

Instructional Unit Title: Ways of Seeing: The Power of Visual Literacy

Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project

The teacher may present the concept of street art through the work of street artists (e.g., Keith Haring) so that students can discuss the interpretation and decision making possibilities of the images/symbols used as well as debate the role of the artist (including the legal and ethical responsibilities of street artist).



The teacher may lead the students through guided discussion and brainstorming session to create a list of key social activism subject areas (e.g., environmentalism, hunger, equality) often used by street artists so that students can identify and relate to artists' interpretation of social activism (is it considered truth or opinion, and why?).

The teacher may provide examples of web sites, videos and visual resources of street art (or other street art terms such as urban art or guerrilla art) so that students can explain the artistic process utilizing the features and characteristics of this genre.

The teacher may provide a diverse selection of street art images so that students can compare and contrast and interpret the intentionality and/or purpose of the images.

The teacher may provide guiding questions (e.g., "If you were all powerful and could change one thing in the world what would it be?") so that students can uncover their truths or personal message as subject matter for their upcoming artwork.



The teacher may facilitate the creation of a KWL chart so that students can assess their current background knowledge of visual literacy to explore how street artists employ symbols and determine additional questions or ideas they want to explore to learn more about the subject.



Once the message is determined, the teacher may present additional considerations of street art-making regarding site-specific art (e.g., Christo, yarn bombing, Stock Market bull) so that students can make informed decisions when incorporating environment into their final work.



The teacher may review what constitutes a responsible and viable plan for street art installations so that students can internalize the important considerations street artists make as they finalize their projects.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: You are an urban artist who will create a "socially responsible" piece of "street art" which gives a voice to your "message of truth" and uses the surrounding environment in a unique way. Your intention is to create a piece of artwork that will broaden and/or change the perspective of your audience around a given topic (e.g., social themes, environmental issues, American youth).

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples>.