

Interesting, But Is It Art?

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Overview:

I teach fine arts at Pittsburgh Middle Gifted Center to seventh and eighth graders. Pittsburgh Middle gifted center provides gifted education to students in grades six, seven and eight who live within the School District of Pittsburgh. Students come to the center one-day a week from public, private and parochial schools.

Pittsburgh Middle Gifted Center offer courses in fine arts, language art, science and technology and mathematics. The seventh and eighth grade students select one course in each of the four categories. The teacher develops the courses. There are no textbooks.

I intend to offer "Interesting, but Is It Art?" in the second semester of the 2001 -2 school year. I shall draw on the body of knowledge acquired in the seminar, "The Twenties, (The Lost Generation)" led by Dr. Alan Kennedy. In particular, I shall focus on the effect World War I had on art.

"The Twenties (The Lost Generation) focused on the writers of the "lost generation" and referred to the writers of the "Beat generation". Both generations "have a relationship to a World War as a defining moment.". We read literature written during and after World War I. We discussed the impact the War had on the writers. We discussed how the lost generation influenced the beat generation.

According to Fussell, "war is always ironic because it is always worse than anticipated." A deep sense of irony is evident in the writings of the "Lost Generation". We discussed the ironic attitude of the twentieth century. We questioned, "Is the ironic attitude of the twentieth century directly related to the World Wars?"

In Fine Arts, we will study the impact World War I had on the visual arts. The creative explosion in the literature of the time is also evident in the art on the time. The ironic attitude of the "lost generation" is also evident in the Dadaist movement. The Dadaist movement of the Twenties is

echoed in the post World War II pre pop artist. By examining Dada we will learn how World War I influenced the art of the times. Duchamp, co-founder of the Dadaist movement, stands out as the most influential artist of the Dada movement. His art and ideas, will be the focus. Duchamp's influence on the Post World War II Pre-Pop artists is evident in the works of Jasper John and Robert Rauschenberg. After studying the works of these artists, the students will be challenged to design and construct a piece of art that speaks of their generation. The work will be in the manner of Duchamp, Johns or Rauschenberg. The concept will be contemporary. The artwork will be constructed from found objects.

Although Pittsburgh Middle Gifted Center is a special program, this course could be used in a visual arts class in a comprehensive middle school.

Rational

What teaching experiences prompted this me to write this curriculum?

Last year, Lynn Marsico and I took our students to the Carnegie International. The exhibition was controversial. One of the pieces in the exhibit had made the headlines. It represented the Madonna surrounded by elephant dung; it was with a great deal of trepidation that we took our students to the exhibit. We spoke to the docents before hand to express our concerns about the public's reaction to some of the pieces. They assured us we were not alone in our concerns. We carefully planned our path through the controversial exhibit. Upon viewing the exhibit, the students did not seem phased by the pieces in question. They congregated around the fun pieces. When asked about the controversial pieces, I got a "whatever" response. The supposed shock was lost on seventh and eighth graders.

The class met the following Friday. We discussed the field trip. We went over the exhibit piece by piece. The favorite piece was a whimsical sculpture of found objects by Nahum Tevet. The artist had asked the permission of the museum staff to use whatever objects the artist could find in their offices to build a sculpture. It consisted of matches, pens, Midol, plants and the very ladder the artist had used to build it. The sculpture filled the room broke through a hole in the gallery wall, continued into the adjoining gallery until it touched the floor.

The students were impressed. They wanted to try their own version of a found object sculpture. We rummaged through the cabinets in the in the stockroom and found toothpicks and craft sticks and beads. The students seemed to have an unending supply of candy and gum papers in their pockets and bags. I insisted that the sculpture be at least 18 inches high. I didn't expect anybody's piece to reach the ceiling or to break into the adjoining classroom. There was an enthusiastic start to this project. After the sculpture reached a height of 6 inches the students started to comment on the perseverance of Nahum Tavet. How could the artist have built such and immense piece in such a short time?

During the time the students spent working on the found art sculpture there was a spirit of fun and exuberance in the room. Some of the students chose to work figuratively but most were non-representational. The students enjoyed the project, but questioned, "Is it art?"

The fieldtrip to the International dramatized the need to study abstract and non-objective art. The student's questions were difficult to address. "Why do people get a million dollars for scribble scrabble?" "Why don't we get a million dollars for doing the same stuff?"

Gerald Brommer, in "Discovering Art History, A Guide for Teachers", states "Students should develop an attitude of openness to new forms of art expression. Students should not make judgements based on ignorance but make them after study and analysis. Students should also realize that their likes and dislikes will have a tendency to change in direct proportion to the amount of art they study and the number of paintings and sculpture they look at."

What is the purpose of this curriculum?

In order to address the students questions, this curriculum will introduce the students to the art and literature between the Wars then compare and contrast the art and literature of the twenties with the art and literature that came after the Wars. The focus of the comparison will be the work of the artist Marcel Duchamp compared to the work of the artists Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. The impact the World Wars had on both art and literature will be examined and discussed.

How will this be accomplished?

The curriculum will investigate how an historical event, World War I, influenced Modern Art by examining Dada, and the art of one of Dada's co founders, Marcel Duchamp. It will discuss the fact that Dada was a movement of ideas not only an art movement. The lessons will incorporate some of the literature of the times. The students will understand the extent of Marcel Duchamp's influence in the art world thus the influence of World War I on art. The students will create art in the manner of Duchamp that is specific to our time and circumstances.

Speakers, field trips and videos will initiate discussions of the events of the Second World War. Duchamp influenced the post World War II artists. This influence will be investigated by studying the works of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg.

What are the challenges?

This curriculum will present some challenges. I teach seventh and eighth graders. They are discovering realistic art. They are fascinated with representation. Before this age level it didn't matter if something looked "real": in middle school it matters a great deal. They want to learn how to draw in perspective. They are interested in drawing the human form in motion. They want to know how to foreshorten. They are very interested in technique. Jackson Pollack is a hard sell to most of my students. In part it is their age. Developmentally they have reached the age where it is important for them to learn how to draw and paint realistically. There is a sense of accomplishment and pride when this is learned. The ability to draw an accurate, representational

drawing is a magic door that is opened. Students who have that ability gain prestige. Art has many big questions. The seventh and eighth graders are struggling with; "Does art have to be representational?" Drawing realistically is a rite of passage. Modern art revisits childhood. Middle school children are attempting to leave the things of childhood behind. The challenge will be to give the students permission to play with ideas. The students must accept the idea that art can be fanciful and poignant without being representational.

How will the insights gained in the seminar, The Lost Generation, be reflected in the courses I teach at the Gifted Center?

At the first meeting of the seminar, Dr. Kennedy presented Fussell's theory that we are in a century of war. The seminar, "Lost Generation," discussed why the horrific events in the First World War changed the attitude of the twentieth century. The War to End All Wars left a profound mark on the people who survived it. It was immeasurably worse than anyone anticipated. The ancestors of World War I are still coming to grips with it. The readings helped me to understand how those who lived through the war dealt with the irony. Some addressed it; many refused to speak the unspeakable. Spoken or unspoken, it still influences how we deal with day to day life. What was presumed to be gallant, precise military action was a senseless bloody debacle. Artists and writers were the first to anticipate then try to stop the war.

The seminar, "Lost Generation", read and discussed excerpts from Thomas Hardy, Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, Robert Graves, Goodbye to All That, Earnest Hemmingway, The Sun Also Rises and Farewell to Arms, Hemingway, T.S Eliot, The Wasteland, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Bernice Bobs her Hair, The Diamond as Big as the Ritz, The Great Gatsby, Vera Britton, The Testament of Youth, Claude MacKay, Home to Harlem, and selections from Langston Hughes.

The insights gained in the seminar, The Lost Generation, will enable me to make connections between the literature and the arts of the period. Great strides were made in literature and the arts during the great burst of creativity that occurred between the Wars. The course, "Interesting but Is It Art?" will attempt to show how our attitudes towards the fine arts have been influenced by WWI. The students will relate various works from the visual arts to the historical and cultural context within which they were created. (Visual Arts Content Standard #4)

Did Art Education experience a change in philosophy?

Yes, it did experience a remarkable change in philosophy. Scholastic Arts Lesson plan packs from the 1920's consist of black line drawings for the students to color, silhouettes for the students to cut out of black paper and designs to copy. The packs are divided into activities for boys and activities more suited to girls. Laura Chapman, in her book, Approaches to Art in Education, discusses historical concerns and contemporary practices. "1920-40: the progressive movement ART AS SELF-EXPRESSION. Prior to the early 1920's, children's art was widely regarded as clumsy and immature version of adult art. Adult art, in turn was valued if it echoed the great achievements of the old masters. Both of these concepts were challenged in the decades

following the First World War." After the War students were given freedom to experiment and the opportunity to use their imagination.

In conclusion:

The seminar, The Lost Generation, focused on the writers of the Lost Generation and the Beat Generation. "Both of these generations have a relationship to a World War as a defining moment." The seminar included "related developments in other arts, especially music and painting." The curriculum "Interesting, But is It Art?" deals with the sculpture and painting produced during this time period. It examines the impact the Wars had on the artist and the artwork they produced as a direct result of the wars.

Dada protested the suffering and carnage of the First World War by questioning the existence of art. Marcel Duchamp, famous for "Nude Descending the Staircase", invented an art form he called "readymades". His most notorious was a urinal that Duchamp titled "Fountain". Duchamp attempted to shock the art world. He did. Duchamp's contemptuous acts were fueled by disdain for the World War I. He opened the door to art of ideas and protest. Twentieth-first century artists are still exploring the ideas of Marcel Duchamp.

In the fifties, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg revisited Dada. The result was "Pre Pop Art". Jasper Johns draws from classical sources. Robert Rauschenberg is considered a romantic. Rauschenberg invented an art form similar to Duchamp's "Ready-mades". He called his sculptures "Combines". The use of found objects is very evident in Modern and Contemporary art.

The knowledge gained in the seminar will enable me to present the lessons from a much wider base of information and a deeper sense of the effect world war has had on our culture.

Objectives:

The seventh and eighth students will compare and contrast the works of Marcel Duchamp to the works of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. The students will relate the artwork of Marcel Duchamp to the historical and cultural context within which it was created. The students will relate the artworks of the Pre-pop artists of the fifties, James Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, to the artwork of Marcel Duchamp. The students will discuss how the ideas of Marcel Duchamp influenced the Pre-pop artist, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. We will look at the art of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg to see if there is a common thread. Students will question the fascination with the machine, rebellion against tradition, and the disenchantment with materialism.

After the shock of the subject matter used in Marcel Duchamp's work wore off the pieces sold like hot cakes. What caused this change in attitude? Are there contemporary examples of this phenomenon?

The students will produce and exhibit work created in the manner of Marcel Duchamp, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg and describe the meaning their work has for them.

Strategies: The Presentation of Art and Literature through slides, prints, videos, web sites, poems, trips, and activities

Strategies to present The Armory Show:

Historical Information

"**Armory Show** this was the first large exhibition of modern art in America. It was held in the 69th Regiment Armory building in New York City in 1913. Although the public and press soundly criticized the show, it had a great impact on American artist. The works of modern European artists influenced them. Its major organizers were American painters Walt Kuhn (1877-1949) and Arthur B. Davies (1862-1928), along with the painter-critic Walter Pach. Among the art exhibited were examples of Symbolism, Impressionism, postimpressionism, Neo-Impressionism and Cubism.

Among those artist whose work was seen in the US for the first time were Wassily Kandinsky (Russian, 1866-1944) Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881, 1973), and Marcel Duchamp (French, 1887-1968)" <http://www.arlex.com;ArtLex/a/armoryshow.html> This web site shows examples of some of the art that was exhibited in the show.

Visuals

The web site, <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~jcont.html> includes photographs of "The Armory Show, Interior", "The *Others* group at William Carlos Williams's house, April 1916", "Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2" (1912) and Marcel Duchamp, "Fountain (1917).

Books

The Time-Life Book, The World of Marcel Duchamp, has a chapter on the Armory Show. It includes newspaper articles and cartoons.

The students will examine newspaper articles that ridiculed the show. They will read reviews of critics who panned the show. The class will discuss why the public was shocked. We will attempt to list other examples of strong negative public reaction to an event. We will ask if time has softened or changed the public opinion of such events. We will ask, " Why have opinions changed about the art exhibited in the Armory Show? Do the students foresee such an event occurring in the future? If so what might cause such a reaction?

Field Trips

Carnegie Museum offers a tour of the art gallery that includes art produced during this time period.

Strategies to present The First World War

Historical Information

Videos

Viewing video clips from Peter Jennings' video, The Century: America's Time will set the tone. It is available through ABC News/History channel. Companion books are available. The Century: America's Time and The Century: America's Time for Young People.

The WQED video, "Letters from the Front" is poignant and heart wrenching. It could be paired with the reading of war poems. The students could reflect on the introduction the unit by writing and illustrating a poem. The U.S. History Video, "The Great War," presents the World War I from an historical perspective. The video, "Cartoons Go to War", "Provides a fascinating look at the culture, politics, and ethnic bias of wartime America as depicted in wartime cartoons." It is available through A&E.

Field Trips and Speakers

Other possible resources are speakers from **Generations Together**, and **The History and Landmarks Society**. **Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall** has a permanent exhibit. Another contact is the **Veterans of Foreign Wars**. Students' relatives and friends are often great sources of information,

"War Stories" museum exhibit on war correspondents at the Newseum in Arlington VA. The exhibit will be at the Newseum until September 30,2001.

Strategies to present Dada and Marcel Duchamp

Historical Information

The Time Life Book, The World of Marcel Duchamp, is an indispensable resource for the teacher. The birth of Dada in Zurich, Switzerland in 1916 was in response to the First World War. Dada was an anti-art movement born out of disgust and disillusionment at the horrors of the War. Dada is a nonsense word. It had a no nonsense purpose. Its purpose was to protest World War I.

Carol Strickland, in The Annotated Mona Lisa, describes Marcel Duchamp as "one of the most influential figures in modern art. A prime mover in both Dada and Surrealism, he also inspired diverse movements from Pop to conceptualism. Duchamp became a legend with out actually producing much art. Although his "Nude Descending a Staircase" was notorious, Duchamp abandoned painting at the height of his celebrity. "I was interested in ideas, not merely in visual products," he said. "I wanted to put painting once again in the service of the mind." Page 148

Slides and Prints

Davis Publications has a slide set available that includes the works of Marcel Duchamp. USC slide set number SB602025 Slide Set Title: Dadaism, Set of 25 Slides w/Slide Guide

Magazines

"Working With Ideas Marcel Duchamp" Scholastic Arts Magazine, February 1999, is an excellent way to present Marcel Duchamp to middle school students. The entire issue is devoted to Marcel Duchamp. It gives biographical information. It begins each section with a quote. There are photographs of Marcel Duchamp and his work. It compares Duchamp to Robert Gober. There is an interview with an eighteen-year-old young woman who works in the manner of Marcel Duchamp. It concludes with an activity, "Creating Art that Startles." Back issues of Scholastic Arts and Art and Man document Duchamp's influence on contemporary art. Louise Nevelson. (March 1995 page 10) refers to Duchamp as a source of inspiration. The article titled "Working With Found Objects: the artist who has transformed ordinary objects into works of art." Introduces the students to Duchamp's "Ready-mades" with an illustration and description of "Bicycle Wheel". The article

states, "With these sculptures Duchamp extended the concept of art, demonstrating that the artistic creation does not have to conform to established rules." Roy Lichtenstein, "Working with Comic Art". Art & Man (April/May 1984) compare L.H.O.O.Q. with the contemporary artist, Morisot and the 18th century artist, William Hogarth in the article "Three comic Artists".

List titles of current hit songs. Find objects that have a connection to the title. It is more fun to strive for a not so obvious connection.

Strategies to present World War II

Historical Information

Videos

There are many popular movies about World War II. "Tora, Tora, Tora", "Shindler's List", "Saving Private Ryan" and "The Longest Day" are part of popular culture. They claim to be historically correct. "Pearl Harbor" has just been released.

Books

Karen MacPherson reviewed two children's books about World War II in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette Tuesday May 22, 2001. In her review, "WWII books bring home message of Memorial Day for school-age readers", she recommends Thomas Allen's book "Remember Pearl Harbor" as an "even handed approach that enhances the drama of the Pearl Harbor story while underlining for young readers the terrible cost of war." She comments, "Historian Stephen E. Ambrose uses photographs, maps and "quick facts" to help bring alive World War II in "The Good Fight". MacPherson adds "but the main strength of "The Good Fight" lies in Ambrose's talent for presenting major players, battles and other events of World War II in a concise but interesting way." Both books are new and written for the young reader.

Tom Brokaw's books, "The Greatest Generation" and "The Greatest Generation Speaks" recount stories of the Depression and World War II in the words of those that endured and survived. His

latest book, Memoirs, is a compellation of letters. The proceeds will go to the establishment of a web site so those veterans can contact each other and document their stories.

Internet

The Internet offers a way to obtain military records. Included in the appendixes is the URL for Master Index of Army Records, Navy Service Records

Strategies to introduce the prepop artists Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg

Historical Information

After World War II, two prepop artists revisited Dada. Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg created with found objects. The work led to the Pop artist of the sixties. Their styles were opposite yet they collaborated.

Jasper Johns

Introduce Jasper Johns with a slide presentation of his work. Note his classical approach to his compositions. Carol Strickand, The Annotated Mona Lisa, (page 173) states "for Johns, as for Duchamp art was an intellectual exercise. During the 50's and 60's he chose familiar two-dimensional objects like flags, targets and maps as subjects, "things the mind already knows," he said which "gave me room to work on another level."

Robert Rauschenberg

Introduce Robert Rauschenberg with a slide presentation of his work. Compare his romantic style to the classical compositions of Jasper Johns. "If art isn't a surprise," Rauschenberg has said, "it's nothing." (The Annotated Mona Lisa, Carol Strickland page 172)

Carnegie Museum has an interesting work by Robert Rauschenberg.

Classroom Lessons

Introduction

History through Art The Twentieth Century 1900-Present: The Video and accompanying Teacher's Guide written by Dr. Martin Engel Professor of History and Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University is an excellent overview of twentieth century art. I would certainly suggest that the teacher preview the video to see if it is appropriate for their students.

Lesson 1

What was the Armory Show?

Grolier Encyclopedia states: " The Armory Show is the popular name for the International Exposition of Modern Art that took place at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York City from Feb. 17 to March 15, 1913. About 25 American Artists, primarily from the Ashcan and Steglitz groups instigated the exhibition, which afforded the American public its first look at European modernist art.

Among the chief organizers were Arthur B Davies and Walter Pach."

The students will learn about the Armory Show viewing slides of some of the art exhibited in the show and then reading some of the reviews. Gerald Brommer states that many of the critics who panned the Armory Show got fired. As a consequence many critics hesitated to put themselves out on a limb over any unusual modern art. This led to an anything goes approach that was not always accurate or fair. The students will be asked for examples of "the emperors" new clothes behavior

"The New York Armory Show of 1913 was the first large and widely publicized exhibition of modern art ever held in America. The new styles of art demonstrated that the artist's creative energy could turn inward to the subconscious, explore pure visual form and structure and transform our sense of time, space, and motion. It was soon obvious to many scholars, artists, and teachers that art could no longer be denied exclusively in terms of skillful representation, Renaissance perspective, and classical proportions. By 1920, alert art teachers were aware that nothing short of an artistic revolution had occurred in Europe and they could see its growing influence on American artists." Page 11 Approaches to Art in Education

Lesson 2

"What do you know about the First World War?"

The objective of Lesson 2 Part 1 is: the students will discuss World War I by recalling information that they have acquired through family discussion and by viewing excerpts from the video "The Century-America's Time".

To set the mood for the class, and to give all the students a basis for discussion we will view excerpts from "The Century-America's Time" (boxed Set) (1998), Peter Jennings, et al. There is a companion book for adults and one for young adults. Since WWI is taught in high school, many of the students will know only what they have heard from relatives and what they have watched on television. When I mentioned WWI to my classes as a way to get a sense of what they know about the First and Second World Wars, I was surprised to learn that many of students have ongoing discussions about WWI and WWII with their families. When I asked the students to tell me what they know about WWI. They replied "War stories! I am so bored with war stories." Nonetheless when pressed to go around the room and share a war story most had a story or two to tell that a relative had told to them. The student's war stories recount the World War II, Korea and Vietnam. As the discussion got under way most of the students were eager to add

information and retell the war stories. A more formal approach would be to ask everyone in the class to write down three things that they know or think they know about World War I or World War II then share it with the class. The student could develop a list five things that appear to be common to "war". The purpose of the sheet will be to see what information is available through their family about World War I (and World War II.) Families are often a tremendous resource of artifacts and information.

The objective of part two of **Lesson 2 Part 2** is the students will become aware of the personal tragedy of war by reading war poems and viewing examples of war art.

"An Usborne Introduction, Understanding Modern Art" by Bohm-Duchen & Cook, divides the study of Modern art into themes. The opening statement in the chapter "War" states: " Although wars have always caused, panic fear and destruction, most works of art before the 19th century showed only their glorious side. This is because the art was commissioned by the ruling powers, such as kings or generals who used it to celebrate victory, encourage patriotism, and reinforce their power. These "official images are still produced in the twentieth century. However the more memorable images tend to be the unofficial ones. Because these usually put a personal point of view, and represent no vested interest, they tend to give a truer view, if grimmer view of war." Students should be aware of the rebellious spirit that was surfacing in the art world in the 19th century as they have studied the Impressionist and post Impressionist painters. The rebellious attitude turned to outrage and disgust with the slaughter that occurred in the First World War. "Understanding Modern Art"(pages 24 -25) suggests the following war art for further discussion: Percy Wyndham Lewis: "A Battery Shelled". 1919. Oil on canvas. Imperial War Museum, London, England. There is definite difference in the way officers and ordinary soldiers are treated in the painting. Pablo Picasso: Guernica. 1937. Oil on canvas. Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain. Wassily Kandinsky: Cossacks 1910-11. Tat Gallery, London, England, Stanley Spencer: Travois Arriving with Wounded at Dressing Station At Smol, Macedonia, 1919. Imperial War Museum, London, England. David Alfaro Siqueiros: Echo o a Scream. 1937. MOMA, New York, USA. Paul Nash: Dead Sea. 1940-1. Tate Gallery, London England. Mark Gertler: The Merry-Go-Round. 1916. Tate Gallery, London, England. "An Usborne Introduction, Understanding Modern Art" "War" (pages 24-25) gives short, concise information. It is a good place to start the discussion of war art. It discusses class in regard to officers and the ordinary soldier, a change in attitude towards machines and the symbolism used "Guernica" Any one of these points could be explored in future lessons.

In the seminar, "Lost Generation we read the war poets, Wilfred Owen, Isaac Rosenberg, Siegfried Sassoon and Rupert Brooke. The students will read "The Soldier" by Rupert Brooke because it is famous. They may recognize it. The sorrow is evident in the war poems. The irony of war is too real.

Lesson 3:

"Who is Marcel Duchamp?" (Two classes)

Marcel Duchamp will be introduced to the class by a slide presentation of his work, and by reading "Working with Ideas, Marcel Duchamp". (Scholastic Art February, 1999) *The Art of Assemblage* correlated with slides eav 1974 educational audio visual Inc., New York 10570 introduces assemblage by viewing examples of art work produced by various artists including Duchamp, Rauschenberg, Man Ray, Marisol and Cornell.

Seventh and eighth grade students love to argue the point, "Interesting, but is it art?" They balk at the idea that modern and contemporary art is really art. Marcel Duchamp presented the question with ready-mades. Duchamp made fun of boorish rules and regulations that determined what was acceptable as art. His disenchantment with organized art groups began before the First World War. His rebellion intensified as a reaction to the War.

Marcel Duchamp co-founded the Dadaist movement in the twenties. When Marcel Duchamp drew a mustache on a print of the Mona Lisa he showed a profound contempt for tradition. The contempt is the result of Marcel Duchamp's bitter disillusionment over the carnage of the First World War. Dada was short lived. Ironically the Dada anti-art that so shocked the public and artist alike became sought after, highly valued art in a few short years. When anti-art became art, Duchamp quit making it. Jasper Johns revisited Dada in the fifties. He chose to work with found objects. His work with everyday objects sprung from Duchamp's *Ready-mades* and led the way to the sixty's Pop Art. The art form called assemblage. It is found in Contemporary art. **Lesson 4 Random**

The name "Dada" was a picked randomly from the dictionary. It means "hobbyhorse". The students can experiment with "random poetry" by creating a stack of "word cards" then tossing them into the air. Write the words as they fall. They can also explore the idea of random in their artwork. The students will create a random design of letters and numbers. When the class is seated in the beginning of the period the teacher will toss a handful of letters and numbers into the air and allow them to flutter to the floor. This will open the discussion as to what is a random design. Some of the students will have a difficult time allowing the letters to lie on the floor in disarray. They will attempt to pick them up and put them in order and hand them to the teacher. Student volunteers should be allowed to toss the letters and numbers a couple of times. Then the students will be charged to create their own random design.

Another "happy accident lesson" is dipping pieces of string in paint then dropping it on white paper. The paint filled string leaves an impression on the paper. Students can then edit the piece by cutting out the most interesting sections.

Lesson 5 Jasper Johns (Classical: Intellect)

It was a natural progression from Duchamp's *Ready-mades* to Jasper John's found objects. After studying the works of Duchamp, Johns and the students will produce assemblage art that exemplifies "a sense of nonsense, play and humor. The student sculptures will comment on their times. The student work will reflect Jasper John's interpretation of Dada. Jasper Johns

interpretation of Dada in the fifties, led to playful "cohesive structures and art forms through disparities".

The students will then be charged to pick an everyday object, set it on a 4"x4" base, give it an interesting name and declare it a piece of art in the manner of Duchamp.

Nicholas Roukes, Design Synectics, opens "Chapter 3 Design and Signification" (page 100-1) with Jasper Johns, **Target with Four faces**, 1955. Roukes offer this interpretation of the image. "The synectic mechanisms repeat, fragment and symbolize are seen as contributing factors in the conceptualization of this image. Communicating through form and color, the artist seems to be saying that man now lives in an estranged society although he is near other, he is yet alienated. In short, man appears to have made himself a target." The students should view this and other images by Jasper Johns. They can listen to Nicholas Roukes' interpretation. The students should then either agree or challenge his interpretation.

The book is a rich resource for activities based on design and signification. A personal favorite studio action is "Wacky Monuments". Page 124

Lesson 6 what does Robert Rauschenberg "Combines" have in common with Marcel Duchamp's "Ready-mades?" (Romantic: Emotion)

Robert Rauschenberg called his variation of assemblage combines. The topic of materialism and or the rejection of materialism may appeal to seventh and eighth grade gifted students. The students are of an age group that is renowned for their ability to consume. They are also developing a social conscience. They have an acute sense of what is fair. Robert Rauschenberg shares this point of view. In this lesson the students will use advertisements and packaging from fast food restaurants to create a "combine" in the manner of Robert Rauschenberg. Topics to be considered, peace, materialism, cloning, the human genome.

Lesson 7 The Artist Writes

The students will be shown examples of writing from Marcel Duchamp, Jasper Johns, Picasso. The student will then complete the Portfolio Reflection Sheet. The Portfolio Reflection Sheet accompanies the piece of student work the student has chosen to include in his/her showcase portfolio. The sheet gives the student the opportunity to reflect upon the piece and to describe the meaning the piece has for the student.

Annotated Bibliography/ Resources

Annotated Bibliography for Teachers

Books:

Gerald F. Brommer. *Discovering Art History*. Second edition. Davis Publications, Inc Worcester, Massachusetts 1988 ISBN 0-87192-190-1

Gerald F. Brommer. *Discovering Art History*. Second edition. *A Guide for Teachers*. Davis Publications, Inc Worcester, Massachusetts

Janson, H.W. *History of Art for Young People* Fifth Edition Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 100 Fifth Avenue New York, N.Y. 10011. 1992

Kohl, MaryAnn F. and Solga. *Discovering Great Artists*. Bright Ring Publishing, Inc. May, 1997 ISBN 0-935607-09-9

Martin, Mary. *Start Exploring Masterpieces*. Running Press. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1981, 1990 ISBN 0-89471-801-0

Stories by Steven Zorn

Strickland, Ph.D., Carol. *The Annotated Mona Lisa. A Crash Course in Art History From Prehistoric to Post-Modern*. 1992 by John Boswell Management, Inc. Andrews and McMeel A Universal Press Syndicate Company Kansas City ISBN 0-8362-8005-9

Tomkins, Calvin and the Editors of Time-Life books. *The World of Marcel Duchamp 1887-*. Time Incorporated, New York, 1966

Videos

Engel, Dr. Martin Professor of History and Fine Arts Carnegie-Mellon University for junior and senior high students 1992 ClearVue/eau**History through Art The twentieth century 1900-Present**

The video ends with "The Hollow Men" by T.S. Eliot.

Slides

The Art of Assemblage 1974 educational audio and visual Inc., Pleasantville, New York 10570

Magazines

Louise Nevelson, Working with Found Objects "Three Artists who have transformed ordinary objects into works of art". "Readymade Art. Scholastic Art March 1995 Vol. 25, no. 5 ISSN 1060-832X Published in cooperation with the National Gallery of Art. Formerly Art and Man. Photo of Bicycle Wheel, constructed in 1913, was one of the first works of art created with found objects. Page 10.

Internet Sites

Armory show
<http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~jconte.html>

Marcel Duchamp
<http://www.arlex.com:ArtLexex/a/armoryshow.html>

Davis Publications
<http://www.davispublications.com>

Master Index of Army Records
<http://www.arm.mil./cmh-pg/reference/records.htm>

Military Service Records
[The Genealogy Page] <http://www.nar.gov/gealogy/genindex.html>

NARA's National Personnel Records center
<http://www.nara.gov/regional/stlouis.html>

Navy Service Records
<http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/questionhs/nrecprds.html>

Universal Color Slides
<http://www.univrsalcolorslide.com>

Annotated Students Reading List

Allen, Thomas, "Remember Pearl Harbor" (National Geographic, \$17.95) focuses on the horrific event that launched America into the war nearly 60 years ago. Reviewed in the PPG May 22.2001 C-2 by Karen MacPherson

Ambrose, Stephen, "The Good Fight"(Atheneum, \$19.95) offers a broadbrush picture of the main events of World War II. Reviewed in the PPG May 22.2001 C-2 by Karen MacPherson

Bolton, Linda. "Art Revolutions op Art". Peter Bedrick Books NTC/Contemporary Publishing group New York ISBN 0-87226-614-1

Bohm-Duchen, Monica and Cook, Janet. "An Usborne Introduction, Understanding Modern Art". EDC Publishing, 10302 E, 55th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74146 1988

Annotated List of Materials:

Send a wish list home for discarded packaging and assorted junk.

Assorted Scraps of cardboard
Toys
Games

Puzzles
Jewelry
Wigs
Containers
Flea Market type odds and ends
Rubber cement
Elmer's Glue
Scraps of wood and material
Pariscraft
Tempera Paint and Brushes

Appendices:

Vocabulary List

These are word found in *The Way of Art Volume One* (Pittsburgh Public School's Art reference text.)

Armature The foundation that gives shape to various types of material used to create sculptural form.

Assemblage relatively new art form. Rejecting all traditional ideas about art, a group of artist in Zurich Switzerland in 1916 began a new art movement called Dada. The Dadaist selected ready-made and found objects such as bottle racks, mousetraps bicycle, wheels. Theater tickets and labels and assembled them into art. The Dadaist brought to the art world a sense of nonsense, play and humor. Some artist in the mid twentieth century revisited Dada and utilized found objects to even a greater extent than did their predecessor." Marcel Duchamp's bitter reaction to the carnage that was World War I caused him to doubt traditional values. Duchamp was a member of the anti-art movement that protested World War I. He was one of the founders of Dada. The members of Dada were outraged that the world would allow the war. The disillusionment of the Twenties caused Dada to ridicule art of the past and opened the door to pre Pop and Pop art.

Collage A design or picture developed by fastening paper, cardboard or other material to a supporting background.

Found Objects All kinds of materials that are found naturally and combined to create a two or three-dimensional works of art

Ready-made A manufactured object exhibited as being aesthetically pleasing. When two or more accidentally "found" objects are placed together as a construction the piece is called an assemblage. Janson

FINE ARTS

Portfolio Reflection Sheet

NAME _____ **DATE** ____ **HR** ____

Day M T W Th F

What is the objective of this lesson? _____

What standard did this lesson address? _____

Describe the procedure that you used?

What rubric would you give yourself and why?

Name _____ **Date** _____ **HR** ____ **Day** _____

Title of Artwork _____

Describe the meaning the artwork has for you.

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Appendix- Content Standards

Visual Arts Content Standards

Content Standard #1: All students describe the meanings they find in various works from the visual arts on the basis of aesthetic understanding of the art form.

Content Standard #2: All students evaluate and respond critically to works from the visual arts of various individuals and cultures, showing that they understand important features of the works.

Content Standard #3: All students relate various works from the visual arts to the historical and cultural context within which they were created.

Content Standard #4: All students produce, perform or exhibit their work in the visual arts and describe the meaning their work has for them.