

## **Common Core Lesson: Exploring Contemporary Art**

**Grade Level:** 4th - 8th grade

**Subject:** Visual Arts

**Objective:** Students will be able to define and explain contemporary art, identify different materials and techniques used in contemporary art, analyze and discuss examples of contemporary artworks, and create their own contemporary art piece using various materials and techniques.

### **Common Core Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### **Materials:**

Examples of contemporary artworks (printouts, digital images, or books)

Chart paper or whiteboard

Writing materials

Art supplies (paint, clay, recycled materials, plastic, glass, digital tools, etc.)

Mixed media materials (paints, markers, photographs, digital elements, etc.)

**Procedure:**

**Introduction (10 minutes)**

Begin by asking students if they have heard the term "contemporary art" and what they think it means.

Define contemporary art as art made by artists who are alive today, using a wide range of materials and techniques.

Show examples of contemporary artworks and discuss their characteristics, materials used, and the artists' intentions.

**Read and Discuss (15 minutes)**

Provide students with a text or article about contemporary art. See resources below for recommendations.

Have students read the text individually or in pairs and highlight key details and examples.

Discuss the main ideas and examples from the text, focusing on the diversity of materials and techniques used in contemporary art.

**Analyze and Reflect (15 minutes)**

Display examples of contemporary artworks and engage students in a group discussion.

Ask students to analyze the artworks, considering the materials used, the techniques employed, and the messages or ideas conveyed.

Encourage students to express their opinions, ask questions, and make connections between the artworks and the text.

**Art Creation (25 minutes)**

Explain to students that they will now have the opportunity to create their own contemporary art piece.

Provide a variety of art supplies, including traditional materials (paint, clay) and non-traditional materials (recycled materials, plastic, glass, etc.).

Encourage students to experiment with different materials and techniques to express their ideas and creativity.

Remind them to think about the messages or concepts they want to convey through their artwork.

### **Gallery Walk and Presentation (10 minutes)**

Arrange a gallery walk where students can display their finished artworks.

Have students walk around the gallery, observing and appreciating their classmates' creations.

Invite students to share their artwork with the class, explaining the materials, techniques, and ideas behind their pieces.

### **Reflection and Writing (10 minutes)**

Ask students to reflect on their experience of creating contemporary art.

Provide writing materials and have students write a paragraph or short essay discussing the materials and techniques they used, the messages or concepts they aimed to convey, and their overall thoughts on contemporary art.

### **Resources:**

Book: "Art Today" by Amy Dempsey - "Art Today" is a visually engaging book that introduces contemporary art to young readers. It features contemporary artists and their works, explaining different materials and techniques used in contemporary art. The book is designed to be accessible and informative for students in the specified age group.

Book: "Art That Changed the World: Transformative Art Movements and the Paintings That Inspired Them" by DK - This book explores significant art movements, including contemporary art, and the artworks that define them. It provides explanations of contemporary art concepts and showcases key artists and their works. It's a suitable resource for students interested in understanding contemporary art in the context of art movements.

Book: "The Art Book for Children" by Phaidon Editors - This book introduces contemporary artists and their works in a way that is accessible to young readers. It



encourages them to think critically about contemporary art and offers explanations of different materials and techniques used by contemporary artists.

**Extensions:**

Invite local contemporary artists to visit the classroom or arrange a virtual artist talk to provide insights into their creative processes. Email [hello@cultivategrandrapids.org](mailto:hello@cultivategrandrapids.org) for recommendations or guidance.

Research and discuss famous contemporary artists and their significant contributions to the art world.

Collaborate on a class art project that combines different materials and techniques, showcasing the diversity of contemporary art.

Visit a local art gallery or museum featuring contemporary art exhibitions.

Note: The lesson duration can be adjusted based on the complexity of the artworks created and the depth of discussions.