuance. They create methods of open and inclusive discourse in the arts and literature. They publically recognize that architecture, art design, art criticism and craft are all public contents and contexts; as such they should be open, available and interpreted with validity by all (Efland, Stuhr & Freedman, 1996).

Deconstruction theory allows for interpretive analysis.

Deconstruction takes apart cultures, language, and representation with the goal of unearthing oppressive elements of power in culture and the arts. It involves a . . . ‘turning up-side down’ of old myths that have been taken for granted, and the ‘unpacking’ of social constructs that have become so embedded in society as to appear natural. This is a powerful process when searching for the ‘fragility of meaning’ and the ‘relation of truth to power.’ ” (Efland, Stuhr & Freedman, 1996, p. 28)

“Whatever can be socially constructed can also be deconstructed to expose the social forces embedded within” (Clark, 1996, p. 9). If the oppressed are released from the culture into which they are grouped, they become important, independent and often unique voices. In this search for meaning, and of many interpretations, deconstruction is very much a part of postmodernism.
Time and place are fragmented

Postmodernism is rooted in today and yesterday, rather than in promises or hopes of tomorrow and the future. Fragmentation is most evident in the mass media; it provides news and information cut and pasted from many sources, many places, and in and out of time. Postmodernism celebrates this chaotic, fragmented version of life, viewing it as encouraging play, experimentation and discovery. Yet it also makes cautious note of its ability to distort truth and reality, particularly without careful attention and critique to messages of mass media.

Pluralism and multiculturalism- all “Others” are embraced.

Postmodernism revisits multiculturalism with pluralism, distinctly including everyone across the board and extinguishing power relations. As such, we all become “others.” Paul Ricoeur says that perhaps there is a day in our near future when “there are just others, that we ourselves are an ‘other’ among others” (Morley & Robins, 1995, p. 25). Postmodernism reflects the this multifaceted nature of human existence (Clark, 1996, p.3). All cultures are recognized, validated, and considered equal. Impurities of culture, rather than the “pure,” are championed.

This principle of postmodernism is particularly pertinent in American school today. Grant and Sleeter (1989) believe multicultural practice encourages minority students to become critical thinkers who can examine their life and social situations in a way that they can enjoy “the social and financial rewards of this country” (p. 54). If students are part of the dominant group, they should be “capable of examining why their group exclusively enjoys the social and financial rewards of the nation . . . [and] teaches students how to use social action skills to participate in shaping and controlling their destiny” (Grant & Sleeter, p. 54).

But there is much cynicism in the way our schools have actually implemented this thinking. Art critic Lucy Lippard (1990) extends that “multiculturalism” has become institutional “nonactivist rhetoric,” without the political power it was deemed to contain. With gusto, postmodernism revisits and promotes inclusion of all students; today it is nothing less than social reconstructivism.

Another important aspect of including “others” in the curriculum would be the explicit inclusion of the cultural diversity in little narratives- collectively in not simply tolerance but unadulterated acceptance. That these often eloquent voices have not been heard adds clarity to the system of political oppression and social inequity inherent not just in society but formidably in our schools.

Postmodern theory endorses the move from cultural assimilation to cultural pluralism. No longer are the marginalized merely assimilated, woven into the mainstream, dominant culture, but now are newly respected, heard, and validated. We all become the “other.”

Feminism reemerges with a new tone.

Feminism has changed significantly in the last decades, from being a socially political activity (women’s liberation) to one of “raising public sensitivity to systemic biases which assume male experience to be universal” (Clark, 1996, p. 11). Postmodern feminism goes beyond how women are (merely) objectified by men to a larger scope: to exploring how women’s lives are affected by many social forces, such as age, class, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation (Clark, p. 10). The attention is shifted from wages and equal rights to social/cultural venues.

Feminism is not just a biological or socially constructed construct. Some insist that gender bias is inextricably tied in with language, a social, cultural and public medium. Judith Butler argues that sexism manifests itself in many, often
indeterminate ways, and that there is no true path to resolution (Postmodern Feminism, n.d.)

**Mini-narratives take center stage.**
Postmodernism negates the idea of the “grand narrative” or the “meta-narrative” and focuses closely on the little, or mini, narrative (Lyotard, 1984). We are each experts of our own autobiographies. Due to the nature of our travails through life (cultural and societal), our stories are continually being recreated and reinterpreted and are often ambiguous and unstable. Our daily needs, circumstances, and experiences dictate the flux in our little narratives- who we are as individuals. Postmodernists believe that there is no grand narrative, or universal truth, or comprehensive explanation of historical experience or knowledge that explains each of us.

**Ambiguity and double coding are welcomed.**
Double coding employs dual meaning discoverable by all. Many symbols systems are used, often not those fundamental archetypes and known semiotics of the modernists. Art and literature are often kitsch, parodic, comic, and satiric, but yet are open to be freely interpreted. Again, viewers are essential to making art “work.”

**Cultural arts are representative, socially alert, and employ new approaches.**
Unlike the modernist white, male artist of the past, traditionally slaving away by himself, a postmodern artist will be employing a variety of approaches. He may be working collaboratively. He may use film or video. He advocates realism, clutter, montage, collage, pastiche, spontaneity and emotion. His subjects may be human, social, or political, rather than based on stylistic or theoretical foundations. The future is rarely depicted as “better.” Gone is formal Expressionism and the elite Abstract Expressionism; these have been replaced and embraced by representational forms of cultural and plural expression. Roger Clark explains:

> Looking beyond artistic and aesthetic meaning, postmodernism views art as a socially constructed entity, requiring the viewer to look beyond the formalist compositional qualities of a work, decode its symbolic imagery and expose its embedded cultural assumptions. Meaning is also seen as fluid and contextual; a disparate array of interpretations can be derived from any given work since meaning is subject to the varied perspectives of artists and viewers. Less value is placed on the critic’s statement of worthiness and more on the “voices of pluralism.” (1996, p.3)

Art “texts,” the communicative symbols of signs, are no longer simply aesthetic nor expressionistic, but become sites within which to look for self and identity through interpretation; the images becomes a discursive instrument which must be considered in the social world. Art becomes a link between aesthetic and social venues (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p.77). Finally, this interpretation and understanding as applies to self and the social world promotes one to “an awareness of the potential for choice or change” (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p.78).

Efland, Stuhr and Freedman insist that “cultural production has to be understood within the context of its culture of origin . . . The use of distinct categories such as ‘folk art,’ ‘primitive art,’ ‘tribal art,’ or ‘popular art’ marginalizes less dominant groups” and removes them from high or “fine art” (1996, p. 13). Typical of the most basic tenet of postmodernism, even the use of terms such as “fine art” or “high art” is annulled.
2. The Many Venues and Movements of Postmodern Art

**Appropriation**
Recycle, sample, reroute, adopt, borrow, steal from diverse pieces of human culture. This includes styles, music, symbols, ideas, artifacts, objects, and the like from other historical or cultural venues.
Makes great use of the postmodern principle of fragmentation.
Recontextualizes old to new work.
Original “thing” remains assessable in new work.
Disregards the modernist notion of originality and genius


**Environmental Art**
Also known as land art or earthworks
Art is out of the museum and available for all to see-Non elitist
Exhibited outside and interacts with the landscape.
Often ephemeral
NOT Mount Rushmore or Stonehenge; these are artworks in themselves and do not particularly celebrate or interact with the land around them.

Noted artists: Robert Smithson, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy

**Installation**
Museum spaces, uses the environment, but generally indoors
The audience is part of the artwork.
Occupies space, often uses light, often very large.
Noted artists: Joseph Beuys, Rebecca Horn, Christian Boltanski, Richard Wilson, Tracy Emin.

**Institutional Critique**
Seeks to make visible the historically and socially constructed boundaries between inside and outside, public and private.
Institutional critique is often critical of how the distinctions of taste are not separate from aesthetic judgment, and that taste is an institutionally cultivated sensibility.
Alter of existing environment be changing and moving walls, art, facades and the like.

Noted artists: Michael Asher, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Hans Haacke, Fred Wilson, Andrea Fraser

**Lowbrow and Graffiti Art**
Subculture art, pop surrealism, commix, punk, hot rod street culture, populist, hip-hop
Originally the frustrated voice of urban minorities making an attempt to create their own visual and musical art.
Has often crossed over from the street into the gallery.
Graffiti art is the epitome of art by all for all.
Noted artists: Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Banksy, Ron English
**Neo Conceptual**
Still conceptual in that the idea behind the artwork is more important that the visual, construction appeal.
Involved in deconstruction of what makes art
Designed to confront, offend, attack or annoy
Minimalism resurfaces as does the notion of “pure” art.
Is often used to create powerful social and/or political statements.
Goes to the interpretive value of the art: Art is created more by the viewer than by the artist.
Noted artists: Jeff Koons, Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst

**Neo Expressionism**
Reevaluates and responds negatively to the monotonous position of expressionism in modern art but revisits the emotion, narrative, and symbolism of the original German expressionists.
Noted artists: Anselm Kiefer, Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Philip Guston, David Salle, Jenny Saville, Louise Bourgeois, Cy Twombly, Lucian Freud, Georg Baselitz, Julian Schable

**Neo pop or Post-pop art**
A revival of the original pop movement.
Draws inspiration from Dadaism in the use of ready-mades.
Pokes fun at contemporary and trivial culture, as did the pop art of the 50’s and 60’s, but has updated to the current cultural times
Generally pokes fun at cultural icons most prized.
Noted artists: Gary Hume, Jenny Holzer, Katharina Fritsch, Jeff Koons, Haim Steinbach

**New Classicism**
Realism, rejection of “modern” emphasis on constant reinvention.
A return to the methods of artistic training and techniques that predate Modernism.
Places a high value on technique, skill, craftsmanship, and beauty.
Returns to the premise that art is to be appreciate for these reasons, and that the masses can see and appreciate it and that their sensitivities can be raised by it.
The subjects are lifted from the modern world rather than the classical world.
Noted artists: Charles H. Cecil, Adrian Gottlieb, Jacob Collins, Michael Grimaldi, Samizu Matsuki, Juliette Artistides

**Performance**
A new way of making art accessible to the masses.
Experimental in the 60's and beyond, conceptual in nature.
Includes "live" art, movement, innovative theatre and performance art.
Today is called “happenings” by visual artists, poets, musicians, video artists, body artists, etc.
Noted artists: Yves Klein, Gilbert and George, Joseph Beuys

**Photorealism, Super-Realism, Hyper-Realism**
Inspired by Pop art.
Copying photographs or digital imagery.
Removes the conceptual, elitist agenda.
The ultimate in representational art, thus easily available and understandable to all.
Sometimes so microscopically real, it borders on becoming unreal, or surreal.
Noted Artists: Audrey Flack, Ron Mueck, Robert Gober, Robert Bechtle, Chuck Close, John Doherty, Duane Hanson, and John de Andrea

**Video Installation art**
Relies on new media including video, moving pictures, audio, but not television or experimental cinema.
New media attracts attention.
Does not rely on actors, dialogue, narrative or plot, or any conventional entertainment principle.
Noted artists: Bill Viola, Matthew Barney, Gary Hill, Nam June Paik, Andy Warhol, Gillian Wearing, Natalie Bookchin
3. *Making Postmodern Art: Vocabulary and Approaches*

A postmodern approach to making art employs many of the following principles. Obviously, they are never all used in one piece. These principles are compiled from the sources listed below.

Faces the Abject
Appropriation
Collaboration
Collapses High and Low
Neo-Conceptual
Confronts the “Gaze”
Deconstruction
Dissonance
Fragmentation
Hybridity
Identity Construction
Intertextuality
Irony
Jouissance
Juxtaposition
Layering
Metaphor
Mixed Media
Mixes Codes
Narrative
Out of Museums
Parody
Playful/ Humor
Re Contextualization
Rejects Originality
Representational
Simulation/ Simulacrum
Text blended with Images

*More information may be found at:*


4. **Discipline Based Art Education: Adding Postmodern Constructs**

In the early 1980s The Getty Center for Education in the Arts began the search for content based art instruction, from which grew what is now known as Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE), a curriculum that provides the arts with well defined content similar to that of other content areas. When considering the purposes of European and Western art for centuries, one can easily justify the ability for application of the elements of art and the principles of design to the art world. This structure also added a cognitive (assessable) value to the art world.

Traditionally, chronologically, and very simplified, art was valued as such:

1. Art education primarily focused on the goal of creating decorators with skills with which to awe the gods and the aristocrats.
2. A structure was developed with which to study whether art was good or not, known as DBAE, identifying the elements of art and the principles of design. This structure allowed for formal art instruction and provided a method of critiquing the arts. This began and thrived in the industrial age, as it does today.
3. We long ago moved out of the industrial age, the digital, information age has come... and even it has gone. Little has been done in education circles to acknowledge the major shift in the visual culture we inhabit. Volumes have been written about visual imagery and mass media, but none of it has reached the classroom. Indeed, art education pedagogy is largely misguided, starting at the university levels.
4. Art education today must focus on the creative and the emotional. Also known as 21st century skills, these include imagining, innovating, resourcefulness, collaboration, flexibility, empathy, and risk taking. It must also embrace the social and political. These are typical of the skills the arts must foster to create the radical and empowering art of self and others. These are postmodern times.

Visual and performing arts as we know and teach them in Discipline Based Art Education must be modified profoundly. DBAE does not fit in the postmodern art classroom when critique is largely based on individual interpretation. Nor does it fit in a classroom of students who are emotionally fearful of their futures.

*The art world is now like Wikipedia: It is vast, multilingual, collaborative, inconsistent, contradictory, and coming from everywhere. As with Wikipedia, anyone can participate. Contributions, or in the case of the art world, exhibitions can be bogus, but they can also be better than what you can get anywhere else... Having an eye in criticism is as important as having an ear in music. It means discerning the original from the derivative, the inspired form the smart, the remarkable from the common, and not looking at art in narrow, academic, or ‘objective’ ways. It means engaging uncertainty and contingency, suspending disbelief, and trying to create a place for doubt, unpredictability, curiosity, and openness.* (Saltz, 2008, p. 5)

Kay Walkingstick, Native American educator and artist, notes the lack of critical attention given to not only Native American art, but indeed that art of
many ethnic groups. Critics are yet to write seriously about art from various subcultures because they consider “universal art values” as twentieth-century Eurocentric art values.” She notes that postmodern art theory is promising a more comprehensive critical viewpoint, but has yet to deliver on it. A broader definition is now required, but has yet to be established (Walkingstick, 1992).

Eurocentric art instruction has long focused on the modernist notions of seven formal elements of art and the seven (or so) principles of design. Since the 1940’s, these “laws” have delineated fine art from the not so fine. Educators have created numerous ways that even the most contemporary or postmodern art erroneously and inadequately “fits” into these modernist pedagogical tools. Rugs India from are fine art due to the detailed repetition in their design patterns. Native American pottery is high quality due to the symmetry in the form. This squeezing of attributes negates the beauty, the form, the function, the spirituality of cultural craft.

Postmodern art is upsetting this old (and modern) apple cart. “In challenging outmoded worldviews, contemporary art prepares people to engage, to shape, (and sometimes preserve) aspects of our ever-changing world” (Gude, 2004, p. 11). Gude reconceptualizes the latent principles with newly added: hybridization, layering, confronting the “gaze,” fragmentation, jouissance, juxtaposition, recontextualization, representation and appropriation (2004). Paul Duncum (2008) suggests seven new principles for Visual Culture Education (as opposed to Art Education), those being power, ideology, representation, deduction, gaze, intertextuality and multimodality. He does not consider these only as “fundamental truths” but as considerations to implement talking about complexity of contemporary art. Duncum continues to add possibilities: agency, audience, discourse, globalization, high and low culture, identity, myth, rhetoric, scopic regime, semiotics, and visuality (2008). The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis suggests the following principles to be added: appropriation, time, performance, space and hybridity (Art Today, n.d.).

Educators and art critics are grappling with identification of “good” art, in knotted quandaries about what this new definition may include. Research and commentary is itching to make new classifications.

I suggest the following six constructs, based upon the twelve lessons of my project, and the creation of assessments for the lessons:

### Postmodern Approach to Discipline Based Art Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Art</th>
<th>Principles of Design</th>
<th>Construction Intents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modernist</td>
<td>Modernist</td>
<td>Adding the Postmodern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Interpretive Value (intertextuality/symbolic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>Emphasis</td>
<td>Lack of Power/Knowledge Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>Pattern</td>
<td>Individually Ideological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Fragmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Proportion</td>
<td>Recontextualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The new “Intents” encompass art that has fallen through the “value” holes: indigenous art, global, women’s, postmodern and much of the modern, mythological and religious. It also includes new media and venues: video, environmental art, performance art. Art that has been squeezed into modernist values, lowbrow and kitsch, pop art, appropriation art and the like, will find new value.

Craft: Attention is apparent in the construction of the piece. The end goal has been successfully approached by the attention to the craft, whether it is roughshod, exact, flamboyant, or the like.

Interpretive Value: The artwork is open to interpretations by the audience, the entire audience including members of societal and cultural groups removed from that of the art maker or the dominant culture. Indeed, the artwork may be interpreted differently during process and completion by the artist himself. No interpretation is better than another and no one interpretation is right. Honest, authentic inquiry is essential, as is a deconstruction of the work.

Power/Knowledge Connection: The artwork attends to the concept that those who have the “correct” knowledge have the power. This is a social construction that traditionally has left “others” out of the dialogue about what is good or bad. Again, interpretation is valued by all, including those who have no knowledge about the supposed “intent” of the work.

Individually Ideological: New art attends to personal ideologies and individuality. Interpretation, again, permits a viewer to discover the meaning of artwork on a personal basis. This discovery may or may not be in tuned to personal belief, but does help articulate and solidify personal ideologies.

Fragmentation: Due to the fragmentation of our lives, particularly in contemporary, dominant society, art work is poised to be equally fragmented. Splitting time periods, cultural preferences, social orders, and the like becomes apparent in postmodern artwork.

Recontextualization: Placing disparate images, text, and possible movement (content) in space in random relationships with each opens possibilities with which these same can be reused and presented in new ways to create new meaning. The process of reconsidering existing symbols and artifacts by looking past the obvious, commonly known cultural narratives. An audience now refuses the common cultural meaning and reevaluates in context of past and future. Allows for reimagining how things could be.

Attitude: New art has attitude. It embraces the ironic, the paradoxical, the dissonant, the abject and the shocking. It is often clever and smart, but not to the point of being elitist or concealing meaning.

Consider the following styles or approaches to art. Consider definitively critiquing the following using discipline based art education. Using the vocabulary of the elements of art and the principles of design.

Graffiti art
Graphic novels/Manga
Robert Rauschenberg/ Appropriation
Video art
Minimalism
Cristo and Jean-Claude
Performance Art

Jackson Pollock
Jenny Holzer
Kiki Smith
Jeff Koons
Learning the accepted truths of European art history provides a ground upon which contemporary art still lines up. Either- or, confrontational debates should not exist; these create unbridgeable gulfs driven by simplification and characterization by those who choose to disassociate themselves with the “other” side (Blocker, 2000). Blocker suggests that many of the characteristics of postmodernism retain very traditional elements of modernism (2000). He also notes: “Art traditions and conventions have elements of continuity as well as change, and it is the former that allows us to make sense of the latter. Teaching has always been the attempt to pass on our best understanding of the present so that our students will make sense of the future” (Blocker, 2000, p. 373). Postmodernism, questioning objectivity, reality, and knowledge, shows the difficulty of this task, yet equally how imperative this task is (Blocker, 2000).

However contemporary art education is approached, a quality, democratic art education program must move beyond old paradigms of Discipline Based Art Education curriculum will INCLUDE, not displace the old, new approaches: investigation of culture, reality, imagination, identity, and truth. Paulo Freire passionately explains the need for a democratic, non-oppressive, inclusive education. Education is inherently a democratic exercise; enabling children to become engaged, knowledgeable citizens in our society. Arts education is essential in this endeavor, perhaps most essential. Olivia Gude writes,

Decision-making, planning, and envisioning in a democratic society require individuals who have the capacity for empathy and for imagination” (2004, p. 10). “Despite difficulties, misunderstandings, seemingly irreconcilable disagreements, and all manner of setbacks, to be a truly democratic society- we must persist in our individual and collective investigations of possibility; we must remain committed to thoughtfully engaging each other in our endeavors to make meaning and to make meaningful lives together. (Gude, 2004, p. 11)

Postmodernism addresses Gude’s premise with gusto.

DBAE has provided “content areas” for the arts: production, criticism, history and aesthetics. This also provides for the arts the testable, quantifiable, concrete foundation upon which to base knowledge or lack thereof. However, Paula Salvio notes that

this tradition … has systematically functioned to create an economy of enclosure, efficiency, and monotony that makes students’ bodies docile. .. that artistic experience is contingent upon emotional life, and that our emotional lives are a constituent of part of the way we know the world. Our bodies are the sites for affective, kinesthetic, and sensory power. Arts curricula that identify with the academic disciplines limit these modes of perception, and thus are potentially complicit in recasting the body as an object to be controlled. (Salvio, 1991, p. 118)

One may question: what would a good contemporary school art program be?

Would a good program be one in which students’ contemporary visual cultural interests are connected to the teacher, the written curriculum, and the enlightened portions of state and national standards? (There are
portions that are not enlightened.) Would it be one in which contemporary art and visual culture are placed within a massive web constructed of world art and visual culture present and past? Wouldn’t it be one wherein students are encouraged, with the support of teachers, to build their own visual culture? What could be more contemporary than this? (Wilson, 2008, p. 9)

The leading question here is obvious: Must art fit the role of content education to be considered legitimate? To what extent? As the arts are “proving” testable, are they also losing the foundation, of the sensory, the emotional, the affective, upon which they are based in accordance with a 21st century education?

Might it not be our emotional involvement, fear, angst, or anxiety that reverses our current ecological trend of destruction, rather than more science? Might it be empathy, shame, or remorse that changes our attitudes and actions in regards to those whose cultures are so diverse from our own? Might it be wonder, affection, and compassion that invite us to embrace the border cultures with which we intimately converse? Must we truly resolve the quandary of testable content in the arts, when it is the sensibilities encompassed in the arts that may make more of a global difference than that of knowable content?
5. Notes and Intents to Postmodern Curriculum

Unit Rationales for the twelve units are as follows:

Content focuses on skill building in the visual arts. Literacy skills as outlined in Discipline Based Art Education formats, elements of art and principles of design, will be included, as will critical visual literacy that postmodern culture presents.

The units will continue to develop communication skills and vocabulary in line with the critical visual literacy. Content will build communication that comes with images in art, in media and as expression.

The units will offer a gateway to developing social and emotional foundations. Self expression in art is a new venue for many and the content herein will open pathways for communicating in a way newly viable. The intent is to explore and discover new ways of expression.

Postmodern content will force critical respond to images often mind tweaking, sometimes abject and disturbing. Exploring the socio-political intent the postmodernists grapple with offers opportunities to step into new ways of thinking.

The content of postmodern art also directly embraces the 21st century skills as defined by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2004. Among others, those skills include collaboration, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, and information, media and technology skills.

The arts, including those considered postmodern, support all three learning domains as described in Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning: the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor. In the knowledge based cognitive domain students learn to describe, compare and contrast with accuracy. The application level encourages them to analyze visual images and textuality. One must not deny the realm of subjectivity permitted in the cognitive domain.

The arts support the affective domain, with its behavioral aspects- those of establishing acceptance or rejection, attitudes, conscience, appreciations, values and biases. So much of postmodern theory is targeted at a consciousness of these sets; the units as presented go straight to the core of this hierarchy of learning. The units provide many avenues in which to consider attitudes toward such bias, stereotypes, and perceptions.

Use of the psychomotor domain will also be evident. The use of imitation, and practice help develop habits in the arts; this makes for a strong foundation to further building creativity and inquiry. Incidentally, teachers who are comfortable allowing student to roam the classroom, stand when working, gather supplies as needed, and move work to the outdoors also encourage the psychomotor domain.

Instructional strategies for each of the units contains a varied number of strategies, but emphases are on:

- Direct instruction for introduction
- Inquiry presented by instruction to generate problems and questions
- Guided discovery as students work through their plans and their projects
Unit introductions included herein are brief, enriching, and each is meant to be a “hook.” Before teaching any lesson to a classroom of students, one should be compelled to read and read—articles, chapters, and books. The ability to understand many often controversial viewpoints of any one topic creates a depth of understanding as well as new considerations of the myriad of students: their ethnicities, socio economic status’, genders, and sexualities. The conveyance of this knowledge and overt acceptance fosters a relationship of trust and caring. Such as this is, “knowledge,” in a postmodern classroom, is not just one of content to be shared but one of knowledge with which to care.

Idea generation is an ongoing struggle in adolescent classrooms. The peer fear (what do other’s think?) is a killer; add to that the years of learned helplessness. Asking a student come up with an idea can be akin breathing underwater.

Gathering ideas is a skill to be taught, practiced and learned. Lionel Trilling said, “The only way to get a good idea is to get a lot of ideas.” Ideas come from everywhere. Students must brainstorm, constantly, as a class, in groups, in pairs, looking at their total environment— in magazines, books, television, outdoors, and on the web. NEVER is a first idea the permitted idea, and a dozen thumbnails per project are crucially essential, as much for habit as for generating ideas.

Much is to be said for idea making, also called conceptual thinking, application of thinking, strategic knowledge, and metacognition. Julia Marshall (2008) notes that this kind of thinking is linked to higher-level learning. Further, she notes the contemporary art appears to reveal more of these thought processes in creating art than traditional artmaking did. Two strategies that encompass this thinking are metaphoric and conceptual collage (Marshall, 2008).

Classrooms should be student work spaces rooms, not teacher job sites. Each should have a loveseat, artwork done by students past and present, photos of students past and present, and music. Clutter isn’t a bad thing. Make it their home (or the home they wish they had.) Consider taking a look at “Including Everyone: Small Changes to Create a Welcoming Classroom,” located on Race Bridges for Schools.com.

Classroom critiques are a given; as such will be conducted at the end of each unit. Critiques will follow the standard guidelines including description, analysis, interpretation, judgment. ADDED will be the postmodern considerations as are outlined in the chart “Postmodern Approach to Discipline Based Art Education,” and considerations posed in Chapter 6: “Interpreting this New Stuff” in this appendix.
6. Interpreting This New Stuff

About Interpreting Artwork
The interpretation of art may be the most important facet of learning about art. It may also be the foundation upon which postmodernism in the arts stands. Consider that it is individual and personal, yet open to multiple viewpoints from multiple experiences. It is equally meant to be shared, such that many narratives are also shared, and thus experienced. Terry Barrett created the following 23 principles of interpretation, and insists they are not a method of interpreting artwork but are meant to, in postmodern fashion, guide and inspire interpretive thinking about art:

**Barrett’s Principles of Interpretation**
- Artworks have “aboutness” and demand interpretation.
- Interpretations are persuasive arguments.
- Some interpretations are better than others.
- Good interpretations of art tell more about the artwork than they tell about the critic.
- Feelings are guides to interpretations.
- There can be different, competing, and contradictory interpretations of the same artwork.
- Interpretations are often based on a world view.
- Interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative.
- Interpretations can be judged by coherence, correspondence, and inclusiveness.
- An artwork is not necessarily about what the artist wanted it to be about.
- A critic ought not to be the spokesperson for the artist.
- Interpretations ought to present the work in its best rather than its weakest light.
- The objects of interpretation are artworks, not artists.
- All art is in part about the world in which it emerged.
- All art is in part about other art.
- No single interpretation is exhaustive of the meaning of an artwork.
- The meanings of an artwork may be different from its significance to the viewer.
- Interpretation is ultimately a communal endeavor, and the community is ultimately self-corrective.
- Good interpretations invite us to see for ourselves and to continue on our own.
- To interpret a work of art is to respond to it.
- Interpreting art is an endeavor that is both individual and personal, and communal and shared.
- Artworks attract multiple interpretations and it is not the goal of interpretation to arrive at single, grand, unified, composite interpretations.

(Barrett, 2000).

Richard Rorty says that “reading texts is a matter of reading them in the light of other texts, people, obsessions, bits of information, or what have you, and then seeing what happens” (Rorty, 1992, p. 105). The attempt to interpret art opens dialogue amongst cultures of past and present. It suggests often controversial ideas, forcing participants to confront their own ideologies as well as others. It offers articulation in words, verbal or written, thus constructing meaning of the world around us (Barrett, 2000). Rorty take this a step farther and poses that meaningful interpretation is a major move toward changing personal priorities and thus changing one’s life (1992). Finally, consider the power a child acquires when her interpretation is validated as important
and enlightening. “The empowering of students by the personal construction and understanding of aesthetic knowledge and knowledge of self allows for greater expansion of interpretations, critical thinking, multicultural thinking and innovative ‘risk taking’ in their everyday experiences” (Gooding-Brown, 1997, p.81).

Art teachers have been using the traditional method of interpreting artwork for decades: including description, analysis, interpretation, judgment. While this certainly provides for accessible, community thinking, it also fits into the modernist, pragmatic paradigm of correctness: practical, real, sensible, and based on reason. Interpreting contemporary artworks in Barrett fashion not only eludes this method of teaching and learning about art, but presents an exciting and pluralistic approach. Barrett proposes that art interpretation builds community by “learning to identify, experience, and ultimately appreciate differences in people and how they experience the world through a work of art (2004, para. 3).

Once again, a balance must be sought between existing knowledge and conventional interpretations and the new, postmodern approach. Barrett notes, “Personal, individual interpretations can and should be informed by knowledge of the artwork from other persons and sources” (2000, p. 11). Symbols and archetypes are still viable, but must be questioned. Biographical information about artists is still practical in interpreting art: consider Vincent Van Gogh, Edvard Munch, and Rene Magritte, who tells us “This is not a pipe.”

Assembling and applauding multiple, often contradictory interpretations to artwork makes for a pluralistic, all inclusive, democratic classroom. “A multiplicity of interpretations can unify rather than divide a group of individuals, helping them form a community of understanding, a community that values diverse beliefs about art and life (Barrett, 2000, p 18). This goes directly to the foundation upon which the postmodernists situate.

Conversations with students may explore the interpretation of art with relevance, more than questions about specific artworks: What is art? Who gets to interpret the art? Does an artwork mean the same to everyone? How about those living in Asia? Northern Alaska? Somalia? Afghanistan? When are interpretations of art wrong? Does anyone know the correct interpretation of artwork? Who would that be? Why does art that is important and valued today lose its value tomorrow? Must one understand art to appreciate it? What does it mean to “understand” art? How might a discussion of postmodern theory fit into a discussion of interpretation? Is it more important to interpret contemporary, abstracted art or representational art? How is interpreting art and literature the same? Different? Why is this important to consider? How do fiction and reality come into a conversation about interpretation?

A Postmodern Approach to Interpretation
Modernist approaches to interpreting art are limited when considering much of the art being created in the contemporary scene. While the traditional four questions maybe asked, one may find them confining, and that the dialogue becomes stilted. The
following principles and approaches to making postmodern art will create a richer, more
diverse and pluralistic conversation:
Might one detect a mini narrative? What is it?
Is double coding or ambiguity present?
Is deconstruction possible? How might one go about doing this?
Is there anything suggesting feminist overtones?
What approaches to postmodern artmaking are used?
Why might the artist have used it/Them?
Can connections be found to other artists? Times? Cultures? Consider intertextuality.
Might there have been another approach that would have added to this piece?
Is there “attitude”?
Is there a relation between the art and culture?
Is there a fragmentation of time, place and/or cultures?
Might there be links between power and knowledge? How so?
Is there a concern for others, a multicultural bent?
Are there social justice overtones?
Do you think the intent of the artist is the same as the meaning you derive? Why or why
not and does it matter? Why or why not?
Does the craft of the piece contribute to interpretation in any meaningful way?
Might several interpretations be gleaned from the piece?
How much of this piece falls into the realm of postmodern art? How much into modern?

Patricia Stuhr considers interpretation of culturally diverse, non Western artwork
through a postmodern lens by suggesting the following questions be asked:

In which culture was the art form produced?
Identify and describe the geographical features of the region/place inhabited by
the producers of this object. In what ways have climate, landform, vegetation,
and natural resources affected the art form produced?
In what time period was the art form produced?
Describe the physical appearance of the art form.
How did/does the art form function in the culture?
What aspects of the cultural aesthetic production are most important? The
process, the product, or the symbolic significance?
What is/was the social significance of the art form?
What are/were the aesthetic values of the culture?
Who were the artists? What was their enter? Age? Social status?
How ere they selected to become artists?
How were they trained?
For whom do/did/ the produce the art form?
Is the art form being produced today? Is it the same or different? How?
How is the art form being used in the culture today?

(Stuhr, et al., 1992, p. 23-24)

Perception of an object costs
Precise the Object’s loss—
Perception in itself a Gain
Replying to its Price—

The Object Absolute—is nought
Perception sets it fair
And then upbraids a Perfectness
That situates so far—

Emily Dickinson
7. Assessments for a 21st Century Art Curriculum

Assessing art can easily be made objective, however, the value learning in the arts is far beyond such assessment. High stakes testing is forcing the hand of art educators to show arts assessment can feasibly be completed on a national level. That level of assessment is simple to implement; indeed it parallels the lower levels of Bloom’s taxonomy. Being that as it is, the assessment of the twelve units and lessons as presented here will focus on authentic arts assessment.

Much recent ado about 21st century skill building has created some concern about the pragmatic, traditional, industrial approach in which our schools are sinking. While the purpose of this project is not to describe or promote these skills, a mention is appropriate in that many of them are those contained in a postmodern approach to art education. These skills become very much a part of the authentic assessment process as outlined in this project. Specifically, as outlined by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), those would be:

- Global Awareness
- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Productivity and Accountability

Class rubrics are to be constructed and shared early in unit presentations. Rubrics herein are constructed to meet parameters of completed lesson plans; however, they should be constructed and ideally modified with class participation.

Not all of the twelve postmodern units will fit neatly into the comprehensive units rubric attached. In the same light, not all art educators will use the same design for the lessons as presented in the units. The following assessment information is meant to be used as a guide rather than a formidable format. Acknowledging this, the following components are most crucial when implementing a quality art program:

1. Writing
   - Reflections
   - Sketchbook notes
   - Short essays showing comprehension and/or interpretation
   - Written critiques about others’ work

2. Persistence and managing of ideas and materials
   - Thumbnails
   - Failures
   - Gathering ideas
   - Questioning
   - Resourcefulness
   - Sketchbook image entries
   - Working creatively, originally

3. Working Collaboratively
   - Working and thinking interdependently
   - Working with others even though projects are individual
   - Sharing ideas

4. Self Assessments
   - Meeting and/or passing learning targets
5. Presentations
   Speaking with expertise about work
   Making connections
   Class critiques

**Units Rubric, to be refined for each unit.**
*Calibration of any rubric is advised before acceptance.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Needs Work 1-2 pts.</th>
<th>Satisfactory 2-3 Pts.</th>
<th>Strong 4-5 Pts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conglomeration Of Written Reflections: Sketchbook, Process Thinking</td>
<td>Student writes several sentences that show minimal reflection in regards to classroom discussion or personal thought.</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or two that shows obvious reflection in regards to classroom discussion and personal thought.</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or more that shows obvious reflections in regards to discussion and personal thought and includes a stretch and/or connection to ongoing reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thumbnails: Process Thinking</td>
<td>Thumbnails show little or incomplete thought.</td>
<td>Thumbnails are basic/rough; needs reworking; does show evidence of thought</td>
<td>Thumbnails have strong compositions and shows evidence of reflective, strong thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini Manifesto: Writing</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of postmodern thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV)</td>
<td>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed and shows clarity of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Title</td>
<td>Needs Work 1-2 pts.</td>
<td>Satisfactory 2-3 Pts.</td>
<td>Strong 4-5 Pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Component</td>
<td>Others completed most of the work, participated minimally, and failed to meet personal commitments with any level of quality.</td>
<td>Student participated when asked to, followed through on personal commitments.</td>
<td>Student worked effectively toward group goals, met group time lines and commitments, willingly participated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity/Originality</td>
<td>Student completed unoriginal thumbnails, all seemingly the same, showed no interest in exploring originality.</td>
<td>Student completed several thumbnails as assigned, copied or mimicked work of others, shows little original thought or “stretch.”</td>
<td>Student explored many ideas in thumbnails, research, made connections to previous knowledge, showed top notch problem solving skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project: Artwork</td>
<td>Composition and/or technical approach does not reflect attention to concept or theme. Technical attention is at odds with intent. Void of pride, craftsmanship, or understanding.</td>
<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support. Needs finishing touches.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
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<td>Presentation To Class: Speaking</td>
<td>Articulation regarding artwork is minimal or lacking completely.</td>
<td>Student supplies adequate information regarding theme, statement and approach to artwork.</td>
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<td>Class Critiques: May include a Written Component.</td>
<td>Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Target Self Assessment
In postmodern theory, individual interpretations must be considered. As such, the following self assessment must be incorporated into not just an assessment of work, but into the discussion about the final project outcomes.

(To be completed after presentation, after thumbnails, before hands-on work begins)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project:</th>
<th>Beginning Intentions and Ideas</th>
<th>Self Evaluation of Actual Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pomo Theories to Consider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art Approach(s)</td>
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<td>Postmodern Movement</td>
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<td>Concept(s) To Explore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Work</td>
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</table>

Art critiques traditionally include the following stages of dissection, which also include the elements of art and principles of design. The proposed postmodern construct intents may easily be included in these four: describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate.
8. **Charting the Path**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Lesson</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Postmodern Art Making Focus</th>
<th>Postmodern Theory</th>
<th>Postmodern Movements</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two Dimensional Projects</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Text, Beet Juice, And Old Men</strong></td>
<td>2D Found/recycled mediums Paper</td>
<td>Appropriation Text</td>
<td>Deconstruction of meaning Questioning Truth Ambiguity/Double Coding</td>
<td>Neo Conceptual</td>
<td>Language Arts Social Science Psychology Environmentalism Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Self Portraits In Foreign Environments</strong></td>
<td>Mixed Media/glue/ recycled supplies Other</td>
<td>Appropriation Juxtaposition RecontextualizationLayering Text and Images Hybridity Gaze Representation</td>
<td>Deconstruction “others” Contextualism Representation</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Language Arts Social Science History Geography Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Feminism and Other Girly Stuff</strong></td>
<td>Choices to be made</td>
<td>Appropriation Juxtaposition RecontextualizationLayering Text and Images Hybridity Gaze Representation</td>
<td>Deconstruction Feminism Questioning Truth “Others” Parody/Irony, etc. Representation</td>
<td>Conceptual Appropriation Neo Expressionism</td>
<td>Language Arts Social Science Psychology History</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Postmodern Picture Books</td>
<td>Recycled hardback books</td>
<td>Appropriation Recontextualization Layering Text and Images Hybridity Representation</td>
<td>Mini narratives Questions Truth Ambiguity/Parody</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Social Science Psychology Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Boxed Up Narratives</td>
<td>Ceramic Or Box Collage ala Cornell</td>
<td>Appropriation Text and Images Hybridity Representation</td>
<td>Mini Narratives Deconstruction Pluralism/Multiculturalism</td>
<td>Neo Expressionism</td>
<td>Language Arts Psychology Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fin de Siècle: Neo Pop</td>
<td>Recycled Materials Plastering Mud Mixed Media Glue</td>
<td>Appropriation Juxtaposition Recontextualization Layering Text and Images Hybridity Gaze Representation</td>
<td>Deconstruction Questioning Truth and Reality Juxtaposition Irony/Parody/Ambiguity Representation</td>
<td>Lowbrow Neo Pop Art</td>
<td>Social Science Language Arts History Anthropology/Consumerism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Homage to Native Americans: Considering Border Cultures</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Appropriation Juxtaposition Recontextualization Layering Text and Images Hybridity Gaze Representation</td>
<td>Juxtaposition Deconstruction Mini Narratives Pluralism Multiculturalism Questioning of Truths Representation</td>
<td>Conceptual Appropriation Neo Expressionism</td>
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<td><strong>Installation/ Environmental Projects</strong></td>
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<td>9.  Family Trees: Community Forest</td>
<td>Found/ recycled objects</td>
<td>Appropriation Recontextualization</td>
<td>Deconstruction Recontextualization Mini Narratives</td>
<td>Installation Conceptual</td>
<td>History Social Science Language Arts</td>
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<td>10. A Wall of Others: Looking at Race</td>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>Layering Text and Images Gaze Representation</td>
<td>Mini narratives Pluralism Representation</td>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>Language Arts Math Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. The End And A Beginning: Video Voices</td>
<td>Video camera</td>
<td>Juxtaposition Recontextualization Layering Text and Images Hybridity Gaze Representation</td>
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9. Curriculum for a Secondary Visual Arts Classroom

1. Text, Beet Juice, and Old Men

Quotes

"Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with shades of deeper meaning." Maya Angelou

"After you've heard two eyewitness accounts of an auto accident, you begin to worry about history." Author Unknown

"All lies and jests; still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest." Paul Simon

Introduction

Text and textuality, the study of how one interprets their environment, is a good beginning for and segue into a study of postmodernism.

We live in a visual age of signs: words, images, symbols, even discernable actions, sound, scents and tastes. John Dewey, in Art and Experience, (1959) proposed that the experiences one brings to this environment, from cultural backgrounds and lives lived, promote an infinite variety of interpretations. Consider the many individual interpretations a class of 30 students can bring to the image of a shabby, old, bearded man strolling down a sidewalk.

Structuralists believe that by “using analytic concepts from linguistics, psychology, anthropology and other fields” (Post-structuralism, n.d.), one could understand the structures of signs. Modernist in bent, they believe this analysis leads to logical, scientific results, at which point, this new knowledge can be incorporated into the existing body of knowledge (Post-structuralism, n.d.).

The post-structuralists in post modern fashion assert that this analysis is inherently faulty due to cultural factors, biases, and misinterpretations also brought to deciphering the meaning of a sign. They hold that one must study “both the object and the systems of knowledge which were coordinated to produce the object” (Post-structuralism, n.d.).

The meaning of signs has been theorized on many levels. Consider the following as conceived by Charles Sanders Pierce:

The representamen: An object represents something one easily recognizes. A bearded man easily created a visual image.

The object: The something which this object represents, and which can be anything thinkable; a bearded man may suggest age, homelessness, hunger, despair, or conversely, aristocratic and wealthy.

The interpretant: Meaning accompanies this representation, which cultivates a new sign or signs through such interpretation. Examples may be: rich adventures and experiences, mental health problems, the personal “wealth” of the interpretant (Sign/Semiotics, n.d.).

Textuality is an object of study in linguistics and literary theory. Text traditionally was considered a complete and purposeful written work. Structuralism
theory holds that no work is complete until one brings outside understanding; all work includes hidden elements, or “subtexts.” Hence, this relationship, between a sign and the world as one knows it, is arbitrary at best.

Postmodern artists capitalize on this study; they open a new venue for interpretive power of text in words.

Caveats and Sidebar Notes

In postmodern fashion, students can pursue the completion of this project in an infinite variety of ways. Many are proposed below.

Make mention: this project is NOT “word art” per Microsoft, it is NOT computer generated art, and it is NOT about how many words one can fit in a 3D design. While those are important and valid studies, the theoretical and artmaking intent of this project is completely different.

Objectives

1. Students will learn the value of experimentation, taking risks, and confronting failure in thumbnail inquiry. CA VAPA: 2.1
2. Students will be exposed to and reflect upon the open-ended interpretive power of art. CA VAPA: AV 4.1
3. Students will begin to understand postmodern art by identifying, in writing and class discussions, some of its characteristics. CA VAPA: 4.5

Activity and Lesson Sequence

Part 1

Interpretation of art is a multifaceted and sometimes confusing activity. Terry Barrett provides a wealth of information regarding interpretation, particularly of contemporary and modern art. (See Interpreting This New Stuff in this project.)

Present Edward Ruscha’s “Romance with Liquid” on either a slide or poster. (It is also located in Guacamole Airlines and other Drawings by Edward Ruscha.) This piece permits many interpretations in a class of adolescents. Ask the students to, in silence, jot down what this “Romance with Liquid” means to them and allow them a few reflective minutes sans talking or sharing. My first experience with this exercise furnished me with the like of: “swimming,” “sex in a pool,” “nothing,” and “love affair with alcohol.” Great discussion about text, signs, interpretations, experiences, and art followed.

Edward Ruscha provides a perfect beginning for this postmodern lesson; his work encapsulates the spirit of the contemporary art movement. He makes witty, somewhat subliminal, comments about American values regarding products, gas stations, pharmaceuticals and his town of residence, Hollywood.

Students take reflective notes during the presentation PowerPoint that includes the following artists and their “text”ual work:
Edward Ruscha  
Jenny Holzer  
Lawrence Weiner  
John Fekner  
Mel Bochner  
Richard Prince  
Joseph Kosuth  
Anthony Campuzano  
Alex Da Corte  
Nicole Docimo  
Alyssa Duhe  
Patrick Fry  
Incidental  
Cary Leibowitz  
Gillian MacLeod  
Mark Mahosky  
Heath Nash  
Kate O’Connor  
Jack Pierson  
Trevor Reese  
Mickey Smith  
Charlie Welch  
Shawn Wolfe

Other images and text art are easily accessible on the web:  
Include Video by Alejandro Cesarco, “Turning Some Pages”  
T-shirts sport quirky and sometimes interpretive slogans/sayings  
Postsecret.blogspot.com- postcards from the edge.

Part II  
While the PowerPoint presentation provided many approaches to tackling this project, teacher will recommend a focus on Edward Ruscha’s approach. In postmodern fashion, Ruscha employed unique, often quirky mediums to complete his work: Pepto Bismol, lettuce, carrots, gun powder, and spinach. Students will create an “Experimental Materials” page in their sketchbooks and play with naturally found colorants as well as consumer products. They may consider an unlimited number of materials: chocolate, black olives, beet juice, crushed barbeque potato chips, grape juice, cough syrup, dirt, plant leaves, ad infinitum. Each student should create at least 6-10 splotches on his/her page. Call this the most fragrant sketchbook page ever.

Part III  
Students have been taking notes and gathering ideas according to Lionel Trilling, “The only way to get a good idea is to get a lot of ideas.” Words, phrases, short sentences are written on sketchbook pages. Consideration is being given to medium, size, materials needed, and time needed for completion.

Students will pair-share, or small group share, their intents. Discussion will include the following points:
1. Does the text provide one, several, or many interpretations?
2. What medium(s) are being considered for implementing the project? What, besides the experimental materials, might be considered?
3. Brainstorm elements of art and principles of design that may contribute to communicative effectiveness of piece.
4. Does the medium planned contribute to a variety of interpretations? Does it detract?
5. How much communicative meaning are you forcing? Is post structuralism allowed?

Part IV

Students will complete the “Learning Target Self-Assessment” rubric (attached in the appendix). Students will also receive the unit assessment rubric, (below).

Work commences. Our class finished the projects using clear contact paper on mat board. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Critique/Closure

Work is displayed and classroom discussion and critiques ensue.

Reflective writing:

a. What is your work about? Explain what how you did what you did and why.
b. What postmodern art making approaches did you use? Were they successful?
c. What postmodern theories did you consider during the planning and completion of the piece?
d. What struggles did you have during the completion of your piece?
e. What postmodern movement(s) does your piece belong to and why?
f. What discoveries have you made during the process of completing this unit?
g. Provide as many different interpretations as you can gather from friends and classmates, and give brief explanation of how those interpretations came to be.

Assessments

Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This portion of the assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.
## Rubric for unit assessment

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<td>Student writes several sentences that show minimal reflection in regards to classroom discussion or personal thought.</td>
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<td>Student speaks articulately about theme, statement and approach to artwork. Makes further connections.</td>
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<td>Reflective Writing Based on Questions Provided</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of postmodern thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Targets Met (see chart in appendix)</td>
<td>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed and shows clarity of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
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### Class Critiques:

**Includes a Written Component.**

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### Materials

Independent projects will require individual needs. Students and teacher will consult before individual projects commence.

### References and Recommended Reading


Student work done by Orland High School students, 2007-08.
2. Self Portraits in Foreign Environments

Quotes

“Enjoying the joys of others and suffering with them—these are the best guides for man.” Albert Einstein

“The world still consists of two clearly divided groups: the English and the foreigners. One group consists of less than 50 million people; the other of 3,950 million. The latter group does not really count.” George Mikes

“Travelers never think that they are foreigners.” Mason Cooley

“We have the opportunity to make a habit of empathy, to recognize ourselves in each other, to commit ourselves to resisting injustice and intolerance and indifference, in whatever forms they may take, whether confronting those who tell lies about history, or doing everything we can to prevent and end atrocities like those that took place in Rwanda, those taking place in Darfur. That is my commitment as president. I hope that is yours as well.” President Barack Obama

Introduction to Unit

Key concepts to this unit will be those of empathy and globalization. The more we increase our understanding of others, the more we will cross cultural barriers and promote the sense of human connectedness.

Daniel Pink (2002) describes empathy as “the ability to imagine yourself in some else’s position and intuit what that person is feeling. It is the ability to stand in other’s shoes to see with their eyes and to feel with their hearts” (p. 159). Several postmodern theories come into play here: identity of self in the Eurocentric environment we inhabit and a consideration of “others,” those belonging to the subcultures that exist in this same environment. Statistically more students will be an “other,” indeed, as French philosopher Paul Ricoeur notes, perhaps today we are all “others;” subcultures are becoming a collective dominant culture. Little consideration do we common give this.

Students will also investigate the lives as lived by others around the globe. A wide array of environments is encouraged as each will be shared, analyzed and considered; thus many cultures will be regarded by the end of the unit.

Discuss empathy and what it means. What might the attack of the World Trade Centers have meant to teenage students in California? In New York? In Australia? How about Hurricane Katrina? The meaning of historical events changes across the globe and through time. Students should consider the cultural context of events, and simply life: of beliefs, interests, sensibilities, experiences. Include reflection about how the past affects the present, about how history affects the future.

Objectives

1. Students will explore postmodern artmaking techniques and make appropriate decisions as to which may best promote their pieces. CA VAPA 3.2
2. Using pre and post writes, students will reflect upon the meaning of “foreign,” “attitude,” and “otherness.” CA VAPA 4.1
3. Students will discover the value of using many thumbnails and preplanning to conceptualize their work early. CA VAPA 5.4
Caveats and Sidebar Notes

This unit may be most interesting in a class as diverse as one in my community which consists of Latinos, Hmong, Punjabi, Afghani, Laotians, Caucasians, and African-Americans.

Activity and Lesson Sequence

Part I

Ask students to commit to paper reflection on the following question:
What does your typical morning look like? Describe the room in which you wake up. Describe your morning routine, including people, from the time you rise until you are at school. With the same approach, describe your evening from the time of your return until bedtime. Write approx 250 words (an average page.)

Second, using the same time line, situate yourself in an environment that would be crucially different from the one you inhabit. Be imaginative, but assume this “place” does exist on earth. It can be close to you, in your community, but directly oppositional from what you know; or it can be somewhere else around the globe. You obviously don’t know what it would be like to live this imaginative life, but do your best to describe it from what you might already know.

Save these two pages aside.

Part II

As a class, brainstorm a list of as many subcultures as possible (time limiting of course.) Once the class gets passed Black, Latino, and Gay/Lesbian- perhaps the most prominent of diverse groups depending on your location- they will have realized the many subcultures that exist- including the aged, the poor, perhaps women, the handicapped, etc. Discuss Eurocentrism: Encourage ALL students to make attempts to cross cultural lines and to empathize. Encourage vicarious reflection.

1. How might we define Eurocentrism? How does Eurocentrism manifest itself?
2. Does it present problems for “others,” and if so, what specific problems are encountered? By family? By self? By the group as a whole?
3. Might one notice any recognizable changes happening? What are they? If not, what should/could they be?
4. Does the school mimic the community? The state? The nation?
5. Ask students, considering their own educational backgrounds, to reflect on the major players and events that have fostered change.
6. How does one change “attitude”?
7. What is assimilation? Acceptance? Tolerance? How are these different and which should we shoot for? What is “equality”?
8. What is “social activism”?
9. If we are all “others,” what are you? How might you be one?
10. Is there a downside to considering this discussion? What is the upside?
11. What is the difference between empathy and sympathy?

What might “foreign” environments be? What might be “foreign” to you? Consider setting, as in language arts, as a place and time. Where, when might this environment exist? Who might be there? Events can complete an environment. Assignment here is to capture an experience you may have being in a “foreign” environment. The working definitions here will be:

Foreign: (adj.)
1. Alien in character; irrelevant or inappropriate; remote
2. Strange or unfamiliar
3. External to one’s own country or nation. (Foreign, n.d.)
Part III
PowerPoint here has two goals: one of artists who combine identities and one of the many approaches that may be taken to completion of this project.
1. Cindy Sherman: *Untitled Still Film #14*, many others
2. Frida Kahlo: *My Nurse and I* or *Roots* or *The Little Deer*
6. Judith Leyster: *Self Portrait*
7. Frida Kahlo: *My Nurse and I* or *Roots* or *The Little Deer*
An image search: “Self Portrait” will provide many thought provoking pieces
One may also include provocative self portraits by

Rembrandt VanRijn
Frida Kahlo
Lucien Freud
M.C. Escher
Francis Bacon
Chuck Close
Pablo Picasso
Henri Matisse
Ted Nugent
Edvard Munch
Andy Warhol
Pablo Picasso
Robert Mapplethorpe
Cindy Sherman
Salvador Dali
Diane Arbus

Part IV
Consider the following:
Find a short story, narrative, film, or poem from which to reflect, or IN which to reflect.
Combine historical reference and contemporary social comment
Self portrait, social concern, mini narrative
Choose an historic event and modernize (concentration camps, war, 911, Hiroshima, Tiananmen Square, et al.)
Fragmentation
Choose a contemporary event and put yourself in it
Consider placing yourself truly in a truly foreign environment, in a place you would not be normally comfortable in any way. Research it and learn about it.
While you may “stick” yourself somewhere, but sure the artwork has unity!
Appropriation of material other than images
Juxtaposition
Recontextualization
Layering
Hybridity
Irony and paradox: humor
Look at many environments in imagery: contemporary photographs, postmodern art.
Think creative and unique.
Remember to isolate a reference in which you are interested and look forward to researching.

Part V
Substantial research about the culture into which the student is inserting her/himself is imperative. Thumbnails, notes, sketches must be completed and approved before starting final project. Reference to published artwork must be supplied. Conversation with instructor will include artistic approach, thumbnails and notes, and strong conceptual thinking.
Students will complete the “Learning Target Self-Assessment” rubric (attached in the appendix).
Work commences. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.

Critique/Closure
Reflective essay to be completed:
  a. What is your work about?
  b. What postmodern art making approaches did you use? Were they successful?
  c. What postmodern theories did you consider during the planning and completion of the piece?
  d. What did you try to accomplish, and did you succeed?
  e. What have you learned about another time or culture? What reflections have you made?
  f. What other discoveries, perhaps incidental or sideline, have you made during the completion of this unit?
Class critiques will be held.

Assessments
Students will be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It will also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.
During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.
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<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation To Class: Speaking</td>
<td>Articulation regarding artwork is minimal or lacking completely.</td>
<td>Student supplies adequate information regarding theme, statement and approach to artwork.</td>
<td>Student speaks articulately about theme, statement and approach to artwork. Makes further connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Writing Based on Questions Provided</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of postmodern thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Targets Met (see chart in appendix)</td>
<td>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed and shows clarity of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Critiques: May include a Written Component.</td>
<td>Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Materials Needed**

Project is mixed media, so materials will vary. Glue, recycled supplies, magazines, mat board for support, and the like will most likely be required. Students will be responsible for gathering individually needed items.

**Recommended Reading**

Empathy quotient test for students: [www.tinyurl.com/dbsd8](http://www.tinyurl.com/dbsd8)

For thinking along the edge, visit IDEO (Innovation Design Engineering Organization at [http://www.ideo.com/](http://www.ideo.com/))


**Unit Plan References**


3. Feminism and Girly Stuff

Quotes

"Feminism is a socialist, anti-family, political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."  Pat Robertson

"Feminism was established to allow unattractive women easier access to the mainstream."  Rush Limbaugh

"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat."  Rebecca West (pseudonym of Cecily Isabel Fairfield) (1892-1983), English novelist.

"One distressing thing is the way men react to women who assert their equality: their ultimate weapon is to call them unfeminine. They think she is anti-male; they even whisper that she’s probably a lesbian.”  Shirley Chisholm, (1924-), American, member of the US House of Representatives

"Feminism is the radical notion that women are people."  Paula Treichler (contemporary), feminist scholar.

Introduction to Unit

Loaded questions accompany a discussion of women’s rights and the common consideration of women as secondary citizens. Attending this discussion will be students who wonder what the problem is. Important to clarify early with adolescents are the following questions:

1. Do we all think women are truly, in all senses, equal to men? Are there any hints of women being secondary citizens? Can we think of any?

2. This is NOT a women’s liberation, political activism venue. This is a conversation about “others,” about equality, and about awareness of our cultural differences. We will not always agree with one another, but we must listen to everyone in class with respect and desire to learn.

3. When thinking universally and/or globally, are all men’s experiences and women’s experiences basically the same?

A brief historical look at feminism, divided into three “waves,” is appropriate:

1. Between the mid 1800’s and early 1900’s, women engaged in the Women’s Suffrage Movement, fighting to win the right to vote. With the passage of the 19th Amendment, this movement, for the most part, was put to rest (Dicker, 2008).

2. The second wave began in 1953, when Simone de Beauvoir published the Second Sex in English, and women became known as “others” in a patriarchal society. This wave was largely known as “Women’s Liberation” and included a demand for equality across the board, including equal opportunity rights. It called for reproductive rights, acknowledgement of sexism, affordable childcare, new rape considerations, and equal opportunities in the military. “Sisterhood is Powerful” became the slogan (Dicker, 2008).

3. New activity began in the 90’s and continues. Ambiguous as it appears, there are several defining characteristics: Feminism today insists on the recognition of the many colors, ethnicities, nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds of women. Like postmodern theory, today feminism “embraces contradictions and conflict, and
accommodates diversity and change” (Third-Wave Feminism, n.d.). In light of this, a “universal” definition is not possible. Open interpretation to feminism is created when dividing the infinite experiences of women globally, including lesbian, transsexual and transgender politics. The vocabulary of oppression and empowerment come into play; women are given the power to define feminism on an individual basis (Dicker, 2008).

Today we must still inquire: are women truly equal in all matters? Has this third wave indicated that feminism of the second wave has done its job? Do women have “equal rights,” abortion rights, equal opportunity, rights against sexual harassment, child care services, educational and military opportunities equal to men? Who is associated with fragile/strong, meek/aggressive, and take care/take charge? What do these dichotomies reveal?

Or does third wave feminism still have its work to do? Are women still second to men in defined venues, threatened by lack of abortion rights, sexualized often catering to men’s needs, expected to raise the children, provided assumed anti-intellectualism, expected to be slim, and non-technological? Do ALL women, regardless of ethnicity, social or economic status, culture, or gender persuasion receive equality equally? Are men willing to step of for women’s equality?

Feminism has changed significantly in the last decades, from being a socially political activity (women’s liberation) to one of “raising public sensitivity to systemic biases which assume male experience to be universal” (Clark, p. 11). Postmodernist feminism goes beyond how women are (merely) objectified by men to a larger scope: to exploring how women’s lives are affected by many social forces, such as age, class, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation (Clark, p. 10). The attention is shifted from wages and equal rights to social/cultural venues.

Objectives
1. Students to examine the gender roles we assume, listen, reflect and write about changing attitudes, including their own. CA VAPA 4.1
2. Students to create a purposeful and successful artwork that promotes a change in attitudes about gender roles. CA VAPA 2.6
3. Students to participate in compassionate or otherwise respectful manner during class discussions and critiques. CA VAPA 4.3

Caveats and Sidebar Notes
I laugh. I suspect there will be a number (all?) of adolescent boys who shirk at a discussion about women’s “lib” and feminism. Eyeballs will roll, seats will slump, and iPods will sneak their way from pockets. However, this is a timely topic about women, and gays, and Latinos and Latinas. It is about the boy with a stutter and the girl with freckles and bad acne. It is about our mothers, stepmothers, grandmas, sisters and girlfriends. It is about the lady next door and the girlfriend in class who are getting hit. It is about the rights and freedoms of each and every one of our children; what they perceive and interpret and how they conduct their lives and their prejudices. I am confident that feminism can be all encompassing and compelling subject for every student in a classroom.

Activity and Lesson Sequence
Part I
The most difficult part of this assignment will be student identification of what they deem unfair in gender matters. Much of the discussion can be about the equality of all or any subculture groups, but this one must focus on feminism. The class will include girls who are already strong feminists, but many of the rest will not “understand the
problem,” and the boys may be infinitely tougher. An open and respectful relationship between students and teacher will be essential.

Due to the difficulty of identifying an issue of concern, a bevy of tactics will help: Introduce students to the humor and the mission of the Guerrilla girls.

Ask confounding questions:

(Students to reflect in writing as discussion continues. Conversation must STOP on occasion to allow this to actually happen. Encourage students to thumbnail as they write.)

What life advantages does a guy have over a girl in this world? Girl over guy?
What is a guy’s biggest disadvantage in life? Girls?
Guys: what do you think the role of a girl is after high school? Girls?
What kinds of things should guys know about girls? Girls about guys?
Do you consider that it would be easier to be a guy or a girl? Why?
Ideally, what would a woman be doing when she is forty?
Who has more power in our community? Why do you think that is?
Is any of this a problem?
Is it OK for a sexy, pretty girl gets a job over a frumpy guy? Why and why not?
What are sex roles and are they equal?
What is sexism and who creates it?
How are women “others”?
Are intellectualism and sexuality in opposition?
Are smart women uppity? Aggressive? Confident? Assertive?
How does sexism, classicism, racism work in feminism?
Can a guy be a feminist?
How is a woman’s gaze different from a man’s? How does that difference influence the ways in which the two genders view the world? And how they view art?
How does all this discussion relate to LBGT, Class, Ethnicity, ...?!

Create a mini unit on the influence of mass media in regards to what we think about sexuality and gender roles.

Imperative! Be sure students are reflecting, sketching, and collecting images along the way. Thematic decisions need not be made at this point.

Part II

PowerPoint of feminist art: Judy Chicago, Kiki Smith, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Krueger, Frieda Kahlo, Cindy Sherman, ----

Cindy Sherman’s photographs are especially compelling for discussion. Her self-portraits provide an avenue with which students can understand the “objectification” of women. The viewer of the “object,” a woman in this (her) case, feels a sense of power, particularly in that the “object” is unaware of this watchful eye, or “gaze.” This objective “gaze” thus becomes subjective; it is voyeuristic and she becomes vulnerable. One may see this shift of intent in all of Sherman’s photographs.

Show 4-6 pieces of Sherman’s work and other feminist artists; artists provided here are easily researched and online images are available for informal classroom PowerPoint. Discuss the messages being conveyed by artists.

Discuss and question:
Expressionism in color, line, form, etc.
Representation and abstraction
Feminism in relation to the “isms” timeline (impressionism, fauvism, etc.)
Level of radical position
Students to identify any messages they may consider as PowerPoint progresses.

(More notes and reflecting.)

Besides commenting on feminist issues, what does most of the art as shown have in common? What might these women have in common?
Part III

Worksheet I: Planning Guide and Worksheet II: Artists and Issues to be passed out.

(Careful: Before releasing students to do research, make clear mention that many feminist artists are unsuitably graphic for public school classrooms. Students should be forewarned that internet research done at school may be blocked and research done at home may be disturbing. Different classrooms and communities confront these issues in sometimes singular and diverse ways. Teachers must know their audiences and accommodate all lessons appropriately.)

---students can begin to formulate what feminism might mean to them.

---Working together, they create a list of issue that they deem important to consider.

---read “The Good Wife’s Guide” (attached as website.) Discuss the implications of this article and the movement of women’s roles in the last 50 years.

---Browse the list of issues (provided as worksheet attached.) Add new ideas from earlier brainstorming sessions.

---Research 5 feminist artists, create 5 thumbnails of one of each of their works, and complete Worksheet 3: Research and Resources.

Part IV

Students will complete the “Learning Target Self-Assessment” rubric (attached in the appendix). Students will also receive the unit assessment rubric, (below).

Work commences. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Critique/Closure

Students to write a Mini Manifesto (250 words) and will answer the following questions: Students had better have an idea about what is going here before they begin painting!!!!!!

a. What is your work about?
b. What did you try to accomplish, and did you succeed?
c. Why did you do this painting as you did?
d. What movement and theory of postmodern art does it belong to?
e. Why will it, and you, be famous?
f. What new artistic vision have you given us? Philosophy? Invention?
g. What is the interpretive message you would hope others will derive from your piece?
h. What have you discovered about feminism? Anything? A decent discussion of this is expected here.

Work is displayed and classroom discussion and critiques ensue.

Assessments

Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.
During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

### Rubric for unit assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conglomeration Of Written Reflections:</strong></td>
<td>Student writes several sentences that show minimal reflection in regards to classroom discussion or personal thought.</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or two that shows obvious reflection in regards to classroom discussion and personal thought</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or more that shows obvious reflections in regards to discussion and personal thought and includes a stretch and/or connection to ongoing reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sketchbook, Process Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Thumbnails:** Process Thinking</td>
<td>Thumbnails show little or incomplete thought.</td>
<td>Thumbnails are basic/rough; needs reworking; does show evidence of thought</td>
<td>Thumbnails have strong compositions and shows evidence of reflective, strong thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Project:</strong> Artwork</td>
<td>Composition and/or technical approach does not reflect attention to concept or theme. Technical attention is at odds with intent.</td>
<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mini Manifesto:</strong> Writing</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
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---|---|---|---
Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV) | Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested. | Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested. | Chart is completed and shows clarity of understanding of concepts as requested. 
Class Critiques: Includes a Written Component. | Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work. | Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow. | Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge. 
Materials Needed
Independent projects will require individual needs. Students and teacher will consult before individual projects commence. 
Recommended Reading
“Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” By Linda Nochlin
http://www.feministezine.com/feminist/No-Great-Women-Artists.html
The Feminist Majority Foundation Homepage
http://feminist.org/
The Feminist Majority Foundation: Arts, Literature and Entertainment
http://feminist.org/arts/linkart.html
The Happy Feminist
http://happyfeminist.typepad.com/happyfeminist/2006/01/feminism_is_not.html
The Guerrilla Girls
http://www.guerrillagirls.com/
The Feminist Art Project
http://feministartproject.rutgers.edu/home/
Grrl Blog, for Adolescents
http://www.grrl.com/
Feminist.com
http://www.feminist.com/
Art History Archive:
http://www.arthistoryarchive.com/arhistory/feminist
Unit Plan References
Worksheet One: Planning Guide

1. Look, look, look... at books, internet sites, encyclopedias...Make a running list in your DL as you go of the artists you may like to revisit.

2. Pick an abstract expressionist (preferably one for whom you can find some information) and research. Complete the artist's page in your DL. Include the following:
   a. Country of origin, birth date and date of death, school of art he/she belonged to.
   b. What kind of background does this artist come from. What major influences of his or her life or times influenced your artist's values, and he/her view of life or the world as it was?
   c. Discuss what he/she is famous for. What was his or her major contribution to art ... (not just the name of a painting, or abstract expressionism, but a philosophy, style, new breakthrough in artistic thought.)
   d. Pick one or two paintings, Discuss their significance. **Answer all these questions:** What are these paintings about and why are they important. Why do you LIKE them? Why/how do they typify the artist and his/her work?

3. Choose a title for your art-to-be. Write it here:____________________________

4. Complete 6-10 thumbnail sketches. Include color (color pencils, markers.) You must check with me before starting your final piece. At this time I will ask to see the work you are referencing, I'll ask you to explain your thumbnail to me, I'll ask you to explain exactly how you plan to execute your piece, and I'll ask you what it'll “mean.” **You must have a totally organized plan before starting.**

5. Complete your work.

6. Write a Mini Manifesto (250 words). You had better have an idea about what is going here before you start painting!!!!!!
   a. What is your work about?
   b. What did you try to accomplish, and did you succeed?
   c. Why did you do this painting as you did?
   d. What school of art (era) will it belong to?
   e. Why will it, and you, be famous?
   f. What new artistic vision have you given us? Philosophy? Invention?
Worksheet Two: Artists and Issues

Incredible Feminist Artists:

Alice Neel  Jenny Holzer  Nancy Spero
Ana Mendieta  Jenny Saville  Paula Rego
Annie Leibovitz  Judy Chicago  Rachel Whiteread
Artemisia Gentileschi  Juane Quick to See  Rachel Stone
Audrey Flack  Kara Walker  Rosemarie Trockel.
Bracha Ettinger  Karen Kilimnik  Runa Islam
Candice Raquel Lee  Kathe Burkhart  Ryoko Suzuki
Carolee Schneeman  Kathe Kollwitz  Sally Mann
Carolyn Folkenroth  Kiki Smith  Sandy Skoglund
Carrie Mae Weems  Lee Bul  Sarah Lucas
Catherine Opie  Lee Krasner  Shazia Sikander
Cindy Sherman  Lilith Adler  Sophie Calle
Diane Arbus  Lisa Steele  Stella Vine
Dorothea Lange  Lorna Simpson  Susan Dorothea White
Dorothy T. Grunes  Louise Bourgeois  Tracey Emin
Edwina Sandys  Louise Nevelson  Victoria Van Dyke
Elizabeth Catlett  Lynda Benglis  Yayoi Kusama
Eva Hesse  Lynn Randolph  Yoko Ono
Faith Ringgold  Marisol Escobar  Yolanda Lopez
Frida Kahlo  Mariene Dumas  Yvonne Rainer
Fujiko Isomura  Martha Rosler
Georgia O'Keeffe  Mary Beth Edelson
Hannah Wilke  Mary Cassatt  Alfred Stieglitz
Janet Cardiff  Miriam Schapiro (Kimono)  Fredrick Douglass
Jennifer Linton  Nan Goldin  William Blake

Some issues the feminists grapple with today:

Military rights
Domestic violence
The culture of rape
The “gaze”
Pornography
Abortion rights
Contraception rights
Sexual harassment
Women’s rights on globally
Roles in the media
Sweatshops
Cultural attitudes
Feminist "empowerment"
Male dominance
**Worksheet Three: Research and Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminist Issue To Consider</th>
<th>Postmodern Approach</th>
<th>Inspirational Artists</th>
<th>Location Of Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
4. The Challenge of Baudrillard’s Simulacra

Quotes

‘Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.” Albert Einstein

“As I was sitting in my chair, I knew the bottom wasn’t there. Nor legs nor back, but I just sat, ignoring little things like that.” Hughes Mearns

“Are you really sure that a floor can’t also be a ceiling?” M.C. Escher

“There is an objective reality out there, but we view it through the spectacles of our beliefs, attitudes, and values.” David G. Myers, Social Psychology

“How do we know that the sky is not green and we are all colour-blind?” Author Unknown

“Nothing exists except atoms and empty space; everything else is opinion.” Democritus

“Did you ever wonder if the person in the puddle is real, and you’re just a reflection of him?” Calvin and Hobbes

“Disneyland is a paradise; the U.S. is a paradise. Paradise is just paradise. Mournful, monotonous, and superficial though it may be, it is paradise. There is no other.” Jean Baudrillard

“The simulacrum is never what hides the truth- it is truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is true.” Purported to be Ecclesiastes, by Jean Baudrillard

Introduction to Unit

This unit attempts to present to educators and students a dab of the philosophical thought surrounding illusion, reality, truth and deception. One may preface it with the following questions:

What is real and what is an illusion?

Is everyone’s reality the same as everyone else’s? Why or why not?

Can one provide examples of illusions that appear to be reality?

How does art fit into this discourse?

Can one paint reality?

The following definitions of simulacrum (singular, and simulacra, plural) may establish a foundation upon which to build the remainder of this unit:

1. **Simulacrum**: “a slight, unreal, or superficial likeness or semblance. Also an effigy, image or representation: a simulacrum of Aphrodite” (Simulacrum, 2010a). First coined in 1599 in Latin, meaning likeness, image, form, representation, portraits (Simulacrum, n.d.).

2. Initially **Simulacrum** was used to “describe a representation of another thing, such as a statue or a painting, especially of a god; by the late 19th century. It had gather a secondary association of inferiority; an image without the substance or qualities of the original” (Simulacrum, 2010b). Plato suggests that a simulacrum is not simply a useless image, but a “deviation and perversion of imitation itself- a false likeness” (Camille, 1996, para. 2) If it is not the original we see, it must be something else—a simulacrum, a fake (Camille, 1996, para. 2).

3. Jean Baudrillard, French sociologist, philosopher and cultural theorist, argues that there is no such thing as reality in today’s postmodern world; that we have
replaced it with models that have no reference to something in the real world (Baudrillard, 1994).

Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum. These would be the successive phases of the image:
1 It is the reflection of a basic reality;
2 It masks and perverts a basic reality;
3 It masks the absence of a basic reality;
4 It bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum.
In the first case, the image is a good appearance- representation is of the sacramental order. In the second, it is an evil appearance- it is of the order of maleficence. In the third, it plays at being an appearance- it is of the order of sorcery. In the fourth, it is no longer in the order of appearance: it is its own pure simulacrum. (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 6).

This is heady stuff. Baudrillard does not simply suggest that contemporary culture is artificial because for something to be deemed artificial there must be something real to compare it with. He says that today we have lost all sense of the difference between real and fake, that we accept fake as reality. Simply put, the simulacrum is a copy of a copy whose relation to the model has become so attenuated that it can no longer properly be said to be a copy. It stands on its own as a copy without a model (Massumi, 1987, para. 5).

Note Baudrillard’s three, rather chronological, orders of simulacra:
a) The first order of simulacra is associated with the pre-modern period, the image is a clear counterfeit of the real; the image is recognized as just an illusion, a place marker for the real. (Feluga, 2003). An example may be a statue: an image that is obviously an image of an object in reality.
b) In the second order, associated with the nineteenth century industrial revolution, mass production and abundant copies begins to break down the distinctions between a real image and a representation thereof. “Such production misrepresents and masks an underlying reality by imitating it so well, thus threatening to replace it (e.g. in photography or ideology); however, there is still a belief that, through critique or effective political action, one can still access the hidden fact of the real” (Feluga, 2003).
c) The third order of simulacra is associated with the postmodern age. Baudrillard notes that “the representation precedes and determines the real. Baudrillard says there is no distinction between reality and its representation. In this postmodern time, there is only the simulacrum (Feluga, 2003).

Baudrillard further states that modern society has replaced all reality and meaning with symbols, signs and codes. This simulacra, of perceived reality, are created by our culture and media, and we have lost touch with the real world upon which the simulacra are based. Postmodernism asserts that though there may be a reality, but we don’t know or understand it any longer; that all perceived reality is merely opinion based loosely on fact, but not in actuality fact.

Simulacrum notes to further clarification:
1. Philosopher Frederic Jameson, philosopher, uses photorealism as an example of artistic simulacrum: “a painting is created by copying a photograph that is itself a copy of the real” (Simulacrum, 2007, para. 1).
2. Is Main Street in Disneyland a replica, simulation or simulacrum of an American Main Street? How about Space Mountain? Fantasyland? Consider: replicas of landmarks (Las Vegas is full of them), re-enactments of historical events, films such as The Truman Show, The Matrix, and Jurassic Park.
3. Consider the whole of America itself. Is it a simulacrum of human culture and life around the world? Daniel Boorstin notes that the citizens in our post-industrial society live in a world “where fantasy is more real than reality, where the image has more dignity than its original” (Kearney, 1961, p. 252).

4. How does one define or categorize photographs of artwork? What is real?

5. Is the David by Michelangelo, where David is proportionally larger than a normal human being, simulacra?

6. Has the line between reality and fiction become so thin that our moral compasses now force our values to be based on simulacrum?

7. A 2008 show in San Francisco called “Simulacra: Art through the Lens of Time” exhibited 13 photographs of masterpieces. Originally these photographs were not intended to be works of art, but time has lent that quality to them. The curator says, “In the 100 years since they were taken, they’ve become precious - didn’t have that precious quality at the time. There’s another dimension beyond the object they’re depicting” (Harmaneci, 2008, para. 5).

8. The media, often providing fictional information and images, is unimaginably influential in our personal values: our politics, our material decisions, even our views of ourselves. The internet allows us to transform ourselves completely and live separate lives from the ones we live. Consider avatars, chats, Second Life, MySpace and Facebook, YouTube, Matchmaker.com, and the like.

9. Why might we study simulacrum, simulation, in an art class? What might this have to do with postmodern theory and power? Do we really accept Native Americans, Blacks, Latinos for who they are? Or do we simulate this acceptance? Is computer art “real” or a simulation of a simulation? What art is “real” art, and what is only simulation?

10. Does this all lead to us becoming “hyper-cynics”? What is to be done?

11. Might Baudrillard have been the one to design the movie “The Matrix,” with its hyper-real, artificial, pseudo-reality? Do films such as this prove we have lost touch with what might be called “real”?

12. When we buy Nikes or Adidas, or Porsches or BMWs, do we buy the shoe or the car, or are we most intent on the image? Are we purchasing simulacra, when signs and codes have replaced what the items originally referred to? Was the destruction of the World Trade Centers a destruction of capitalism and the media, or of buildings and people? (Ramduth, 2007, para. 1 & 2).

Objectives

1. As evident in their artist statements and final art work, students will understand the meaning of simulacrum as it applies to contemporary culture. CA VAPA 4.1

2. Students will discover the interdisciplinary nature of the arts. CA VAPA 5.4

3. Students will explore the power and influence and need for critical evaluation of mass media and technology in our daily living. CA VAPA 5.3

Caveats and Sidebar Notes

A study of theory is just that: a study. This unit is a discussion of theory, a tweaking of minds, and an attempt to “wrap one’s head around” complex contemporary definition of simulacrum in postmodern times.

Tell a true story: Dave and Mike aim for Disneyland’s Tomorrowland to embark on an intergalactic adventure on a Space Mountain rocket ship. They missed Neil Armstrong’s reception of an inspirational plaque upon which was inscribed the Disney slogan: “It’s kinda fun to do the impossible.”

Their ship is launched into a spiral galaxy, heading for the sun. Little do they know, with the g-force holding them back and the bright colors and screaming rock and
roll sound waves of outer space, that the sun was going super nova, only suddenly to explode right in front of them! Quick turn: they are zipping along next to a speeding asteroid that PHEW! astoundingly takes a sudden right turn to veer safely away. Silence finally. Real silence. The rocket ship stops. Really stops. Way up there on the roller coaster. Several minutes of stillness pass and a loudspeaker echoes, “Hello astronauts. This is mission control. Unfortunately, due to a mechanical mishap, the space ships will no longer function in a safe manner. We ask you to carefully unbuckle, leave your spacecraft, and head to the closest exit. Thank you and please accept our apologies.”

A few minutes later, Dave and Mike are walking along a roller coaster track some 50 feet above concrete, gears, wheels and miscellaneous machinery.

Discuss the illusion. What is real and what is not? In what other settings are we “removed” from reality? Why is simulacrum worthy of discussion?

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**

**Part I**

PowerPoint slides and discussion to include:

1. Rene Magritte: “The Treachery of Images: This is Not a Pipe.”
2. A sign to “nature trail.” What is nature today? Is it real, or is it simulated?
3. Images of media displaying what we must have (but don’t need). Media as creating a new reality of who we are, how we must live, and what we must own.
4. Gerhard Richter: “Women with an Umbrella.” A 1964 painting of a German housewife or of Jackie Kennedy hours after her JFK’s assassination?
5. Gerhard Richter: “Alfa Romeo with Text.”

Gerhardt Richter’s paintings show a surprisingly diverse range of approaches, and has created a prolonged discussion from critics, especially due to Richter’s disregard for the modernist bent toward “progression” and his use of photographs.

8. “Monument to the Simulacrum” by Stephen Hendee. (sculpture in Las Vegas)

http://www.lasvegascitylife.com/articles/2008/10/06/ae/art/iq_24232421.txt

9. Marcel Broodthaers: “La Salle Blanche” Attacks the artificiality of art and art space in contrast to the truth of an art object.
10. Second Life: Images from the website presents a hyperreality.
12. Marilyn Anne Levine: “Dark Grey Satchel” 1874 Ceramic
13. Helen Altman: “Goldfish”
15. Olga Ponomarenko: “Portrait of Molly and Georgia”
16. Andy Warhol: “Campbell’s Soup Cans” Production of simulacra of images. Brillo boxes, Marilyn Monroe, newspaper photos of an electric chair. Simulacra in this sense were second-order images, or representations of representations (Best and Kellner: The Postmodern Turn p 175.
17. Andy Warhol: “Self Portrait” 1966
19. Slide(s) from the film “Avatar.” The real is more real than reality. What does it leave the world we live in?
20. Slide(s) of Disneyland. Can Disneyland, its Main Street, the living animals, provide us with “more reality than nature can”? (Eco in Travels in Hyperreality p. 44)

Questions to consider during presentation:
Do artists project simulacrum, or are they the translators for the media?
Are they the sole and lonely conveyors of truth?
Does the artist have some hyper natural sense of perception that can see beyond the simulation to the real, or many realities of our culture and world? Do they create alternate realities purposefully and for the better of us all, or do they create undecipherable metaphors?
What has all this to do with the power/knowledge paradigm of education? What are we and what are our capabilities as recipients of the media?
Who is Mickey Mouse? What DID he represent in days past? What does he represent today?
Is simulacrum kitsch? Is it something that used to have meaning but has lost it?
What kind of photography is simulacrum and what isn’t?
Is simulacrum “post-surrealism”? Is it what is now known as “hyper-real” and might it be superior to the “real”?
In entertainment, do we seek simulated stimuli and nothing more? What more is there?
Three: Can you justify the following as Simulation or Simulacrum?
  Fire drill
  Marine world
  A fax
  Robots
  Second Life
  A dramatic production
Part II
Begin to consider your approach. Complete the following in a sketchbook:
What kind of simulation, simulacrum, might you focus on?
Can you identify anything that seems fake beyond fake?
Which of the PowerPoint slides caught your attention? Why did it do that?
Are you conscious of something that you may be able to relate to this discussion?
Did you light on something that might spark your interest?
Can you find humor or parody in it? Or what DO you find humor in?
Morph this into Part IV.

Part III
What kind of simulation might you focus on? Which of Baudrillard’s successive phases of the image are you going to work in:
1. A reflection of a basic reality. An image is an obvious copy of the real. Most artwork we view today is this reflection.
2. A mask and and/or perversion of a basic reality. Photography and mass media create imitations of the real, and an alternate reality is available. But one can still deconstruct reality from simulation.
3. A mask of the absence of a basic reality. As in the map discussed previously, new realities are being drawn, but there is no territory from which this reality is based.
4. A total absence of any relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum. You are stepping into the postmodern age, where there is no “distinction between reality and its representation.”

Complete Six Thumbnails:
Using Two Distinctly Separate Approaches
(for example: a painting of a photograph? image and text?)

Part IV
Students will complete the “Learning Target Self-Assessment” rubric (attached in the appendix). Students will also receive the unit assessment rubric, (below).
Work commences. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.
During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Critique/Closure
Work to be displayed and classroom discussion and critiques ensure.
Students to write reflective essay addressing the following questions:
a. Define the difference between representation, simulation and simulacrum.
b. Identify three diverse pieces of student work as true simulacrum and explain why they are.
c. Discuss why this unit may be of importance in a high school classroom.

Assessment
Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.
During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Rubric for unit assessment

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<tr>
<td>Conglomeration Of Written Reflections: Sketchbook, Process Thinking</td>
<td>Student writes several sentences that show minimal reflection in regards to classroom discussion or personal thought.</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or two that shows obvious reflection in regards to classroom discussion and personal thought.</td>
<td>Student writes pertinent paragraph or more that shows obvious reflections in regards to discussion and personal thought and includes a stretch and/or connection to ongoing reflection.</td>
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<td>Thumbnails: Process Thinking</td>
<td>Thumbnails show little or incomplete thought.</td>
<td>Thumbnails are basic/rough; needs reworking; does show evidence of thought.</td>
<td>Thumbnails have strong compositions and shows evidence of reflective, strong thought.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: Artwork</td>
<td>Composition and/or technical approach does not reflect attention to concept or theme. Technical attention is at odds with intent.</td>
<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation To Class: Speaking</td>
<td>Articulation regarding artwork is minimal or lacking completely.</td>
<td>Student supplies adequate information regarding theme, statement and approach to artwork.</td>
<td>Student speaks articulately about theme, statement and approach to artwork. Makes further connections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Writing Based on Questions Provided</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of postmodern thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV)</td>
<td>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
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Further Study
Read The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka. Discuss the simulacrum.
Create a (sketchbook) page of images you can justify as simulacrum.
Define what Umberto Eco calls “The Authentic Fake.”

Materials Needed
Independent projects will require individual needs. Students and teacher will consult before individual projects commence.

Recommended Reading
Brian Massumi. Realer than Real: The Simulacrum According to Deleuze and Guattari.
Definition of simulacrum and difference between simulacrum and simulation:
http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/simulationsimulacrum.htm
Gerhard Richter and Simulacrum:
http://www.gerhard-richter.com/biography/work/
Introduction to Jean Baudrillard, Module on Simulacra and Simulation
http://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/engl/theory/postmodernism/modules/ baudrillardsimulation.html
Michael Camille: “Simulacrum”
http://faculty.washington.edu/cbehler/glossary/simulacr.html
Simulacra in the Media:
http://cyberartsweb.org/cpace/infotech/asg/ag7.html
Second Life and Baudrillard:
What’s in a Turtle? From PBS.

Unit Plan References
5. Postmodern Picture books

Quotes

“The world is as many times new as there are children in our lives.” ~Robert Brault

“A characteristic of the normal child is he doesn’t act that way very often. ~Author Unknown

“Children make you want to start life over.” ~Muhammad Ali

“A good book should leave you... slightly exhausted at the end. You live several lives while reading it.” ~William Styron

“There are books so alive that you’re always afraid that while you weren’t reading, the book has gone and changed, has shifted like a river; while you went on living, it went on living too, and like a river moved on and moved away. No one has stepped twice into the same river. But did anyone ever step twice into the same book?” ~Marina Tsvetaeva

Introduction to Unit

Postmodern picture books offer literacy skills on three levels: from the story as told in visual images, through the verbal content in language as text, and in interpretative literacy based on experience. Their emphasis, however, is on the final one, that of fostering the interpretative value of postmodern visual art. Using postmodern picture books, students can incorporate creative expression and critical analysis to build knowledge. They can use them to create and understand multiple meanings; and finally they will understand the relationships between literacy and artistic techniques.

The characteristics of postmodern books are many and typically diverse.

1. Postmodern picture books offer more than a reading experience. They add an experience in narrative construction. Children can create many, sometimes nuanced, meanings from the interplay of words, images, sidebars, balloons and the like, much like the hypertext on a computer or television channel surfing (Goldstone, 2002). The consequential narratives may be infinitely constructed and indeed different each time the book is “read.” Postmodern picture books, as noted, are busy. Children must actively engage in them on several levels.

2. Postmodern picture books often contain a socio-cultural or political concern. The postmodern agendas of the “other,” the feminist, or the multicultural are common themes.

3. Postmodern picture books have distinct features. The story is often non-linear (if there is a story); the books may contain irony or ambiguity, or are sarcastic and cynical; they play with traditional formats (a mouse eats his way through the book); surrealistic images or completely unrelated images are used. The format of the book itself may be expanded in size, shape, construction, and the books may be read backwards, or upside down, or even back and forth, giving a hypertext feel to the reading. Finally they promote and indulge the reader as the privileged creator of the narrative.

Adolescent creation of postmodern picture books is a valid and informative approach to art education. Students can study them from the viewpoints of design, art
elements, composition, and use of media, these approaches feeding directly into the visual arts content standards and discipline-based art education agendas. They can use them to study postmodern theory, including socio-cultural concerns and their codes and symbols (Hellman, 2003). Approaching postmodern picture books from a literacy angle feeds directly into visual, media, and language literacies. Intertextuality, interpretation, narrative, deconstruction, fragmentation, parody and irony, and the multiplicity of meaning can all be discussed at many levels.

It has been suggested that students today learn differently than in the past (Prensky, 2001; November, 2001; Oppenheimer, 2003). The proliferation of media, the many ways we get our information, the multi-tasking abilities that our children possess— all of these have created exciting new ways of both teaching and learning. Children who grow up “participating” with computers and smart phones may be challenged to navigate a linear, formal, single-perspective story. Postmodern picture books, like postmodern art itself, allows for resourceful, flexible, and creative thinking and conclusion making.

Postmodern picture books have a special place in our worlds as children, as adolescents, and as adults. They shift the ground upon which we walk, requiring us to reevaluate truth and reality as offered in something as basic as a children’s story book. “Rather than providing order, these books show the quixotic nature of the world. Then they reassure the... reader that this uncertainty can be overcome and that the world is a wondrous and surprising place” (Goldstone, 2004, p. 203).

**Objectives**
1. Students will draw relationships between the visual arts and cognitive learning. CA VAPA 5.2
2. Students will explore both traditional and postmodern picture books to discover how the different styles create meaning in the works. CA VAPA 1.3
3. Students will create a postmodern picture book that reflects knowledge of both the traditional elements of art and principles of design and postmodern approaches. CA VAPA 2.1

**Caveats and Sidebar Notes**
A blast to the past. Secondary students get to revisit the books of their childhoods and decipher the elements that brought them joy. A mere ten years later, picture books have begun to transition in and to the age of technology. Gone are the traditional picture books of simple story line and in are interactive, experiential and interpretive picture books. A class historical analysis of picture book development should be most fun.

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**
**Part I**
Teacher reads two children’s books to class, class sitting on the floor in traditional “reading circle.” One book is a traditional children’s picture book such as *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak, the other a postmodern picture book such as *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith. Reflective conversation will begin the study. (A number of postmodern children’s books are included at the end of this unit plan. Any of them, or others, would work.)

Students and teacher gather children’s picture books for investigation. Working in groups, students will identify the differences in traditional and postmodern picture books using *Worksheet: Investigating Postmodern Picture Books.*

Blending student exploration and inquiry with teacher provided materials, class will begin to gain recognition of the elements of postmodern picture books. Discussion
will include literacy, interpretations, plot, principles of art and elements of design, and elements of aesthetic postmodernism including theory.

Part II

Students create a postmodern picture book using at least 4 elements as identified in class. Book must be completed in color and/or ink. Book must have cover, end pages, title page, table of contents, author introduction page, and at least 6 story pages. A conclusion is encouraged. A rough draft version (stapled or clipped together) must be completed and submitted with final book.

The final picture book creation options will include:
1. A reconstituted book (very postmodern!)

(Instructions for the creation of these books are not included here but are available on the internet and in commercial publications.)

Students may work independently or form their own groups of no more than three. Should students work in groups, each task to book completion must be clearly identified and assigned.

Using a graphic organizer (Worksheet: Gathering Ideas), students begin to gather ideas. Students may create their own, brand new story, modify an existing story, or create a progressive or grouping book (alphabet, numbers, colors, etc.). Students are encouraged to visit the community library to research elements and approaches to other postmodern picture books. (Many are listed below.)

Part III

Students work to complete their books. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.

Part IV

Postmodernism focuses on individual interpretations of art objects; as such, before class critiques proceed, teacher will gather and redistribute books. Students will write reflections as they read. These short responses will first and foremost include personal interpretation reflecting:
1. What is happening in the story?
2. What emotional tie might you make with the story, an action, a character or a setting? What specifically did you connect to and why?
3. At what point did you pause to investigate something longer than normal? It might be the artwork, some text, a creative approach... other? Describe what stopped you, why it stopped you, and what you finally decided about it.
4. Offer a suggestion that may make this postmodern picture book more effective. Be explicit.
5. What discoveries have you made during the process of completing this unit?

Critique/Closure

Students revisit their reading group circles. Each student will read the book upon which they reflected (not their own). Discussion and critique will be conducted as a class (if class is large, in two groups).

Assessments

Students will be writing in many venues; the short responses will provide skill practice in language arts. It will also be an important venue for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and
working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit. (See rubric for unit assessment.)

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

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**Materials Needed**

Picture books aimed at various ages, subjects, and from various generations.
Include 5-8 recognized postmodern picture books (listed in appendix)
As needed by students. Paint, colored pencils, ink pens, paper, lightweight cardboard

**A Number of Postmodern Picture Books for Investigation**

- **Black and White** by David Macaulay
- **The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales** by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith
- **The True Story of the Three Little Pigs** by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith
- **Fly Away Home** by Eve Bunting
- **Officer Buckle and Gloria** by Peggy Rathmann
- **The Story of a Little Mouse Trapped in a Book** by Monique Felix
- **The Three Little Pigs** by David Wiesner
- **Time to Get Out of the Bath, Shirley** by John Burningham
- **The Armadillo from Amarillo** by Lynne Cherry
- **The Trouble with Trolls** by Jan Brett
- **The Mitten** by Jan Brett
- **Comet’s Nine Lives** by Jan Brett
- **The Polar Express** by Chris Van Allsburg
- **Nappy Hair** by Carolivia Harron
- **Frog Prince Continued** by Jon Scieszka
- **Cindy Ellen: A Wild Western Cinderella** by Susan Lowell
- **We Are All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy** by Maurice Sendak
- **Tar Beach** by Faith Ringgold

**Recommended Reading**

Vandergrift’s Children’s Literature Page:
  http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/professional-development/childlit/ChildrenLit/
Carol Hurst’s Children’s Literature Site. Looking Critically at Picture Books.
  http://www.carolhurst.com/subjects/criticalpicture.html

**Unit Plan References**


**Worksheets**

*Investigating Postmodern Picture Books*
*(Chart to be copied into Log/Sketchbooks)*

**Title of Book:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot Lines</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Possible Meanings</th>
<th>Interactive Elements</th>
<th>Postmodern Evidence</th>
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### Gathering Ideas

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<th>Possible Themes</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>New Story Ideas</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing, Reconstituted Stories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progressive Stories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grouping Stories</td>
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6. Boxed Up Narratives

Quotes

“A ‘Normal’ person is the sort of person that might be designed by a committee. You know, ‘Each person puts in a pretty color and it comes out gray.’” Alan Sherman

“Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”  Dr. Seuss

“Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.”  Mark Twain

Introduction to Unit

The coolest thing about sharing little narratives is the valid claim that they are all absolutely real. Hence, when two students converse, one is sharing his narrative as he knows it, the second is hearing that narrative from his culturally biased, and as well he is slightly tweaking his own personal narrative to include some small portion of the story he just heard.

Postmodernism celebrates identity and individualism. As individuals with diverse identities, we also are each influenced by our “surrounding cultures, changes within those cultures, and are fragmented like those cultures” (Beck, 2004, para. 24). Hence, our selves, our conversations, opinions, values, and actions- all correspond to the culture we inhabit. In the same light, we transform with changes in our cultural environments. Of importance is that individuals do not necessarily reflect their racial, socio-economic, gender, or religion; these traits provide a cultural ground upon which an individual may identify with gusto or merely with incidental indication.

We perpetually create new selves, as noted, due to the nature of our existence- visiting, talking, moving through daily life, listening and learning of and from cultures different from our own. Each time we interact with an experience, that experience re-creates who we are, what we think, and our vision of purpose. Humans live in a flux of knowledge and self re-creation.

With this in mind, students will examine themselves in a not-so-typical self portrait approach. They will take an inner look at who they are, their likes and dislikes, what motivates them, perhaps at their struggles in their environments, perchance even their dreams. Then they will examine the image they portray on the exterior, the image they think others see. This is the image they outwardly portray in spite of what is intrinsically driving them on a day by day basis.

Examining these two selves in a populist setting promotes and displays the postmodern view of individuality in a setting of pluralism.

Objectives

1. Students will express who they are in ceramic using only symbols and archetypes.   CA VAPA 2.5
2. Students will discover the power of the visual arts in self-expression.  CA VAPA 4.3
3. Students will discover the assorted number of mini narratives contained in one classroom, the separate diverse identities, and the value of understanding our differences.  CA VAPA 4.1
Caveats and Sidebar Notes

Ask students to take some extra time when asking themselves the questions below. We can all provide superficial answers to these, but taking a slower, more gentle, more analytical approach will certainly enrich the final results to this project.

This project lends itself beautifully to integrating with language arts. Powerful writing can be gleaned from the thinking generated in numerous portions of this project. Obviously a discussion beforehand should cover the definitions and goals of self portraits, of expressionism, and of narratives. Students are also invited to consider cultural bias, racial bias, economic status, marginalization of groups, perhaps global implications regarding self. So much may be added to this discourse.

Activity and Lesson Sequence

Part I

A simple description to students explaining the upcoming ceramic project may be sufficient at this time. Students will seldom balk when the subject of a project or assignment is themselves. Making deeper reflective analyses, however, may take a bit of organization and prodding.

Students can begin by answering questions similar to the following. Ask them to write the questions in their sketchbooks, leaving plenty of space, and to return to them over a period of days. Allowing class time at the onset of this part of the assignment would be beneficial to “hooking” the students. Ask them to take time to reflect, to provide several (only initial) responses to each query.

Intrinsic questions: What is inside you?
What do you really, really like? Dislike?
What makes you get up each morning?
Where is your favorite place to be?
What are you afraid of?
What would you like to change about yourself?
What do YOU consider your biggest strength? Your deepest weakness?
What might you like to have or be that can’t be purchased?
What is your biggest obstacle to life on a daily basis? In your future?
What keeps you awake at night?
If you could contribute something to the world, what might it be?
What is your spiritual bent?

Extrinsically: How do you portray yourself to others?
What do others see when you walk into a room? What do you look like?
What do you talk about the most?
What activities are (were) you involved in that others know about?
What might everyone know about you: where do you live, what have you done in the past, what material goods do you have?
What personality traits do you have that are obvious to others?
What is your most common behavior?
What behavior do you display that is a positive one? A negative one?
What face do you purposely display that you cognitively want others to see?
Students to write their stories. Autobiography, done early this time, will force them to articulate with commitment just who they are both inside and out. Several pages may be needed for each “half” of themselves. Students should be encouraged to write as much as they choose, to provide examples and evidence of their claims, and to write in clear sentence and paragraph form.

Part II

Archetypes and symbols in language and visual arts are introduced. “A symbol is something such as an object, picture, written word, sound, or particular mark that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention” (Symbol, n.d.). Discuss the complexity of this definition, from the most basic symbols-an image of a fork is a symbol of a fork- to the more complex- candle light for life or winter for death. Discuss symbols as they are presented by the elements of art and principles of design: a squiggly line may be a symbol of confusion. A tiny dark spot on a large field may signify loneliness.

Look at narrative paintings. Write the potential stories. (This project has similar components in regards to symbolism and archetypes as does Unit/Lesson #9: Family Trees. An extensive outline of a possible PowerPoint is provided there and may easily be used here in its entirety or in portion. Whimsical and eclectic images may also be found and added with a web image search of “box artists.” Don’t forget Joseph Cornell and Betye Saar. Visit the International Museum of Collage, Assemblage, and Construction at http://collagemuseum.com. A web search of “narrative paintings” will provide a scads of options; consider paintings by the realist F. Scott Hess or cultural artist Hung Liu.)

Allow students to work alone or together. Students will create symbols for all of the short responses to the previous questions.

Students plan ceramic layouts using attached graphic organizers. The inside of the box will represent their personal, intrinsic, private selves (the inside of the box is a symbol in itself). Attention must be given to four inside walls, floors, and corners, and floor. The outside of the box will display the exterior of themselves-four walls and corners. Students are expected to create a lid, but this lid has no design parameters. Ask them to consider what symbolic purpose a lid may serve and thence what it may need to visually display.

Part III

Students build their sculptures using existing and new knowledge of ceramic techniques. Boxes are glazed. Felt pads are attached to bottoms.

Critique/Closure

All boxes are displayed and sharing commences. Each student is required to comment on their symbols and their thinking processes. Important are the discoveries students make during the course of completion, not solely the details as revealed in the final product. Even more important is the new collective awareness of the individuals in the class, their separate, diverse identities, particularly those not generally exposed, and the newfound acceptance of each.

Writing options:

A discussion of interpretation would be valuable at the conclusion of this assignment and as a preface to the final write.
1. Imaginative interpretations: Each student, using the box of another student as a starting point, writes a narrative.

2. Students are provided narrative painting(s) done by master artist(s) from which they write narratives. This may be prefaced by offering one painting to a handful of students (that would be several paintings to several groups) to verbally examine how interpretations vary.

3. Students explore the postmodern principles as they applied to this project.

Assessments

Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on the following rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the unit, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Rubric for unit assessment

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Student writes several sentences that show minimal reflection in regards to classroom discussion or personal thought.</td>
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<td>Thumbnails have strong compositions and shows evidence of reflective, strong thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project: Artwork and Use of Symbols</td>
<td>Composition and/or technical approach does not reflect attention to concept or theme. Technical attention is at odds with intent.</td>
<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
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<td>Presentation To Class: Speaking</td>
<td>Articulation regarding artwork is minimal or lacking completely.</td>
<td>Student supplies adequate information regarding theme, statement and approach to artwork.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing: Either Option</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of assignment.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation in regards to (completed) artwork.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of (completed) artwork.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV)</td>
<td>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
<td>Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested.</td>
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<td>Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge.</td>
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</table>

**Materials Needed**
- Sketchbooks
- Ceramic supplies including clay of choice, kiln, glazes, etc.
- Green felt for the feet of the boxes.

**Recommended Reading**
Online: International Museum of Collage, Assemblage, and Construction at [http://collagemuseum.com](http://collagemuseum.com)
Barrett’s Principles of Interpretation as included in Part 6: Interpreting This Stuff

**Unit Plan References**

Student work done by Orland High School students, 2003-04.
7. Fin de Siècle Pop Art

**Quotes**

Robert Rauschenberg:

"I think a painting is more like the real world if it's made out the real world."

"The artist's job is to be a witness to his time in history."

Andy Warhol:

"Style isn't really important."

"If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings . . . There's nothing behind it."

"Paintings are too hard. Machines have less problems. I'd like to be a machine. I think everybody should be a machine."

"Sometimes you fantasize that people who are really up there and rich and living it up have something you don’t have, and their things must be better than your things because they have more money than you. But they drink the same Coke and eat the same hot dogs and wear the same clothes and see the same TV and the same movies. . . You can get just as revolted as they can -- you can have the same nightmares. All this is really American."

"I loved working when I worked at commercial art and they told you what to do and how to do it and all you had to do was correct it and they'd say yes or no. The hard thing is when you have to dream up the tasteless things to do on your own."

**Introduction to Unit**

An introduction to Neo-Pop art must first position the movement in art history. While Pop art is familiar to most art educators, a brief review of its development and dominant themes is helpful to both instructors and students.

Pop art developed in the fifties and sixties in both England and the United States on the heels of Abstract Expressionism. Both Minimalism and Pop art blossomed from this time when art was most prominently Eurocentric and elitist, smothered in conceptual practices.

The thrust of Pop art was in actuality conceptual also; its purpose was two-fold: 1) it was a backlash to the focus of the conceptual artist endlessly searching for dramatic, sophisticated, often large scale compositions, and 2) it was a striving to create a place amidst the new mechanically produced, well designed and clever images provided in the mass media. The technical or theoretical aspects of a piece were replaced by attitude: of society, materialism, mass media, culture, and art itself. Popular art reflected the way current values were influenced by popular images, the kitsch that we decorated our homes with, the methods with which we made our art. The recontextualization of Andy Warhol's Brillo box or Campbell's soup cans is complicit in creating conflicting values in the society we inhabit. Pop artists indulged in the same practices as those working in mass
production design industries, but often added irony, parody and overtones of social critique.

Neo-pop art moves the Pop art of the sixties to the socio-cultural matters of today; much of this can be attributed to its influence on the postmodern art movement. Parallels between principles of postmodern theory and Neo-pop art can easily be drawn:
- Representation
- Deconstruction
- Questioning Truth
- Ambiguity and Double Coding
- Recontextualization
- Feminism
- Parody and Irony

Often seen in Neo-pop are postmodern art making techniques:
- Appropriation
- Juxtaposition
- Layering
- Text and Images
- Hybridity

**Caveats and Sidebar Notes**

It is not uncommon students to think this project is not much more than junk. Care must be taken to differentiate between art, junk and kitsch.

**Objectives**

1. Students will research and write about Pop art today, how it is used, and they will make distinctions between the Pop art of the sixties and Neo pop art of today. CA VAPA 4.2
2. Students will learn the complex meanings of irony and parody and cognitively use one of them in their artwork. CA VAPA 4.1
3. Students will explore the approaches to making Pop art with a postmodern take, including the uses of appropriation, juxtaposition, layering, text and images, and hybridity. CA VAPA 1.5

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**

**Part I**

An introduction to Pop art as provided above with supporting PowerPoint slides begins this unit. Slides can be of the pop art most commonly known by educators, including work by the original Pop artists: (in no particular order) Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg, David Hockney, Jim Dine, Marisol Escobar, Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Robert Indiana, Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Hamilton, Peter Max, Sigmar Polke, Raymond Hains, Tom Wesselmann, Mel Ramos, Larry Rivers, James Rosenquist; and the work of today’s Neo-Pop artists: Takashi Murakami, Jeff Koons, Katharina Fritsch, Ed Ruscha, Keith Haring, Charles Ray, Kenny Scharf, Yasumasa Morimura, and Daniel Edwards. Attention will be drawn to the fact that the Neo-Pop art movement is not particularly diverse from the original Pop art but is an evolution influenced by contemporary subject matter. The Neo-pops are inspired also by minimalism, photorealism, conceptual art, installation and performance art. As the original Pop artists were, and as are postmodernists, they often criticize Western culture using irony and paradox.

Students will take notes during the presentation of short biographies, several pieces by each artist and Pop art approaches. Students will begin to narrow their focus of topic and approach for their own Pop art compositions.
At the end of the presentation, students will be conversant with the information and brainstorming can begin.

Part II

Using graphic organizer attached, Narrowing Ideas to One (attached but to be copied into sketchbook), student work back and forth narrowing their directions. Approaches to Neo-Pop art in a classroom will follow one of three routes: 1) collage or assemblage using primarily found materials (appropriation), 2) recontextualization of found materials or images, 3) juxtapositioning of accepted norms in images and/or text.

Adolescent idea generation is a gray area in the classroom; the hardest part of any unit is facilitating the creation of student ideas without providing them outright. The worksheet as provided is meant to be scribbled on, cut, pasted, torn, and maybe even shredded before a new one begins. Working with the class as a whole would help provide the impetus to productive brainstorming, and it may sound like this:

“What kinds of things bug you guys about the society we live in today?”
(i.e. sexism, war, materialism, immigration, the importance of good looks…..)

In the third column of their own sketchbooks, students write at least three themes they consider worthy of consideration: their own or class generated.

“List the artists you most liked during the PowerPoint.”

Students identify 4, 5, or 6 artists they were most fond of per the PowerPoint.

“When considering the three possible approaches we talked about, which did each of these artists use to complete their pieces? If there is an approach NOT listed, name it and write it.”

Students identify the approaches the Pop artists took, as noted above: collage, assemblage, hybridity, appropriation, layering, recontextualization, or juxtapostioning.

“Finally, consider the themes you’ve listed.

“Which artist would most likely use an approach that would complement your theme? Working back and forth, complete these three columns. When done, identify the postmodern direction(s) that would best accompany your thinking.”

This multi-directional approach of weaving new found knowledge, idea manipulation and creation with well established opinions into a path designed to build strong rough sketches has proven to be an outstanding way of funneling students into their own, original designs. Diligence, patience and persistence for teacher and students are required, but the results are incredible.

Students are provided the questions to which they will later respond in their artist’s statements.

Part III

Students commence work. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face.

Critique/Closure

Write an artist’s statement. Include:

a. What is going on in the world that you are poking fun at? That you want to make others aware of? What did you try to accomplish?

b. Did you use irony or parody? Were you successful? Explain.
b. Why did you do this painting as you did? Is it Pop or Neo-Pop?
c. What one thing in your art would you change and why?
d. How does this artwork fit in the realm of postmodern art?
e. How is this Pop art? Be specific and explain.
f. What new artistic vision have you given us? Philosophy? Invention?
g. Why will it, and you, be famous?
h. In this piece becomes part of a serious series, what will you do next?

Assessments
Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important venue for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Rubric for unit assessment

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<tr>
<td>Writing to the Prompts</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
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**Materials Needed**

Independent projects will require individual needs. Students and teacher will consult before individual projects commence.

**Recommended Reading**

Archive  
http://www.artchive.com/artchive/p0443art.html

ArtLex on Pop Art  
http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/p/popart.html

Pop Art by Dr. Tilman Osterwold. Taschen Books  
http://www.taschen.com/

WebMuseum: Pop Art  
http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/tl/20th/pop-art.html

Pop art on Wikiedia  
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop_art

**Unit Plan References**

Neo-Pop art on Art History Archive  
http://www.arthistoryarchive.com/arthur/logo/Neo-Pop-Art.html
Student work done by Orland High School students, 2007-08.

**Worksheet: Narrowing Ideas to One**

*(To be copied into sketchbooks)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Artists (At least four)</th>
<th>Method or Approach to Completion</th>
<th>Possible Themes</th>
<th>Postmodern Theory and/or Approach</th>
<th>Humor: Parody or Irony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
8. Tribute to Native Americans: Considering Border Cultures

Quotes

“It does not require many words to speak the truth.” Chief Joseph

“If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian he can live in peace. There need be no trouble. Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it.” Chief Joseph

“Everything on the earth has a purpose, every disease an herb to cure it, and every person a mission. This is the Indian theory of existence.” Mourning Dove Salish

“Out of the Indian approach to life there came a great freedom, an intense and absorbing respect for life, enriching faith in a Supreme Power, and principles of truth, honesty, generosity, equity, and brotherhood as a guide to mundane relations.” Luther Standing Bear Oglala Sioux

“Illegal aliens have always been a problem in the United States. Ask any Indian.” Robert Orben

Introduction

Mainstream students have one of two views of Native American Indians today. One they have studied for years in public school classes. A stereotypic, outdated image of Indians, in teepees, dancing at powwows and making maize flour in rock bowls has been ingrained in their historical knowledges. So have images of Indians in war paint, on bareback, wearing feathers, yipping and howling around covered wagons. From this background comes much of the Indian art we still see: “generalized and stereotypical symbols which white culture has identified as Indian... They make indigenous people appear remote, generalized savage, nonhuman, and nonthreatening- in other words, not real people” (Walkingstick, 1992, p. 15).

The second, updated image, and equally trite, is one of our Native Americans-gathered around a hut set on a desert reservation, drinking, collecting unemployment, looking at a dim future- that is unless the casinos can save them.

These views are provided in whole by the mainstream culture and media of America today. The melting pot we profess to embrace has botched on so many levels, including our failure to include a comprehensive understanding of the contributions of “others.” This unit particularly addresses the border culture of our own Native American, but it will parallel the many border cultures existing in the states today.

Three hundred million Native Americans are part of the five hundred tribes that exist in American today (The American Indian and Alaska Native Population, 2000). Odd how little we know about the life, the quandaries, the successes and the culture of Native Americans today. As are we all in the 21st century, they are an amalgamation of the Western and their own Native American cultures.

“Border culture,” as described by Elizabeth Garber, is the “intersection points between two cultures in which some elements overlap and others diverge” (Song, 2009, p. 19) An examination of Native American culture by both viewing and creating artwork can create an understanding of this overlap and lead to acceptance and appreciation of the ambiguities and the “multifaceted identities” of Native Americans as well as all Americans who live with dual identities.
Decidedly, this is an educational avenue rich with possibilities in an art curriculum. Studying the aesthetics and the meaning/social implications of Native American culture is a gateway to understanding the culture of past and present Indians. But a postmodern study creates both new problems and insight. We are somewhat familiar with traditional indigenous artmaking, but the time has come to allow for the emergence of individual and contemporary styles. Questions present themselves: how does this art fit into our Western view of aesthetics? Do we allow for the contextual, sometimes spiritual, significance when forming critiques? (Meyer, 2001, p 25) Is this work isolated and doomed to be craft? Do we consider the contemporary social implications of Native American artwork, beyond the traditional pottery et al.? “In search of aesthetics we must reexamine the very notion of art and its relationship to other aspects of human culture” (Meyer, 2001, p 26). This is a postmodern dilemma not easily resolved when considering aesthetics from a purely Western vantage point.

While Native American history us incredibly rich, a look at the current issues our indigenous neighbors are facing can be rewarding in a pay-it-forward fashion. Understanding and appreciating this rich history creates a ground upon which students can build a new and communicative relationship.

Minorities are stepping up to insure that all cultures are represented with accuracy and validity. Making infinitesimal steps, “cultural pluralism” is beginning to move beyond merely rhetoric. Along with this messy pluralism of many cultures that make up American society, so are the “transcultural” complexities and contradictions afforded by the influence of media and migration among the indigenous people of America today (Ballengee-Morris, 2008, p. 31). An effort to explore and blend what we know and may come to understand is appropriate for secondary art students.

Objectives

1. Students will recognize the ways in which Western culture by and large promotes the continuance of marginalizing subcultures, border cultures, and minorities. CA VAPA 3.3
2. Students will learn about Native Americans with honest reflection and compassion, and create a piece of artwork that is a tribute to Native Americans today. CA VAPA 2.6
3. Students will create a work of art that communicates the cross-cultural theme as presented by Native Americans using fragmentation. CA VAPA 5.2

Caveats and Sidebar Notes

Regard must be taken that there are most likely students with Native American backgrounds in the class and mention in class acknowledging such is appropriate. Discussion regarding dominant culture and all marginal cultures would be an interesting and intriguing introduction to this lesson. Student recognition that there are many subcultures and that we all most likely belong, at least partially, to one is a major goal in this lesson.

Questions fostering engagement:

1. Who are Native Americans? According to the 2000 census, the population was over 280,000,000 (Census, 2000).
2. List all the facts you know about Native Americans in three minutes. (Obviously brevity is appropriate. Students will most likely list the same cliché information they have learned over the years.)

Students may or may not be part of an indigenous group. Those who are not should recognize the significance of Indian culture to both native and non native communities. Studying and conceptualizing a piece of the culture we are so richly provided pays tribute, to past, present and future connectedness. Students will isolate a portion of indigenous culture they recognize as pertinent to this tribute.
Students will be aware of the many derogatory, often subtle ways in which we negate the Native Americans and their cultures. Discussion will include these (Indian giver, got scalped at the barber, GERONIMO! et al.); this consciousness will remove any further remarks and innuendos from the curriculum. Little else needs to be initially addressed in regards to the plight of our modern American Indians as this will come to light during the course of the lesson.

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**

**Part I**

Show PowerPoint slides of traditional Native American art. Most images will be somewhat familiar to students as Indians have been amply represented in mass media and class projects: teepees, rain sticks, basket weaving, narrative totem poles, paintings, pottery, bead work, turquoise jewelry, etc. Appropriate here would be inclusion of high quality traditional work. Care should be given to not trivialize Native American art work. Note that much of the work is based on two major themes: spirituality and nature.

A PowerPoint continues to showcase contemporary Native American artwork. Slides can include work by Yatika Fields, Juane Quick-to-See Smith, Ernest Whiteman, Jimmie Durham, Rebecca Belmore, George Longfish, Kay Miller, Phil Young, James Lavadour, Joe Fedderson, Edward Poitras, Edgar Heap of Birds, Gerald McMaster, Shelley Niro, James Luna, Jolene Rickard, Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, Melanie Yazzie, Doug Coffin, Kay Walkingstick, or many others.

This combination of two PowerPoints will engage students in discussion comparing and contrasting traditional Indian art (and culture) with that of today. Indian Americans present in class are invited to share and critique with their personal cultural and contemporary knowledge and experiences. Discussion will address the differences in purpose and interpretations. The questions asked at the beginning of the unit should be brought in at this point. All together, there is a lot of fodder here to investigate.

Finally, discuss this comment by Ohnesorge:

Contemporary and postmodern Native American artists “challenge ‘majority’ visual and rhetorical constructions of the land. All of them conduct explicit imagetextual conversations with contemporary urbanization, globalization, nostalgia, and racism. In some cases they argue persuasively for decolonization of the land; in others they propose a new landscape in which the white body experiences the hardships of homelessness and exile. (Ohnesorge, 2008, para. 48)

**Part II**

Students begin their own research on the internet. They may work individually or in pairs, as by choice. Worksheet will be provided (attached). Students search for tribal information (500 tribes in America) and take notes on six with the goal of finding one that is compelling to research. Once they choose their tribe, they take brief notes as found about tribal culture, including images, history, location, rituals, known artifacts, symbols, tools, art, etc.

Students research contemporary Native American 2-D or 3-D artists. They may use any of those presented earlier or find their own. They should also be mindful of postmodern elements. Students choose four artists, note their names and complete thumbnail sketches of their work.

Using this information as prompts, students begin to combine culturally historical elements of Indian culture with contemporary elements of postmodern society. Students to consider all of the following:
Which of the artists you’ve been exposed to through research or class presented PowerPoint are you most attracted to? Why? How do you interpret what this artist is communicating? A written reflection, quick write, is expected.

What elements might you combine to pay tribute to the duality of identities an American Indian may have to equally combine to be a Native American citizen engaging in contemporary American society? Consider the challenge this merging of cultures may be.

Being as choice of medium is completely open, students must consider the artistic approach they might take to complete their tributes to this particular cultural diversity? Three dimensional? Paint? Recycled materials? Traditional materials? Mixed Media? Will the art include humor with sensitivity? What postmodern art approaches will be consciously included? Will there be historical reference or contemporary social comment included?

Part III:

Students present thumbnails and plan for conversation with instructor. A “plan” must be constructed which will include: a final thumbnail sketch, a written reflection about intent, materials, timeline, size and format, and postmodern approach. Clarity of purpose and intent to completion must be evident.

Students will complete the “Learning Target Self-Assessment” rubric (attached in the appendix). Students will also receive the unit assessment rubric, (below).

Part IV:

Work commences. Students will be all over the map in purpose and approach. This classroom strategy encourages and foster students to share their insights in their personal artistic and cultural endeavors- in new knowledge, struggles, realizations, and the like.

Critique/Closure

Students complete work, display, and prepare for class critiques. At this time, the cultures of many Indian nations will be shared, compared and contrasted. The compilation of class projects will provide ample viewpoints, positioning students to consider not just the struggles Native Americans face, but those of other marginal subcultures. Attributes of tolerance, acceptance, and value of education will be present and welcomed.

Assessment

Consider the following questions in a short write to assess understanding of the intent of the project:

Questions:
1. Who am I? What is my ethnic makeup?
2. What ethnicity do I identify most closely with?
3. If I have a dual identity (explain), what is (are) the largest conflict(s)?
4. If I don’t have a dual identity, what vicarious experience might I be concerned with for those who do?
5. Why might art be a good vehicle with which to explore culture and identity?
6. Should “others” be assimilated, acculturated, accepted or tolerated? Why?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
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<th>Satisfactory 2-3 Pts.</th>
<th>Strong 4-5 Pts.</th>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Creativity/Originality</strong></td>
<td>Student completed unoriginal thumbnails, all seemingly the same, showed no interest in exploring originality.</td>
<td>Student completed several thumbnails as assigned, copied or mimicked work of others, shows little original thought or “stretch.”</td>
<td>Student explored many ideas in thumbnails, research, made connections to previous knowledge, showed top notch problem solving skills.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support. Needs finishing touches.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
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<td><strong>Class Critiques:</strong> May include a Written Component.</td>
<td>Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow.</td>
<td>Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge.</td>
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**Materials Needed**
Varies according to individual student plan. Both teacher and student will assess approaches in logical, practical and financial matters and revise as needed.

**Recommended Reading**


Native American Cultures across the U.S. A website sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, found at [http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=347](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=347)


**Unit Plan References**


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**Worksheet: Investigations: Homage to Native Americans**

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**Worksheet: Tribe Chosen**

Notes about Culture: Images, History, Location, Rituals, Known Artifacts, Symbols, Tools, Art...
Worksheet: Native American Contemporary Artists: Name and Thumbnail

To be copied into Log/Sketchbook

1. ____________________
2. ____________________
3. ____________________

4. ____________________
5. ____________________
6. ____________________
Worksheet: Combining Historical Elements of Indian Culture with Contemporary Elements of Postmodern Society.

Consider: Which of the artists you've been exposed to wither through research or class presented PowerPoint are you most attracted to? Why? How do you interpret what this artist is communicating? Discuss.

Consider: What elements might you combine to pay homage to the duality of identities an American Indian may have to equally combine to be a Native American citizen engaging in contemporary American society? Consider the challenge this merging of cultures may be.

Consider: What artistic approach might you take to complete your homage to this particular cultural diversity? Three dimensional? Paint? Recycled materials? Traditional materials? Mixed Media? Will you include humor with sensitivity?

Four viable thumbnails, to be completed in sketch/log book, (even if to be completed as 3-D sculpture), and presented to teacher. Include a tentative step by step plan.
9. Family Trees: Community Forest

Quotes

“Nobody has ever before asked the nuclear family to live all by itself in a box the way we do. With no relatives, no support, we’ve put it in an impossible situation.” ~Margaret Mead

“Families are like fudge - mostly sweet with a few nuts.” ~Author Unknown

“I don’t have to look up my family tree, because I know that I’m the sap. ~Fred Allen”

“The thing about family disasters is that you never have to wait long before the next one puts the previous one into perspective.” ~Robert Brault,

“The family. We were a strange little band of characters trudging through life sharing diseases and toothpaste, coveting one another’s desserts, hiding shampoo, borrowing money, locking each other out of our rooms, inflicting pain and kissing to heal it in the same instant, loving, laughing, defending, and trying to figure out the common thread that bound us all together.” ~Erma Bombeck

Introduction to Unit

One day in the late nineties, while practicing for a drama production about family connectedness, I overheard several students agonizing in conversation about their step-families. I’d heard snippets of this conversation for years in classrooms, so I arbitrarily stopped class and asked them all, “How many of you still live with your biological mom and dad?” Perhaps I was naïve when astonished that only four students in the class raised their hands. This might have been the first episode signaling to me that this post modern family structure was evident in some fashion in the lives of all my kids.

The emerging postmodern family was first described in the mid seventies and it particularly identified three characteristics: “adolescent indifference to the family’s identity; instability in the lives of couples, accompanied by rapidly increasing divorce rates; and destruction of the “nest” notion of nuclear family life with the liberation of women” (Zeitlin, Megawangi, Kramer, Colletta, Babatunde, & Garman, 2005).

In the early nineties, the emerging postmodern family was called “the saturated family,” members saturated and scattered in never-ending busyness. “In addition to absorbing exposure to myriad values, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles, and personalities, family members have become embedded in a multiplicity of relationships. The technologies of social saturation (e.g. the car, telephone, television, and jet plane) have created family turmoil and a sense of fragmentation, chaos, and discontinuity” (Zeitlin, et al., 2005, para. 12).
Thus is the lived experience of children today. Most accept this chaos, either at home, or in the homes of their friends, as normal to them. Deconstructing the nature of families is enlightening and opens for personal, group and global interpretation the many and varied family cultures in which they and their friends actually live.

**Objectives**
1. Students will collaborate in creating first trees, and then a forest of families, making and acknowledging the diversity of our community. CA VAPA 4.1
2. Students will create a three-dimensional work that reflects the contemporary make up of his/her family. CA VAPA 2.6
3. Students will explore the manner in which artists have conceptualized their versions of “family.” CA VAPA 1.3

**Caveats and Sidebar Notes**
Talking about families, their construction, and their dynamics can be personal and sensitive. A discussion involving many family constructs would be beneficial, allowing students an initial understanding about the many and varied family make ups in their own community. Students will be invited to participate orally as they choose, with the hope that they will feel more comfortable as they hear diverse stories begin to emerge.

This is also a good time to discuss the meaning of art as expression, that “place” available to humans as therapeutic, healing, communicative and rewarding.

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**

**Part I**
A prefacing PowerPoint of *family tree artworks* grounds this project in conceptual thinking about the representing of different families. “Family tree art” is plentiful on the web, created by amateur as well as accomplished artists. Creating this PowerPoint is simple due to this abundance, but be sure to include art from many corners of our globe, and that exude different attitudinal stories. A discussion about the purposes of art fits here.

The second half of this PowerPoint is focuses on *symbols and metaphors*. Again, it is simple to find images of barbed wire, dark clouds, a candle... to display and talk about symbolic and metaphoric meanings. Students will find in their knowledge banks that they know about symbols and will easily put this knowledge to work on their trees.

Finally, the third part of a PowerPoint may include *narrative family paintings*, from which students can reflect again about families and symbols. This part can be a hoot: ask students what they glean from these paintings and if they’d like to be part of them. Consider using family portraits found on the web by the following artists:

Johann Heinrich Strumpff
Cornelis de Vos
Lars Rasmussen
Tonoy Mendoza
Maerten Van Heemskerck
James Brennan
There are many, many more than may be included, found through an image search of “family portrait paintings.”

Part II
Questions to consider as class discussion: What might the line up be for members of your family. Who is at the top, holding everything up? Is there a “building” of personalities or controlling members? Who is particularly “large”? “Small?” “Unnoticed or periphery?” Are there branches and who is on them? Are there members of your family who are not blood related? Where do they belong? How might you transition from one member to another? Transitions are crucial. What kind of root system are you going to include and what does it signify? Who makes the root? These questions can be infinite, but do spark a lot of inquiry by students.

When constructing these family trees, students must consider even more: How does one indicate happy, crabby, dominant, funny, quiet, depressed, sad, energetic, athletic, intelligent, hard-working, absence, annoying, youth, age, strong-willed, silly, angry... What physical symbols might one use to express these and other attributes? How might one consciously include the elements of art and principles of design, and is this important? How might this tree be unified?

Students receive graphic organizers with which to begin to outline their ideas. At this point there is so much to explore and discover, and working together in comfortable, student chosen groups, is beneficial. Adolescents discover so much about themselves and others when casual dialogue is fostered.

Straight away, students are given their cotton clotheslines. This early allotment sparks the impetus to plan ahead re: materials needed.

Part III
Students verbally and symbolically share plans with the teacher before beginning of construction.

Tree rules are provided to class:
1. All materials must be attached without using any glue, most likely to be tied or wrapped
2. All clothesline armature must be covered; no white may show upon completion.
3. Avoid tying too much “junk” onto the clothesline. Focus on symbols and metaphors in materials rather than toys and jewelry.
4. Roots must be addressed.

Part IV
Construction begins. Students may work wherever is comfortable, in groups, on the floor, etc. Little input is provided by teacher at this point.

Most likely there will be piles of “stuff” in the classroom. Encourage students to bring more, to share, and to ask the class for a specific material they can’t find at home.

As each class hour draws to a close, students can hang unfinished trees from another clothesline along a wall or in a corner, to be retrieved the following day. Clothespins work well for this.

Critique/Closure
Upon completion, students will gather together and share out their trees. This will be a required activity, although students who are inordinately sensitive about their personal narratives can abbreviate their stories upon request. Most will want to share their entire history, and will have to be restricted in time!
Class critiquing of this project is minimal. In postmodern fashion, the value of the project is in the process and personal interpretation.

Students hang all finished family trees together in designated place on campus (or in classroom.) The power of this installation is in the knowledge these students take away from the project and the reporting out: families, family cultures, backgrounds, family experience, flux, and dynamics are all so different. Students may discover that these many backgrounds are part of what creates cultural diversities and may learn tolerance and then acceptance. They also ultimately learn that these many family cultures create a forest, that forest being the community in which they co-exist, and that every family is integral to the community.

Reflective essay:

a. What is your work about?
b. What postmodern art making approaches did you use? Were they successful?
c. What postmodern theories did you consider during the planning and completion of the piece?
d. What did you try to accomplish, and did you succeed?
e. What global discoveries have you made? About community? About the meaning of art?
f. What might you personally do different next time? What would make this “project” better? How else might you construct a family tree, without the use of a rope?

Assessments

Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important venue for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

Rubric for unit assessment

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**Materials Needed**

Cotton rope, clothesline quality, length to be determined, each preferably reaching from classroom ceiling to floor.

Random ribbon, remnant cloth, rope, tinsel, rags, thread, string, yarn, twine, vines, raffia, feathers, sheet music, wrapping paper, wax paper, burlap, random fabrics, doilies, laces, wire, shoelaces, chains, belts, nylons, camouflage stuff, pieces of things, etc.

Cost should be minimal: the cost of purchasing several packages of cotton clothesline at local discount store.

**References: Recommended Reading**

References: Unit Plan and Notes

Student work done by Orland High School students, 2005-06.

Create your family tree by filling in names as best you can:
Worksheet: Tree Plan

Draw a family tree. Who is in your family?
Consider- nuclear, extended, passed on,
neighbor/close friend. . . .
Define your family as you see it..4-12 people?
Draw directly on this sheet of paper.

Then, reflect upon:
Who is where and why?
How long is each person?
What kind of personality traits does
each member have?
How do you indicate: happy,
crabby, dominant, funny quiet,
depressed, distracted, sad,
ergetic, athletic, intelligent,
hard-working, absence, annoying,
youth, age, strong-willed, a bully,
a mediator, angry, silly,..
How are you going to start?
How are you going to transition from
one to another? Will there be transitions or not?
What kinds of materials can you use
to express each person? Include
many art elements and design principles:
colors, textures, size, shapes, balance, lines. . .
How are you going to unify your
tree so we know this is one family?
What kind of root system are you
going to include, and what does it
signify? What are your family roots,
or who is the family root?

Your sculpture!!
Good or better or best?:
Include a lot of cool materials that
are unique to you and your family.
Know why you choose the ones you do.
Do NOT use toys, _________
Make your tree really sturdy. Use
little or no glue. Let no armature
rope show.
Think abstractly. Dare to be creative.
Think out of the box.
Look everywhere for ideas.

Draw roots →
10. A Wall of Others: Looking at Race

Quotes

“One day our descendants will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender instead of the unique identities of each of us as complex human beings.” Franklin Thomas

“Racism isn’t born, folks, it’s taught. I have a two-year-old son. You know what he hates? Naps! End of list.” Dennis Leary

“Racial superiority is a mere pigment of the imagination.” Author Unknown

“I am working for the time when unqualified blacks, browns, and women join the unqualified men in running our government.” Cissy Farenthold

“Racism is man’s gravest threat to man - the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.” Abraham Joshua Heschel

I swear to the Lord
I still can’t see
Why Democracy means
Everybody but me.

Langston Hughes

Introduction to Unit

Postmodernism confronts multicultural politics directly. While multicultural acceptance a foundation of postmodern theory, racism by itself encompasses an enormous portion of the pervasive negative attitudes our population holds today.

Diversity, or multiculturalism, is a consideration of many cultures, including differences in gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, socio-economic status, religion, and similar potentially segregating classifications.

Race literally refers to “the physical features commonly seen as indicating race are salient visual traits such as skin color, cranial or facial features and hair texture” Race, Wikipedia.) Racism is the belief that specific groups as defined by their race are
superior in various cultural and biological ways to others, also defined by their race. This unit looks at race and racism.

**Objectives**

1. Students will study and review principles of design, particularly emphasis, balance, and unity, among others, as they pertain ceramic, to a medium unfamiliar to many of them. CA VAPA 1.5
2. Students will understand the value and diverse interpretations when displaying art in a public venue. CA VAPA 5.3
3. Students will experiment using ceramic tools and glazes, and will become aware of the caution needed to fire clay in a kiln. CA VAPA 2.6

**Caveats and Sidebar Notes**

Approaching a unit on racism can most likely be uncomfortable for students and teacher alike. Indeed, there will be one black student in class, or one Punjabi, or one Korean, each of whom will squirm when the subject is brought up. An educator may avoid this topic, yet for that same reason it is so important: avoidance, comfort levels, guilt, defensiveness, fear…..

Students, including students of color, may initially react with the likes of the following:

“I’m not racist and I don’t discriminate.”
“What has this got to do with me?”
“Nadjeer is in class today; can we talk about something else?”
“Everyone has the same opportunities today. They just have to get with the program. Why must we harp on this subject again?”
“I’m all for equality, but everyone in America everyone should at least speak English.”

**Question:** What is the root of these all comments; aren’t they based on conversations from homes?

Before starting this unit, be familiar with “Ten Things Everyone Should Know about Race,” published by PBS as part of their programming called “RACE- The Power of an Illusion,” and found on their website (below in unit references).

While this unit as presented here focuses on race, it also envelopes much of the discussion included in previous units: “others,” ethnicity, diversity, belongingness, and the like.

**Activity and Lesson Sequence**

**Part I**

Ask students to reflect and define “race” and discuss. List all responses on a display board (blackboard.) Among other questions, one may ask:

If we were all blind, what would we know about the person standing in front of us, who we are talking to?

Is race cultural or biological? Does it have a genetic basis?

How are you different from the large majority of students in this classroom? What specifically might separate you from the others? How are you an “other”? Is everyone an “other”?

List all the clichés and metaphors you can think of that present the negative side of dark and the positive side of light: going to the “dark” side or I see the “light.”

Who is an expert on race and racism? What might characterize this person?

If people look different, are they really different? When did race start and how does it affect us today?

Exactly what do slavery and race have to do with one another?
Present project. Class is to brainstorm the many ways this project may be approached, built and presented to inform the school community about aims of the discussion and mural. Students are to convince instructor that this mural will meet the goal for which it is intended.

Part II

Students are to submit 4” thumbnails to instructor and garner approval before obtaining clay. Ideas may be gathered from magazines; this prevents them from duplicating scads of the same face. Students may also use photographs from home, or from class (cameras on cell phones are pervasive today.) For unity reasons, encourage students to consider just the face, without neck, negative space, or too much hair. They are encouraged to consider human characteristic of faces, but to also add creative and playful touches (zebra designed skin, spaghetti hair, facial gestures)

Part III

Using a four inch mat board template to measure their clay slabs, students cut their tile and hand build. They have a lot of freedom after they have their “support.” They can build, cut, stamp, or carve.

Part IV

Commence work. Individual conversations and help will be required as projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher identifies struggles that the whole class may face. After firing, they can hand paint with ceramic colors or glaze, leaving their tiles flat or glossy. They are permitted to add other materials like rope, fiber or paper.

Not all tiles need to be posted; this creates a significant lesson in workmanship, thought, and quality that one must never hesitate to include.

Critique/Closure

Students to write reflectively in response to the following topics. This write will be in their sketchbooks/logs and not formal compositions. Students will, however, be required to be attentive to the writing component of the rubric.

1. List and discuss at least three ideas we’ve talked about in class regarding the following: 1) race, 2) community, 3) working with ceramic, and 4) public art.
2. Respond to the following quote: “Colorblindness will not end racism. Pretending race doesn't exist is not the same as creating equality. Race is more than stereotypes and individual prejudice. To combat racism, we need to identify and remedy social policies and institutional practices that advantage some groups at the expense of others” (Ten Things Everyone Should Know about Race, 2003).

Assessments

Students should be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill practice in language arts. It should also be an important place for them to rethink and solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and working processes. This portion of the assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.
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<td>Writing conventions are used correctly. Structure of essay and transitions are used to enhance a meaningful composition. Defends artwork with tone, voice, and ownership. Essay shows deep thought, reflection and offers clear and connected interpretation of postmodern thought.</td>
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Materials Needed
Slides, posters, scrapbooks and/or textbooks from which to share and discuss design, emphasis, balance, and unity, among others.
Ceramic clay and basic tools. I used a B-Mix, the most “friendly” clay available to me at the time.
Magazines for image ideas.

Recommended Reading
Susan O’Halloran. Stories for an America as Extraordinary as Its Promise, found at http://susanohalloran.com/
What is Race? Listen on NPR.org, found at http://www.npr.org/templates/player/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=91436534&m=91436522
What is Race? On PBS.org, found at http://www.pbs.org/race/001_WhatIsRace/001_00-home.htm

Unit Plan References

Student work done by Orland High School students, Orland, CA, 2007-08.

About the Orland High School Mural
No visitor to the campus of Orland High School will ever question that he or she has stepped into a world of the masses: kids of many backgrounds, activities, personalities, busyness, and playfulness- a veritable cloud of mild bedlam. The wall of ceramic faces that greets him or her in the school office is another reminder of just that organized chaos that we as teachers adore.

For years we had a principal who would only allow us to display only temporary art in designated locations. No murals were permitted, no matter the quality or the goal. So we tackled this one, a touch alternative to the painted “worrisome” mural. The tactic: It was to be ceramic, located in the main office, and, though he never knew how hard those screws were going to be to remove, temporary.

The really cool part of this project was that every one of the art classes was going to be involved, which at OHS meant that every student enrolled in art was building this mural. All levels of art students were included, so I also devised a variety of teaching approaches.

I received faces with tattoos, checkerboards, scars, zebra strips. There were green, hairy, freckled, and half faces. We have Spiderman and George Bush. The best were sticking out their tongues, cross-eyed, sleeping, or simply, a nose. I want to go on and on: we have a Miss Piggy, an eyeball, a Martian and Grumpy. This wall was a gas!!

Today our mural is 10’ x 26’ and holds 133 faces. Seldom does one fail to find one that they’d never seen before. A nearby table holds a binder with all the thumbnails and artist identifications; as well we have an artist identification grid posted on the wall. The office staff is ecstatic, campus guests are mesmerized, and returning students are forever standing and grinning at the base of the wall, pointing out their own.
11. Environmental Arts: Out of the Museum and the Classroom

Quotes

[The land sculptures'] “short life-spans create a preciousness and an urgency, encouraging us to bear witness and drink in the art as much as we can, while we can, all the while knowing [they] may well be gone the next time we visit the site -- in this case Central Park.”  Christo and Jeanne Claude

“Nobody sees a flower, really, it is so small. We haven’t time - and to see takes time like to have a friend takes time.  If I could paint the flower exactly as I see it no one would see what I see because I would paint it small like the flower is small. So I said to myself - I'll paint what I see - what the flower is to me but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it - I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers. Well, I made you take time to look at what I saw and when you took time to really notice my flower you hung all your own associations with flowers on my flower and you write about my flower as if I think and see what you think and see of the flower - and I don't.”  Georgia O’Keeffe

“Be the change that you want to see in the world.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Introduction to Unit

If there was one overarching goal to art education in my classroom, it was that my students learn to see their worlds intimately and critically. This lesson aims directly at that goal.

The media, with good cause, is teeming with environmentally focused material today. Global warming, green energy, save our waters/whales, recycling and recology, emissions reductions, clear cutting of forests, off shore drilling... We are all aware of the dire straits of the earth’s health. Further exploitation of natural resources comes in the form of benign disregard, one of “unthinking neglect or concern for one’s surroundings ... such as the use of natural and human resources with no regard for future consequences” (Neperud, 1991, p. 25). Few of us are naive about the horrendous implications of the human footprint on the earth, or of the bleak future that science and biology is presenting. This objective view of pollution and ecological destruction is apparent. Neperud further notes:

If the environment is regarded as an object, as separate from us, and as something out there, one can do terrible things to it, with little feeling or sympathy. However, if we regard environment as part of an interactive process between and among humans and surroundings, we have the basis for a different set of environmental concerns. (1991, p. 28)

With Neperud’s premise in mind, the environment becomes one with us rather than a separate entity. This project requires students to step outside and see their world in a new, personal, and subjective way. The arts have the remarkable capability of creating new ways of seeing.

Few of us take urgently needed moments from our busy, distracted lives to truly look at and reflect upon the natural beauty that still exists. The connection of that particular, outdoor reflective moment consciously tied to the knowledge of its ephemeral nature may promote new awareness, divergent from the scientific, in our adolescents. Students may recognize environmental concerns as social and aesthetic concerns separate from those of hard edged scientific proofs (Neperud, 1991). An
acquaintance with this sympathetic approach toward environment may promote action. Finally, new relationships may develop environmental responsibilities (Neperud, 1991). This unit forces students to see the world in a more holistic way, promoting a sensibility of interdependence and interconnectedness of all things (Blandy and Hoffman, 1993). Twenty year olds are pounded with the same media warnings and horrendous scenarios- global warming and environmental decay, drowning polar bears and incessant hurricanes. We are schooled about green living, sustainability, and recology, yet a large number of our youth see change as hopeless. A subtle, artful, fresh, and backyard approach to sharing personal and communal environmental awareness may create an unsullied jumpstart to action.

Environmental art fits into the blueprint of postmodern study. It is not subject to an elitist venue. The art is temporal, outside (not in a museum), and it may not be purchased. These specifics disallow the manifestation of the knowledge/power paradigm. The potential power of environmental and land art available to all of human kind puts it in a most essential position in contemporary art today. In regards to art education in the classroom today, it is time students develop a socially situated and responsible view of aesthetics, become involved in developing creative, imaginative solutions to environmental problems, . . .develop a sense of empowerment to recognize, improve and reconstruct neglected environments through individual and communal actions. (Neperud, 1997, p. 14) Projects like this may just be the thing that saves us.

Objectives
1. Student will explore environmental and land art by such artists as Andy Goldsworthy and Cristo and Jean-Claude and will consider the impact of art as it exists in the outdoors. CA VAPA 1.5
2. Students will create, and photograph, their own environmental art. CA VAPA 2.6, 4.4
3. Students will write about their experiences. They will explore the personal value of creating environmental art. CA VAPA 4.5

Caveats and Sidebar Notes
This project will require some forethought in allowing students time out of class to work. Students are encouraged to work in small groups, visit several sites, collaborate and innovate. The project will also require students to use Habits of Mind (Costa and Kallick, 2000) such as thinking flexibly, posing problems, applying past knowledge to new situations, imagining, taking responsible risks, remaining open to new ideas, and finding humor in the process. What can be done, when, how long it may take, and how stable the project is- all this must be taken into consideration at the inception of the project.

Activity and Lesson Sequence
Part I
A discussion based on the notes above would be most appropriate for the beginning of this project. Noting that art is everywhere around us and that nature provides so much beauty is equally pertinent. And a discussion that we so rarely look at this natural canvas due to the “stuff” of our daily lives may spark the new considerations this unit strives toward.

A PowerPoint of that includes a smattering of the following will oblige the students to pause:
(Many of these websites have numerous links to more images that may be used. Wikipedia is a great resource for countless links.)
Andy Goldsworthy on Wikipedia-
Earth Artists-
   http://www.earthartists.org/
Washington State University: Environmental Justice Eco-Art:
   http://www.wsu.edu/~amerstu/ce/art.html
Land Art and Artists-
   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_art
The Crop Circles Connector-
Jean-Claude and Christo-
   http://www.christojeanneclaude.net/

Part II
Project guidelines are clarified and distributed:
   1. Artwork to be outside only
   2. Construction/manipulation to be done with natural, found materials only.
   (Nothing “recycled” can be used.)
   3. Artwork to be digitally photographed. This digitization may be manipulated
      in color or contrast ONLY- no fancy stuff here.
   4. Attention must be made to art elements and design principles.

Part III
   Students begin collaborative work with brainstorming sessions. Many ideas 15-
   20-25) are encouraged before any commitments are made. Visits to potential sites are
   needed. Time to reflect, imagine and grapple is also needed. Evidence of thought is
   required in presentation of thumbnails and dialogue with teacher.

Part IV
   Work commences. Individual conversations and help will be required as
   projects proceed. Occasional stop to work will be needed to direct class when teacher
   identifies struggles that the whole class may face. When artwork is completed, digital
   photographs are taken and later printed on simple computer printers.

Critique/Closure
   Photographs are displayed together in well designed layout. Students to critique
   photographs individually and as a group. Discussion will include the process of
   creating both the sculptures and photographs (challenges, discoveries, etc.), success of
   the individual pieces, success of the display as a whole, and success of the unit as a
   whole in regards to initial purpose (environmental awareness.)
   Reflective essay to be completed after critique:
   a. What is your work about?
   b. What postmodern art making approaches did you use? Were they successful?
   c. What postmodern theories did you consider during the planning and
      completion of the piece?
   d. What did you try to accomplish, and did you succeed?
   e. What discoveries have you made during the process of completing this unit?

Assessments
   Students will be writing in many venues; this essay will provide such skill
   practice in language arts. It will also be an important venue for them to rethink and
   solidify their ideas. As such, this also becomes a way of assessing their thinking and
working processes. This assessment will be graded on a rubric presented early in the presentation of unit.

During the course of the project, students will be imagining, creating, innovating, and thinking independently and interdependently. These processes should be evident in their final art piece.

**Rubric for unit assessment**

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<td>Thumbnails have strong compositions and shows evidence of reflective, strong thought.</td>
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<td>Final Project: Artwork</td>
<td>Composition and/or technical approach does not reflect attention to concept or theme. Technical attention is at odds with intent.</td>
<td>Composition shows adequate attention to concept or theme. Technical approach is adequate not to be distracting. Expression of statement is clear due to thorough details and support.</td>
<td>Artwork shows quality attention to them, composition. Technical approach is in line with theme and statement. Using multiple methods, expression of statement shows impressive depth of thought and analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation To Class: Speaking</td>
<td>Articulation regarding artwork is minimal or lacking completely.</td>
<td>Student supplies adequate information regarding theme, statement and approach to artwork.</td>
<td>Student speaks articulately about theme, statement and approach to artwork. Makes further connections.</td>
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<td>Reflective Writing At Conclusion Of Unit</td>
<td>Writing conventions are weak and distracting. No depth in thinking or interpretation. Structure is jumbled and transitions are lacking. Defense of artwork is non existent or minimal. Lack or weak understanding of postmodern attributes.</td>
<td>Writing conventions are sufficient such that meaning of essay appears. Adequate structure and transitions are used. Defense of artwork is appropriate and satisfactory. Shows thought and interpretation of postmodern principles in regards to completed artwork.</td>
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| Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV) | Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested. | Chart is completed with some effort exposing understanding of concepts as requested. | Chart is completed and shows clarity of understanding of concepts as requested. |

| Class Critiques: | Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work. | Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow. | Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge. |

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**Materials Needed**

Camera, phones with cameras, method of transferring image to a computer, printer.

Little else needs to be supplied for completion of this project, but the students will be required to be “naturally” resourceful.

**Unit Plan References**


12. The End and a Beginning: Video Voices

Quotes

“The very meaninglessness of life forces man to create his own meaning. If it can be written or thought, it can be filmed.”  
Stanley Kubrick

“I have a personal journal, but for every movie I do I have a pad and paper or a notebook. I write everything, memories ... it is important for me at this moment not to censure myself.”  
Helen Hunt

“I like the idea of making films about ostensibly absolutely nothing. I like the irrelevant, the tangential, the sidebar excursion to nowhere that suddenly becomes revelatory. That’s what all my movies are about. That and the idea that we’re in possession of certainty, truth, infallible knowledge, when actually we’re just a bunch of apes running around. My films are about people who think they’re connected to something, although they’re really not.”  
Errol Morris

“For everything which is visible is a copy of that which is hidden.”  
Gary Hill

Introduction to Unit

Video art as a medium is nothing new; Nam June Paik was experimenting with televisions in the 1960’s. By the nineties, the ease, accessibility and narrative capabilities created a widespread interest. Rarely does it promote a narrative or story; more likely one will find it open to audience interpretation based on individualistic, postmodern themes- feminism, multiculturalism, truth and reality, and the like.

This project looks at video as art installation. As installation, it requires an environment upon which projection can be made, such as walls, buildings, bill boards, and ceilings. (Budget issues negate the use of monitors in public education venues.)

While video can be used as another visual art form, like painting or sculpture, the environmental, often large scale, factor requires a normally passive viewer to be immersed in the art, requiring a participatory role in viewing and interpreting.

The intent here is NOT one of video production assignment in the traditional sense. Students may use camcorders, video cameras, cell phones, or other video equipment as may be present tomorrow, but while portable lights, mixers, gels, booms and the like may be intriguing and available, they are absolutely not necessary for this unit. This is also not job training, such as the creation of public service announcements, nor is it a study in animation. It is an experiment in manipulating the medium of video to create a statement on social, political or cultural issue. It is making use of the pervasive multi-media and multi-modality world we live in. And once again, in postmodern fashion, it is available to all to view and interpret outside of the museums.

Objectives

1. Students will explore the medium of video art as created by contemporary artists. They will explore the way video may create meaning differently than traditional 2 and 3 dimensional art.  
CA VAPA 1.6

2. Students will create their own video art thematically place in social activism.  
CA VAPA 2.3
3. Students will identify the ways in which video art is postmodern and why it may be important to today’s art world. CA VAPA 3.2

Caveats and Sidebar Notes
Expense, expense, expense. The need to borrow several (one, but up to 10) projectors may be overwhelming in an already impoverished school setting.

Gathering the wherewithal to manage this project will be another challenge. Where can this projection work and will there be an audience? How far must one project? How does one coordinate the use of multiple projectors? While this discourse on video art presents important challenges, it does not solve the many roadblocks this new medium will also present. From this point on, educators who put this unit on their radar will surely be required to do some homework. Here is simply the dare, and the justification for its validity in a contemporary, postmodern art program.

These problems also present perfectly in a postmodern education, wherein the students become the lesson, and the teacher becomes the moderator, the organizer, and the help staff. When students take their own education upon themselves, education becomes authentic and meaningful.

Activity and Lesson Sequence
Part I
Present video art in the classroom. Excellent suggestions are offered here. However, as offered on a computer screen, they are small. While most of these videos do not represent the project product, they will open creative avenues with which students may experiment.
1. The Perpetual Art Machine Video Gallery
2. Nam June Paik: Lessons from the Video Master. DVD
3. Another Tomorrow: Young Video Art from the Collection of the Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum. DVD
4. Bill Viola: I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like. DVD
   Bill Viola work is plentiful on YouTube.
5. Natalie Bookchin. Much of her work is found on YouTube.*
   “Testament is a series of collective self-portraits made up of fragments from online video diaries, or ‘vlogs.’ Chapters focus on a collectively told vignette, story, proclamation, or meditation on topics such as identity, the economy, illness, politics, the war, or work” (Bookchin, 2009).
6. Zbig Rybczynski
   “Zbig Vision Experiments” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sE_8_1dwAVI
7. Kit Fitzgerald
   “Sound View” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1A5HGknQj0
8. “Video Art Installation” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYdN8mMDLoo
9. “Her Morning Elegance” by Oren Lavie
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_HXUhsShhmY
9. “Interactive Video Installation Art: Gathering.” -
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlPAMsb9CJ4
9. “Stop Motion Rubik’s Cube
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQ8ZWMIObGE&feature=related
10. “MUTO Wall Painting Animation” by BLU
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuGaqLT-gO4
11. “Wires” by David Firth
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_z6Q_yWeUI&feature=related
12. All of Natalie Bookchin  
   “My Meds” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzFhEdht5bo  
   “Laid Off” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoWzWrsugdY  
   “I Am Not” - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8G78sFBPU_4  
14. Gary Hill. Plentiful on YouTube and Vimeo  

Part II  
In self chosen groups of two-three, students to brainstorm a video production they may be interested in composing. This pair must provide the equipment (of course unless the school has funds and equipment available for student use) and know how to complete their products. Allow students to explore video artists they’ve seen and require they unearth a new one of interest. All small groups will present to the class their proposals using story boards and thumbnails.  
Class brainstorming and discussion will commence. A search for topic, questions, availability of equipment, student interests and know-how, willingness and enthusiasm and time will all dictate the direction of the project.

Consider the following as a jumping off point:  

One video is of students interviewed.  
One video is slides of student work.  
Final video is running text- words of students documented through time.  
Each element may be provided by use of monitor or projector.  
Consider overlapping, changing fonts, sizes, switching elements between hardware, adding another element for animation, ......  
During the course of the year, during research and artmaking, interview and videotape students. These interviews will be included in the video display, so reminding students to answer the complete query will be important. Ask the following questions:  
What are you doing?  What does it mean?  
Why are you doing that as you are?  
What is the hardest part of this project?  
Why are you in an art class?  
What IS art?  
Is there a reason behind what you are creating right now?  
What would you like someone else to see in your art?  
Has art taught you anything besides how to make stuff?  
What have you done that has had to largest impact on you personally?  
Do you think art can change anything?  How?
Part III
Create manageable and integral groups, each group to provide a crucial part of completing a production. Given that many students today possess technical skills and equipment (!) beyond those of an instructor, the students truly control the success and final outcome of this unit. This is inherently postmodern venture in all aspects.

Job roles may include one of each: a script crew, a film crew, an equipment acquisition and set up, a design and display crew, a coordination (mixer) crew, a promotion and site crew, an audio specialist crew, and direction/production crew. Depending upon the vision of the final product and what students may bring to the table, more or less may be added.

Students and teacher may abandon this whole plan and build individual or small group shows, based on one of the videos found online, or, obviously, from a unique and experimental vision they have.

Part IV
Work commences and is completed.

Critique/Closure
Videos are shared. Being as this is such a new medium with which to work in a classroom, and the approach is so open to completion, so is the closure and assessment open to interpretation. Students and teachers should be working through the assessment together when creating a successful and appropriate rubric.

Students to reflect casually in their sketchbook/logs in response to the following:
1. How does working with video blend with working with traditional art media? Using art vocabulary, discuss why this is an art class project and should remain in this venue.
2. What makes a piece of video art successful? What makes it unsuccessful? Discuss.
3. What might you have done to improve yours? What would you do differently next time? Consider small changes as well as large, such as rewriting a script or revamping a theme.
4. What will your next unique video project be?

Assessments

Rubric for unit assessment

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<th>Learning Targets Met (see chart in Part IV)</th>
<th>Chart completion minimal. Shows lack of understanding of concepts as requested.</th>
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<th>Class Critiques: Includes a Written Component.</th>
<th>Student has nothing to share orally. Written critique shows no thought or reflection of work being analyzed. Makes no connections to previous discussion or work.</th>
<th>Student is attentive and offers overtures to critique. Written critique shows some thought, a connection to previous knowledge, but is obscure or shallow.</th>
<th>Student is attentive and actively participates in class critique. In class and on paper, offers insight, deep reflection, and makes interesting and pertinent connections to previous knowledge.</th>
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**Materials Needed**

The hardware- cameras, projectors, monitors, computers- are completely dependent upon what might be available to instructor and what students may provide from home. Much of this will be determined by the depth of the project as designed in process.

**Further Exploration**

Searching for simple access to video art online is a challenge still today. While names and still images are accessible, the actual video artwork is allusive. That is not to say it cannot be found with persistence and ample surfing. A most successful route was 1) artist identification (name, often found on Wikipedia) followed by a search on YouTube.
You Tube and Google Video offer a plethora of oddball videos, some artistic, some not.

A search of “moving picture artists” offers an interesting selection. A regularly updated link of video artists and their links may also be found at these addresses:

Artcyclopedia-  http://www.artcyclopedia.com/media/Video_Artist.html
Flicker- http://www.hi-beam.net/mkr/fmhome.html

*In depth inquiry into Natalie Bookchin, who inspired this unit plan, is encouraged. Several of her sites can be found:
Natalie Bookchin website: http://bookchin.net/projects/testament.html
The Intruder Game-  http://bookchin.net/intruder/
Metapet- http://metapet.net/
Bookchin’s work, shown at the Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art 2009-10, can be seen on YouTube.com: “I Am Not,” “My Meds,” “Me Dancing,” and “Laid Off.”

Video Tutorials- more than one may ever want to know
http://www.dvvideo.com/
http://www.mediacollege.com/
10. Visual and Performing Arts: Visual Arts Content Standards
Grades 9-12, Proficient

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to the Visual Arts

Students perceive and respond to works of art, objects in nature, events, and the environment. They also use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

Develop Perceptual Skills and Visual Arts Vocabulary
1.1 Identify and use the principles of design to discuss, analyze, and write about visual aspects in the environment and in works of art, including their own.
1.2 Describe the principles of design as used in works of art, focusing on dominance and subordination.

Analyze Art Elements and Principles of Design
1.3 Research and analyze the work of an artist and write about the artist's distinctive style and its contribution to the meaning of the work.
1.4 Analyze and describe how the composition of a work of art is affected by the use of a particular principle of design.

Impact of Media Choice
1.5 Analyze the material used by a given artist and describe how its use influences the meaning of the work.
1.6 Compare and contrast similar styles of works of art done in electronic media with those done with materials traditionally used in the visual arts.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts

Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.

Skills, Processes, Materials, and Tools
2.1 Solve a visual arts problem that involves the effective use of the elements of art and the principles of design.
2.2 Prepare a portfolio of original two-and three-dimensional works of art that reflects refined craftsmanship and technical skills.
2.3 Develop and refine skill in the manipulation of digital imagery (either still or video).
2.4 Review and refine observational drawing skills.

Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art
2.5 Create an expressive composition, focusing on dominance and
subordination.
2.6 Create a two or three-dimensional work of art that addresses a social issue.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts

Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

Role and Development of the Visual Arts
3.1 Identify similarities and differences in the purposes of art created in selected cultures.
3.2 Identify and describe the role and influence of new technologies on contemporary works of art.

Diversity of the Visual Arts
3.3 Identify and describe trends in the visual arts and discuss how the issues of time, place, and cultural influence are reflected in selected works of art.
3.4 Discuss the purposes of art in selected contemporary cultures.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgments About Works in the Visual Arts

Students analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art, including their own, according to the elements of art, the principles of design, and aesthetic qualities.

Derive Meaning
4.1 Articulate how personal beliefs, cultural traditions, and current social, economic, and political contexts influence the interpretation of the meaning or message in a work of art.
4.2 Compare the ways in which the meaning of a specific work of art has been affected over time because of changes in interpretation and context.

Make Informed Judgments
4.3 Formulate and support a position regarding the aesthetic value of a specific work of art and change or defend that position after considering the views of others.
4.4 Articulate the process and rationale for refining and reworking one of their own works of art.
4.5 Employ the conventions of art criticism in writing and speaking about works of art.
5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Connecting and Applying What Is Learned in the Visual Arts to Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers

Students apply what they learn in the visual arts across subject areas. They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills. They also learn about careers in and related to the visual arts.

Connections and Applications
5.1 Design an advertising campaign for a theatre or dance production held at a school, creating images that represent characters and major events in the production.
5.2 Create a work of art that communicates a cross-cultural or universal theme taken from literature or history.

Visual Literacy
5.3 Compare and contrast the ways in which different media (television, newspapers, magazines) cover the same art exhibition.

Careers and Career-Related Skills
5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the various skills of an artist, art critic, art historian, art collector, art gallery owner, and philosopher of art (aesthetcian).

Provided here are the “proficient” standards according to the Visual Arts Content Standards. The Advanced and Proficient standards may be found online at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/vamain.asp
11. Project References

1. Postmodernism for Teachers on the Run

2. The Many Venues and Movements of Postmodern Art

3. Approaches and Principles to Making Postmodern Art

Suggested study Terry Barrett’s book *Making Art: Form and Meaning*, which includes comprehensive chapters on both the traditional modernist and the postmodernist approaches to making art.
4. **Modernism, Postmodernism, and DBAE**


5. **Notes and Intents to Postmodern Curriculum**


6. **Interpreting this New Stuff**


7. Assessments for a 21st Century Art Curriculum

10. California Visual Arts Content Standards