

UbD/DI Unit: Assemblage Sculpture K-12

Stage 1 - Desired Results

Established Goal(s):

Have the ability to explain and understand what an assemblage sculpture is. Articulate the personal preferences used to make their piece. Compare their piece to other assemblage artists. Articulate two artists that have approached the same subject matter but express it differently. Understand the term appropriation and explain how their artwork is inspired by...but does not copy...Also understand the term fair use. Student is capable of editing work throughout the making and is willing to self assess progress

Understanding(s):

Appropriation, composition, color and fundamentals of a wall relief sculpture.

Essential Question(s):

What do the pieces I am using say about me as a person? What meanings do the objects I am presenting have?

Knowledge

Students will know . . .

Understand how compositions work and how to manipulate their objects to give them more visual weight or importance. Articulate the meaning of the work to the group/class.

Skill

Students will be able to . . .

How to use different glues to adhere pieces to their pieces. Speak publicly about their work. Manage their different objects in an orderly way.

Stage 2 - Assessment Evidence

Performance Task(s):

Glue, arrange, paint, present, title, explain their pieces

Other Evidence:

Use appropriate vocabulary to describe compositions, color choices and general terms within the parameters of making

Stage 3-Learning Plan

Judy Onofrio, (White Woman) a sculptor from the MN index will be featured. Watch a video of her [here](#). The video is primarily about her work with bones, but then the last third shows her other assemblage work. This project needs a lot of materials. Plan early and ask fellow educators, and students to bring in items to share, and/or for themselves. Bottle caps, buttons, game pieces or puzzle pieces are good things to ask for. Often at thrift shops they have bags full of small random pieces that are sold together cheaply. Show box lids are an excellent “canvas” for this project. Have a box for each student and they can collect their objects in the box and then use the lid to make the piece.

Assemblage Sculpture

Make a sculpture using a variety of other materials

Oral assessment/History: Assess knowledge of what an assemblage sculpture is. Definition from Tate Museum: **assemblage: Art** made by assembling disparate elements often scavenged by the artist, sometimes bought specially.

Art from local MN artist: Judy Onofrio. Look at her series [here](#). Some of her work is “in the round”(stand alone and viewable on all sides), some is hung from the wall, what is generally called “relief” sculpture. Look at the images and see if you can pick out the items she has repurposed for the pieces. Her latest series is [here](#). Many items are carved but she also uses a variety of other materials. What do you think her work is saying? What about the title of the works? What do you like about them? What is something you want to know more about?

Other non MN artists to look at for references:

Louise Nevelson, a Jewish Ukrainian war refugee, came to the US and became a sculptor. See her work [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). She used objects/trash/cast offs around the city of NY and used a monochromatic (one color) treatment to highlight the work. How is her work similar to Onofrio’s? How do they both use color but with such different results? [Marisol](#), born in France to Venezuelan parents and later emigrated to America, is another artist that worked in assemblage. See her work [here](#). How does her work look at the form? What do her sculptures make you feel?

Vocabulary:

Assemblage: Art made by assembling disparate elements often scavenged by the artist, sometimes bought specially.

Relief Sculpture: relief sculpture is any work which projects *from* but which belongs *to* the wall, or other type of background surface, on which it is carved/made.

Appropriation in art and art history refers to the practice of artists using pre-existing objects or images in their art with little transformation of the original.

Common examples of fair use are reviews of the copyrighted work where only a small sample is used, works that incorporate the original to create a parody (usually a send-up of or comment on the original) and works that “transform” the original into a wholly new work

Materials:

- Thin wood, heavy cardboard, foam core or matt board for backers of relief sculpture.
- Sawtooth hangers for wood, other wire or hanging solutions for other materials. *LEAVE holes ready to hang from nails or hooks on walls or use holes to string wire or fishing line to hang. Wire, fishing wire etc.

- This is a great project to use broken game pieces, orphan game pieces, puzzle pieces, marbles, bottle caps, dice, buttons, tiny pencils, legos, beads, fake gems, costume jewelry, beach glass, dominoes, wine corks...empty that junk drawer. It is pretty much anything goes as long as it won't cut you.
- Elmer's glue or other craft glue, NOT washable glue
- [Liquid nails](#) and a [caulking gun](#) for the heavier or plastic items
- Paint; acrylic for the younger children-can just use color from pieces
- Acrylic spray paint for classes with a spray booth or where educator willing to paint

Production:

First: Choose a standard size that the students will make the work on. It will need a firm back board to support the weight. Thick cardboard can work, foamcore, matt board and wood are all good backers for this project. Show box lids are also a good "canvas" to begin with as they help contain the composition and focus it. (More akin to Nevelson work). The free form shapes are more like Onofrio. Onofrio often starts with an oval shape, so could pre cut ovals for students. Decide how it will be hung before the process of making starts. Maybe holes in the top edge of the lid to string with wire, or holes in the back that can be hung with nails. Wooden pieces, glue a sawtooth hanger on the back before works starts-remember to orient it properly to make it

Next: Assemble the materials. Ask friends, family, students, and anyone else to bring stuff in. Students can bring in specific pieces they might want to use in their piece: a toy or something else personal. Parts of Onofrio's work are hand sculpted. If there is an advanced student, give them some air dry clay for them to add to their assemblage and they can paint it when it is finished.

Most things will stick with elmer's glue. I like to make tubs of glue in reused yogurt tubs. I pour out the elmer's and let it sit a bit to dry out...not too much but enough that it thickens a bit. I find using popsicle sticks to put glue on works well. Hot glue will be necessary for plastic stuck to plastic, or if you are comfortable using a caulking gun use some liquid nails-just don't get it on the students! Have students lay out their concept, the first layer so to speak. Get that glued down. After that is dry, glue the next layer and so on. This is a project where it is helpful and necessary to stop regularly and check on progress and critique. The too much glue and little thought process will not work and just make a mess. If you have a 2-5 class, have them write a statement about the piece while they wait for it to dry; title it, list materials, tell what the piece is about, etc. The K-1's may just need a smaller piece.

If you choose an all wood project more Nevelson style have the students paint. I have often painted them myself because a flat black or white spray paint looks amazing. The [gold too](#) is incredible.

For 5th grade and up:

Do the same with all of the collecting but plan for bigger pieces and a more sturdy "canvas"/backer for the project. Have students sketch out their plans and the HS

students be in charge of sourcing some materials. Prepare backers for the project and have students lay out their design; have them plan with a theme or idea for the project. Make decisions before gluing as to what the focal point of the piece will be. Will they paint it when they are finished or will they use the color already there? Look at the Banks' level. Does Level 3 or 4 relate to their work? Are they making a social or cultural comment? Is there a woodshop in your school that could help your students make any parts of their pieces? Do a group of students want to work together on a larger piece or make a series of pieces that tackle a social, cultural or political topic?

The James A. Banks' Levels of Multiculturalism are

- 1) **The Contributions Approach: Focuses on heroes, holidays and discrete cultural elements**
- 2) **Additive Approach: Content, concepts, themes and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure**
- 3) **The Transformation Approach: The structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of diverse ethnic and cultural groups**
- 4) **The Social Action Group: Students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them.**

Critique: facilitate in class critique. Model language for students to use with one another. "This area is successful because..." "This composition makes me feel like..." "This area isn't working well for me because..." "I am not sure where to look." "This part is balanced..." What is compelling (evoking interest, attention, or admiration in a powerfully irresistible way) about this piece?

Aesthetics: What colors are "your" personal aesthetic? Onofrio's work went from colorful to all white (she was fighting cancer) then back to bright colors. What do you think made her stop using colors and focusing on bones? Which aesthetic speaks the most to you? Color or no color? Do you see a theme for each of Onofrio's pieces in her *Bliss* series? Do you find a relief sculpture more interactive than a painting? Why?

Minnesota State Standards

Grade K		Strand	Anchor Standard	Benchmark	
5.0.4.8.2	5. Visual Arts	0	4. Respond	8. Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.	2. Select and explain reasons for <i>personal preference</i> .
5.0.5.9.1	5. Visual Arts	0	5. Connect	9. Integrate knowledge and personal experiences while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic work.	1. Create <i>art</i> that tells a story about a life experience.
5.1.4.8.1	5. Visual Arts	1	4. Respond	8. Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.	1. Compare <i>artworks</i> that represent the same subject using <i>artistic foundations</i> .

5.1.4.8.2	5. Visual Arts	1	4. Respond	8. Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.	2. Classify <i>artwork</i> based on different <i>criteria</i> for preferences, including artistic foundations .
5.2.3.6.1	5. Visual Arts	2	3. Present	6. Make artistic choices in order to convey meaning through presentation.	1. Choose <i>artwork</i> based on a theme or concept for an exhibit.
5.3.2.3.1	5. Visual Arts	3	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	1. Create visual representations of places or systems that are part of everyday life using artistic foundations .
5.3.2.3.2	5. Visual Arts	3	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	2. Demonstrate safe use of studio spaces and equipment.
5.4.2.3.2	5. Visual Arts	4	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	2. Identify issues involving copying and originality in artmaking.**
5.4.2.4.1	5. Visual Arts	4	2. Create	4. Revise and complete original artistic work.	1. Revise in-process <i>artwork</i> , on the basis of insights gained through peer discussion.
5.5.2.3.1	5. Visual Arts	5	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	1. Using artistic foundations create <i>art</i> that redesigns artworks, objects, places or systems.
5.5.2.3.2	5. Visual Arts	5	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	2. Explain the <i>ethical responsibility of appropriation</i> in artmaking.**
5.6.2.2.1	5. Visual Arts	6	2. Create	2. Generate and develop original artistic ideas.	1. Elaborate upon an initial concept for art making.
5.6.2.2.2	5. Visual Arts	6	2. Create	2. Generate and develop original artistic ideas.	2. Plan art with a specific theme, concept, or idea, considering a <i>contemporary</i> or traditional <i>artistic practice</i> .
5.7.5.9.1	5. Visual Arts	7	5. Connect	9. Integrate knowledge and personal experiences while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic work.	1. Distinguish between <i>subjective</i> and <i>objective approaches</i> related to personal preferences in artwork.
5.8.2.3.1	5. Visual Arts	8	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	1. Apply visual literacy strategies to create <i>artwork</i> that communicates ideas.
5.8.2.3.2	5. Visual Arts	8	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	2. Apply ethics of <i>appropriation, fair use, creative commons, open sources, and copyright</i> to the creation of <i>artwork</i> **
5.9.2.2.1	5. Visual Arts	HS	2. Create	2. Generate and develop original artistic ideas.	1. Collectively or individually apply <i>inquiry methods</i> of observation and research to investigate an idea.
5.9.2.2.2	5. Visual Arts	HS	2. Create	2. Generate and develop original artistic ideas.	2. Explore and plan themes, ideas, concepts or styles in preparation for an artwork.
5.9.2.3.1	5. Visual Arts	HS	2. Create	3. Create original artistic work.	1. Synthesize visual literacy strategies and conceptual intent to create <i>artwork</i> for a specific purpose.

