

Art Changes Me & Changes the World

Overview: In this lesson students will explore the role that the arts play in expressing emotions, understanding fear, developing security, and creating change in the world. The lesson focuses on three films: *Diana's Story*, *Rapping at Fear*, and *Fires Over England*. Students will conduct research, create a presentation, and use reflective journals as they investigate visual arts, film, theater and music and make connections between the issues raised in the films and their own lives.

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject Areas: Language Arts, English, Arts, Geography

Objectives:

Students will do the following:

- View, analyze and evaluate media
- Participate in class and small-group discussion
- Conduct Internet research
- Evaluate differing concepts and opinions on a range of topics
- Work collaboratively to create a presentation
- Respond to prompts in a writing journal
- Compare and contrast information from multiple perspectives

Media

Diana's Story Diana Guevara

La Camioneta (Guatemala City, Guatemala)

In my barrio in Guatemala City, it's hard not to be in a gang. My country was at war for 36 years and community structures and resources have been destroyed. While a gang is supposed to protect you, it's all too easy to get hurt. I know, because I was raped by one of the members of our gang. I told my mother about what happened, but she just blamed me. While I can't avoid the gang completely, I discovered and met a new group that makes me feel good about myself, the Iqui Balam Theatre Troupe. The members of the Troupe are helping develop my talents and learn the art of acting. I often choose the roles of girls that have been abused; it's my own way of healing and fighting back.

Rapping at Fear Andres Tabares

Polimorfo (Bogota, Colombia)

Twelve year-old Andres lives in the Cazuca slum on the outskirts of Bogota, Colombia, where his family sought refuge from a brutal civil war in the countryside. Like many in Colombia who were threatened and fearful for their lives, Andres and his family escaped seeking safe ground in Cazuca. But safety is the last comfort they found. Paramilitary, or "social cleansing" groups, police the dirt streets and paths of Cazuca, placing seeds of fear among inhabitants. These groups inhibit youth from expressing themselves - saying what they want to say and wearing what they want to wear. Afraid of being silenced, Andres writes and performs rap music to speak out about his life, his barrio and his country.

Fires Over England Daisy Badger

Rose's Theatre (Tewkesbury, U.K.)

When the Foot and Mouth epidemic hit Britain in 2001 it seemed like nothing could stop it. The government slaughtered millions of animals and we could even smell the smoke from burning pyres in our classrooms. Friends were stuck on their farms, the countryside was closed and the tourism industry was badly hit. Scared and angry, we were determined to find out all we could about Foot and Mouth disease. We learned precautions and produced information for markets, traveling farmers, politicians, and anyone else who would listen to us. We used this knowledge to produce a play for our small, rural community of Tewkesbury. The play became more than just a way to describe the thoughtlessness and greed that caused such devastation. It was an opportunity for us to use our voices, connect and teach the community, and do our part in preventing a recurrence of this terrible disease.

Lesson Sequence

Building Background

Activity One: Investigating the World

The purpose of this activity is to provide students with background information that will help them better understand the issues discussed in the film and the lesson activities.

1. As a class, visit the *Beyond Borders Countries* section of the website. This section contains information about the culture, geography, politics, economics and people of the varied countries that are featured in the *Beyond Borders* films. In this lesson, have your students investigate the following countries:

- Guatemala
- Columbia
- England

Activity Two: The Meaning of Art

The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to begin to think about the role the arts play in both their personal lives and in the larger society.

1. Have the students participate in a “Think-Pair-Share” activity. In this activity, students respond to writing prompts and participate in small-group and whole-class discussion.
2. Provide students with “The Meaning of Art” assignment. You can write the questions on the board, or use the template provided below.

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS

1. Why do you think people create art?

2. What is your most memorable arts experience in a school setting?

3. Art should be created only by people who are skilled at their craft.

Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

4. I notice art in public places.

Rarely

Sometimes

Never

5. I think a part of people's taxes should fund arts programs in schools.

Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Agree

6. Describe a strong reaction, either positive or negative, that you have had in response to a painting, song, film, or sculpture.

3. After each student has completed the assigned prompts, divide the class into groups of two and ask the students to discuss their answers. Give the students a five-to-ten minute period for discussion.

4. After they are finished, invite the students to share their thoughts with the entire class. Discuss the differences and similarities in students' responses, and ask them to explain their reasoning and their choices.

Activity Three

The purpose of this activity is to help students make connections between personal emotions and the arts.

1. Ask students to provide an example of music, art, theater, or film that captures the feeling of fear.

Teacher Note: You may wish to assign this as homework.

2. Provide time for students to share their selections with the entire class.

Media Component

1. View the film *Diana's Story* with your students. Give the students the following questions to answer after they have finished.

- Describe Diana's emotions.
- What emotion do you think Diana felt most strongly?
- How has Diana made a decision to confront her emotions?
- What do you imagine Diana has learned from her experiences?
- How did this film make you feel?
- What do you think Diana's theater group provided for her?

2. View the film *Rapping at Fear* with your students. Give the students the following questions to answer after they have finished.

- What are Andres' fears?
- How did Andres use music to help him deal with his fears?
- Have you ever used music to help you express your feelings?
- Describe Andres' emotions.

- How did this film make you feel?
- How does rapping connect Andres to his community?

3. View the film *Fires Over England* with your students. Give the students the following questions to answer after they have finished.

- How did Daisy feel about what happened to her?
- How did destroying the animals impact Daisy personally?
- How did destroying the animals affect the community?
- Describe Daisy's emotions.
- How did this film make you feel?

After the students have finished watching all three films, discuss the questions below, and then ask students to complete the Compare/Contrast Organizer. This organizer is designed to help students analyze and compare the differences and similarities in the films. First students will fill in information about each film, and then they will list the differences and similarities among the three films.

- What did each filmmaker fear?
- What were the differences among the students' experiences and how they dealt with them?
- What film did you think was most personally compelling? Why?
- What message do you think each filmmaker was trying to express?

Lesson Activities

Activity One: Art, Feelings, & Change

The purpose of this activity is to provide students with an example of how art is used to express one's emotions and one's reactions to an event.

1. Divide the class into small groups and tell the students that they are going to conduct Internet research on how the arts can impact individuals and society, and create change in the world. Ask the students to investigate the resources listed below.

- Vedran Smailovic & and the Sarajevo Breadline Massacre
<http://myhero.com/myhero/heroprint.asp?hero=vedrans>
- Live Aid/Live 8 Concerts
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4694475&sourceCode=RSS>
http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Live_8_concerts_to_%22End_Poverty_Now%22_taking_place_around_the_world
- Afghanistan: The photograph of Sharbat Gula
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/03/0311_020312_sharbat.html
<http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/2002/mar/girl/>
- Artists Against the War
<http://www.aawnyc.org/>
- International Women's Health Coalition
Generation 2000 Changing Girls' Realities
<http://www.iwhc.org/resources/generation2000.cfm?language=1>
- Voices of Youth Digital Diaries
http://www.unicef.org/people/belize_26967.html
- *A Thousand Cranes: The Hiroshima Atomic Bomb*
<http://www.childrenstheatreplays.com/atc.htm>

2. After the students have finished their research, ask each group to select an area related to the arts and create a project that can make a change in the world. The project should have one clear focus, and a plan for how to enact change in the world. Encourage students' creativity. You may wish to provide the ideas listed below to the class.

- Create a skit.
 - Create a one –minute public service announcement.
 - Draw a mural.
 - Create a plan for an advertising campaign for radio and/or television.
 - Write an editorial for a newspaper.
 - Write and present a speech on the topic.
 - Write a song.
 - Write a poem or rap.
 - Create a website.
 - Host a spoken word festival.
 - Create a community action day.
 - Research, survey and interview local activists.
3. Ask each group to present its project to the entire class. Provide time for discussion, questions, and feedback.

Extension Activities

Activity One: Artists for Peace

1. Ask the students to choose one of the featured artists at the Artists for Peace website at http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=8843&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html. Have the students share what they have learned with their classmates.

Activity Two: Making Media

1. Have the students create a film that expresses their thoughts on fear, security, and making a change in the world.

Standards
Mid-continent Research for Education & Learning

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Language Arts

Writing

Standard 4. [Gathers and uses information for research purposes](#)

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

2. Uses a variety of print and electronic sources to gather information for research topics (e.g., news sources such as magazines, radio, television, newspapers; government publications; microfiche; telephone information services; databases; field studies; speeches; technical documents; periodicals; Internet)

6. Uses strategies to adapt writing for different purposes (e.g., to explain, inform, analyze, entertain, reflect, persuade)

Reading

Standard 7. [Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts](#)

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

1. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts (e.g., textbooks, biographical sketches, letters, diaries, directions, procedures, magazines, essays, primary source historical documents, editorials, news stories, periodicals, catalogs, job-related materials, schedules, speeches, memoranda, public documents, maps)

Arts Connections

Standard 1. [Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines](#)

Visual Arts

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Benchmark 1. Identifies intentions of those creating artworks
<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/reference.asp?item=benchmark&BenchmarkID=2375&subjectID=13>

Geography

Standard 4. [Understands the physical and human characteristics of place](#)

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

1. Knows how social, cultural, and economic processes shape the features of places (e.g., resource use, belief systems, modes of transportation and communication; major technological changes such as the agricultural and industrial revolutions; population growth and urbanization)

Working With Others

Standard 1. [Contributes to the overall effort of a group](#)

Level IV (Grades K-12)

2. Works cooperatively within a group to complete tasks, achieve goals, and solve problems



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