

IN THE AIR

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Pre-Post Module **Activity**

"Creative Arts
Project"

9-12 EDUCATION MODULE



 MISSOURI
BOTANICAL
GARDEN

Correlation with Education Standards Summary

Pre-Post Module Activity “Creative Arts Project”

For a narrative description of these standards, please refer to the Teacher’s Guide.

National Standards

SOURCE: www.education-world.com/standards

NA-VA.9-12.1

NA-VA.9-12.4

NA-VA.9-12.6

NA-M.9-12.4

NA-T.9-12.4

Missouri Show-Me Standards

SOURCE: www.dese.mo.gov/standards

Performance Standards:

GOAL 1: 4, 5, 6, 8

GOAL 2: 1, 2, 5, 6

GOAL 4: 1, 2, 6

Knowledge Standards:

CA 1, 4, 5, 6

FA 1, 2, 4, 5

HPE 6

SC 8

SS 6

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IN THE AIR

Pre-Post Module Activity

OVERVIEW

Throughout history, important social issues have been brought to the attention of the public through the works of creative artists. Before beginning the module itself, students demonstrate what they know about airborne toxics through a creative medium of their choice—music, drama, poetry, art, etc. They write a paragraph explaining the thinking behind their work. The results are collected by the teacher and put aside until the module is completed. After completing the module, the students' artwork is returned to them and they modify it in light of what they have learned. As a follow up, students display and/or perform their creative endeavors for their classmates and others.

“CREATIVE ARTS PROJECT”

Recommended Grade Level:
9-12
Preparation Time:
Time needed to make copies of the Student Packet (five pages) one copy per student.
Presentation Time:
One to two class periods at both the beginning and end of the module.

GOALS

- To stimulate interest in airborne toxics by making the issue personal and creative
- To demonstrate how becoming informed about social issues may lead to active involvement in their solution
- To tie the various parts of the module together and provide a consistent conclusion

OBJECTIVES

When the module is completed, students will be able to do the following:

- Give two examples from the past of how creative arts have been used to call attention to social problems.
- Explain how their original ideas about airborne toxics did or did not change at the completion of the module.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Art supplies
- Copier
- One copy of the Student Packet (five pages) per student

PROCEDURES

1. Announce that the class will begin studying a module about a particular kind of air pollution called airborne toxics, which for some people has become a major social issue.
2. Work out a definition of social issues with the class—for example, a social issue (or problem) is a condition felt to be detrimental by certain groups who bring it to the attention of the general public by various means—protesting, lobbying, and through works of art, music, and literature.
3. Point out that those who disagree that the condition in question is detrimental (or warrants public attention) may do the same thing. For instance, the women’s suffrage movement and the Eighteenth Amendment banning alcohol produced public protests and creative art works on both sides of the question.
4. Ask class members to think of other examples of how creative arts highlight or downplay public issues, past and present.
5. Explain that the airborne toxics module will be preceded by a creative arts project that allows students to express ideas about the subject in their own imaginative ways.
6. Distribute copies of the student packet.
7. Discuss the arts and social issues examples on the students’ worksheets with the class.
8. Explain how to proceed with the project according to the instructions on the worksheet.

Art Activity

9. Allow time for students to work individually or in groups to make plans for their project.
10. Have students create the art.
11. Have students write a paragraph explaining the thinking behind their work.
12. Gather art works to keep until the module is completed.

Conclusion

13. Remind students that their creative art works will be returned at the completion of the module.

CREATIVE ARTS CONCLUSION

After completing the module, the teacher returns the students’ original creative art works. Students modify their original ideas in light of what they have learned during the module. Once done, students display or perform their works for each other, other classes, school assemblies, etc.

Pre / Post Creative Arts Project

Instructions

This project has three parts:

1. **Create a work of art about airborne toxics that reflects what you currently know about this subject.** (This is not a test, but a creative method to monitor the module's effectiveness.) You may select any of the following art forms for your project, and you may work individually or with a partner or small group.

When you have completed your artistic work, write a brief paragraph on the back of this sheet about your work and what led you to choose its theme. The project must be completed by _____. At that time, your teacher will collect your work and return it at the end of the module.

2. **When the entire module has been completed the following will occur:**
 - Your original work will be returned to you so you can examine it in light of what you have learned about airborne toxics.
 - Revise or redo your first work incorporating any changes in ideas, facts, attitudes, etc., that occurred during the module.
 - Compare/contrast your first and second works as called for below.

Describe the differences between your first and second efforts.

How do you account for the differences? If you find no differences, explain why.

3. Presentation

- Share your before-and-after creative works with class members by means of discussions, demonstrations, performances, etc.
- Produce a multimedia festival for other classes featuring an art exhibit and presentations by composers and writers.
- Take the show to a social or civic club in the community.

Airborne Toxics And The Creative Arts

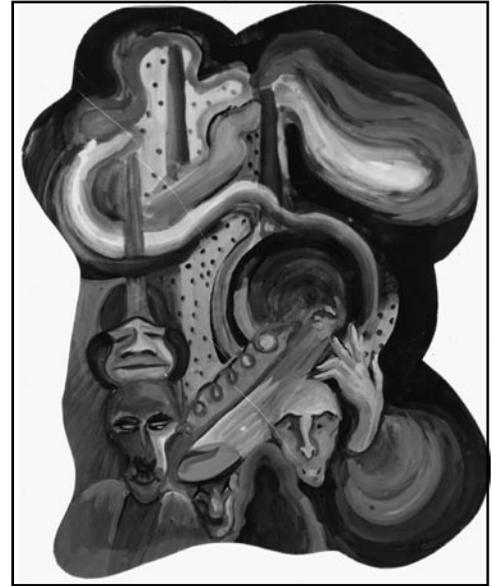
Novelists, poets, and playwrights have always been among the first to call attention to social issues and conditions, sometimes at great risk to their lives and careers. Many are well known, for example, Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the famous anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Others are more obscure. Rachele van Catinelli, used both visual art and poetry to dramatize the seriousness of smoke pollution in St. Louis, Missouri in the 1930s (see below).

"Listen to the air.
You can hear it, feel
it, smell it, taste it."

John Fire
Lame Deer,
Lakota Sioux
Medicine Man

Another lesser-known artist is, John Fire Lame Deer, a Lakota medicine man. In his book, *Lame Deer, Seeker of Vision*, he wrote about the struggles of American Indians living in a white-dominated society.



"Smoke" by Rachele von Catinelli

FROM THE St. Louis Globe-Democrat Archives, ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

MAY 28 1935

**MODERNISTIC PAINTING,
'SMOKE,' GIVEN MAYOR**

Artist Attaches Poem—
May Be Used in City
Campaign.

An extremely modernistic painting by Miss Rachele von Catinelli called "Smoke" was presented to Mayor Dickmann yesterday. Miss von Catinelli teaches art and languages at Maryville College.

The painting was one of several in the same style exhibited by Miss von Catinelli at the Public Library. The Mayor thought the picture might be used in his campaign against the smoke nuisance here.

The artist went farther than merely to give her visual impression of the smoke evil in the modern art vein. She attached to it the following interpretation, in poetic form:

In red
Rise up
Curve down
In black
Down to
The heavy ground
And choke
Despair
No breath of air
Smoke hovers
Covers
All around
Steadily
Shrill calling
Twists
Through the hazy gloom
The darkness wins
And something black
Sits
On my soul
And presses down
And grins.

Miss von Catinelli was born in Fiume and educated in Vienna.

FROM THE St. Louis Globe-Democrat Archives,
ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

The book became popular during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 70s.

In 1969, black writer, Lorraine Hansberry, wrote a play entitled *A Raisin in the Sun* about the efforts of a black family in Chicago to break away from the urban ghetto. The title was borrowed from a line in a poem by Langston Hughes, another black writer. ("What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?") The play was produced on Broadway and won the New York Drama Critics Award that year.

Composers, musicians, and singers have always been at the forefront

of social issues as well. Paul Robeson, a black singer, used his many talents to promote equality for people of color during the mid-twentieth century. White folksinger and songwriter Woody Guthrie did the same for the migrant farm workers from the Midwest during the Depression and the Dust Bowl disaster of the 1930s. The lyrics of one of his songs, *So Long, It's Been Good to Know You*, tells of the westward migrations that began as dust storms and ruined thousands of acres of farmland in Oklahoma, Kansas, and other Midwestern states.

SO LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU

Words and music by Woody Guthrie

VERSE

That dust storm hit and it hit like thunder,
An' it dusted us over, an' it dusted us under,
Blocked out the traffic, covered the sun.
An' straight for home all the people did run, Singin':

CHORUS

So long, it's been good to know yuh,
So long, it's been good to know yuh,
So long, it's been good to know yuh,
This dusty ol' dust is a-gettin' my home,
An' I've got to be driftin' along.

The visual arts often point to social issues. In the 1930s, Spanish artist Pablo Picasso painted a famous anti-war mural to protest atrocities in the small town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. Painted for the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World's Fair of 1937, the mural measures 11 x 26 feet. Mexican artist, Diego Rivera, is famous for his gigantic murals that celebrate the lives of Mexico's common people.

Cartoonists have long been active in highlighting social concerns as well as lampooning issues raised by certain groups. Examples from the mid-twentieth century are Al Capp with his comic strip, *Li'l Abner*, and Walt Kelly who drew *Pogo Possum*. Aaron McGruder, who draws the comic strip, *Boondocks*, and Gary Trudeau with his comic strip, *Doonesbury*, do much the same today.

Political cartoonists also have championed or lampooned social and political issues. For example, in St. Louis, Missouri, in the 1930s, a series of satirical cartoons on the editorial pages of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* newspaper spurred city officials and the general public to clean up the city's unhealthy air resulting from the burning of coal.

Architects create social commentary. Maya Ying Lin, a Chinese-American woman from Ohio, is the designer of the Vietnam War Memorial

in Washington, D.C. Her design, a black marble wall set into a hillside, is etched with the names of all the American servicemen and women who died or were reported missing during the Vietnam War. Lin was 21 years old when she won the memorial design competition.

I saw the Vietnam Veterans Memorial not as an object placed into the earth but as a cut in the earth that has then been polished, like a geode. Interest in the land and concern about how we are polluting the air and water of the planet are what make me want to travel back in geologic time to witness the shaping of the earth before man.

Maya Ying Lin
Quoted in *Smithsonian Magazine*, August 1996

Buildings and other architectural features frequently become the canvas on which graffiti artists make known their views. Graffiti has a long history, from crudely written protests on walls or buildings to elaborate and creative art projects created in unsightly or unused areas. An example of the latter is the city of Philadelphia where official and unofficial public art projects encourage urban neighborhoods to celebrate their cultures or air their views through "grass roots" art on walls or the sides of buildings.

Creative artists have always been active down playing or lampooning issues (or would-be issues). Probably the best-known examples today are the late night monologues of TV hosts, routines of stand-up comedians, and satirical skits on popular comedy shows. Popular music also presents many examples.

Whether highlighting or down playing an issue, creative artists have played an important role in capturing the public's attention. (For more information about the artists and projects mentioned above, see For Further Reading and Research.)

Need Help To Jump-Start Your Creative Processes?

Library and Internet Sources

The sources below are just a start. Use the library catalogs and Internet keywords to find many more sources for working with creative arts.



Music

- *How To Write A Hit Song And Sell It*, by Tommy Boyce and Melvin Powers
- *You Can Teach Yourself Song Writing*, by Larry McCabe
- *You Can Write a Song*, by Amy Appleby

Poetry

- <http://www.personal-internet-publishing.com/howtowritepoetry.html>
- <http://www.poetrymagic.co.uk/starting.html>

Short Story

- *Writing the Short Story: A Hands-On Program* by Jack M. Bickman
- *Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Short Stories* by Margaret Lucke

Drawing

- <http://www.art-wow.com/HTML/drawing.html>

Cartooning

- <http://members.ozemail.com.au/~denyss/lesson.htm#process>
- *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Cartooning but Were Afraid to Draw*, by Christopher Hart
- *Graphic Storytelling*, by Will Eisner

Poster Design

- <http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/infolit/poster.htm>

For Further Reading and Research (Pre/Post Activity)

Conveying Social Messages through Art and Music

- Al Capp: Comic strip cartoonist (Li'l Abner)
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA97/price/comic.htm>
- Woody Guthrie: Songwriter and performer
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wwghhtml/wwgessay.html>.

- Lorraine Hansberry: Playwright
<http://www.accd.edu/sac/english/bailey/hansberr.htm>
- Langston Hughes: Poet
<http://www.poets.org/poets/poets.cfm?prmlID=84>
- Book: Walker, Alice. *Langston Hughes: American Poet*. HarperCollins Juvenile Books, 2001
- Walt Kelly: Comic strip cartoonist
<http://www.moviepoopshoot.com/comics101/28.html>
- John Fire Lane Deer, Lakota Sioux Medicine Man
<http://www.ewebtribe.com/NACulture/articles/amindianquote.htm>
Lane Deer, John, and Erdoes, Richard. *Lame Deer Seeker of Visions*. Touchstone Books, 1973.
- Maya Ying Lin: Designer of the Vietnam Wall Memorial in Washington.
Howe, Robert F. "Monumental Achievement." *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 2002. The entire article can be found at the following website: www.smithsonianmag.si.edu/smithsonian/issues02/nov02/pdf/smithsonian_november_2002_monumental_achievement.pdf
- Video: *Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision*. Directed by Freida Lee Mock, 2000
- Book: Lin, Maya Ling, *Boundaries*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.
- Aaron McGruder: Comic strip cartoonist (*Boondocks*)
<http://www.theavclub.com/avclub3536/avfeature3536.html>
- Book: McGruder, Aaron. *The Boondocks*. Andrews McMeel Publishers, 2000.
- Pablo Picasso: Painter http://www.aestheticrealism.org/GUERNICA_dk.htm.
- Diego Rivera: Muralist <http://www.riveramural.com/rivera/mural/artinaction.html>

Graffiti and Public Art

- <http://www.public.asu.edu/~kadams/PoliticalGraffiti.html>
- <http://www.graffiti.org/>
- <http://mitglied.lycos.de/graffitiforschung/ArtGraffiti.html>

