

Grades 6 – 8

Art

Armory Center for the Arts

Recycled Mixed Media Sculptures

Time: 3 hours

Grades 6-8

California VAPA Content Standards

Visual Arts

Grade 6

Artistic Perception 1.2 Discuss works of art as to theme, genre, style, idea, and differences in media.

Creative Expression 2.4 Create increasingly complex original works of art reflecting personal choices and increased technical skill.

Aesthetic Valuing 4.4 Change, edit, or revise their works of art after a critique, articulating reasons for their changes.

Grade 7

Artistic Perception 1.1 Describe the environment and selected works of art, using the elements of art and the principles of design.

Creative Expression 2.3 Develop skill in using mixed media while guided by a selected principle of design.

Aesthetic Valuing 4.3 Take an active part in a small-group discussion about the artistic value of specific works of art, with a wide range of the viewpoints of peers being considered.

Grade 8

Artistic Perception 1.2 Analyze and justify how their artistic choices contribute to the expressive quality of their own works of art.

Creative Expression 2.6 Design and create both additive and subtractive sculptures.

Aesthetic Valuing 4.3 Construct an interpretation of a work of art based on the form and content of the work.

Indicators of Achievement

- Student shows an understanding of the concept of Ecological Art (Eco Art) and the relationship between art and nature.
- Student views a work of art from the exhibition and are able to identify the choices made by the artist and begins to understand the impact artwork has on society.
- Student gains an understanding of the techniques and materials used to create art from natural found objects and assembles a sculpture that communicates the theme of recycling that relates to the environment.

Materials

Found recyclable objects (bottle caps, Styrofoam, plastic utensils, etc.), found box or container (shoe, cigar, suitcase, etc.), glue, glue containers, and glue brushes

Vocabulary

ecological art/Eco-Art, installation, site-specific art, earthworks, environmental art, ephemeral art, sculpture, function, environmental impact, organic, 2D vs. 3D

Preparation

Artists in the 1970's began an art movement known as environmental installation or earthworks. Nature was the focus of their work. This movement continues to thrive today because our environment continues to be a source of inspiration and concern for many artists. Ecological art (Eco Art) is not just about the environment; it is by, for, with and often in the environment as well. It is art that reconnects people with their surroundings and tries to reverse negative environmental impacts with positive solutions for healthy survival. The movement continues to thrive today because eco art is having an impact on the environmental problems of today. In this exhibit your students will see several works that transform or use natural materials or recycled objects to change or influence how we see nature. They will also explore how the construction of an art object and the placement of in the environment can influence how we think about nature.

Found objects and recycled materials often inspire artists to create their works. An example of this is seen in the work of Kim Abeles, titled *Run-off Dolphin Suitcase*. This sculpture is created from discarded objects found in the storm drains that eventually run-off into the ocean. It allows us to reflect on our responsibility towards the environment and brings about awareness and hope for change.

Discussion

Ask the class to look at overhead image of *Run-off Dolphin Suitcase*, by artist Kim Abeles and asks the following questions:

- What types of objects appear on the outside of the suitcase?
- What objects are placed on the inside?
- Why do you think the artist decided to collect objects from storm drains?
- Why do you think she made a sculpture that functions like a suitcase?
- What do you think she is trying to communicate about our environment?
- How can art influence how we think about different social issues?

Activity

The following activity will provide your students with an opportunity to create a sculpture based on the overflow of recycled objects that surrounds them on a daily basis and further reflect on their impact on the environment.

1. Ask the class to collect a variety of recycled or discarded objects found around their homes, their neighborhoods, or the park. Instruct them to bring these objects to school for their project.
2. Next, ask the class to bring in an old unused box or container for the base of their sculpture.
3. Begin by sorting out all the different objects into various categories. The objects can be placed in large containers until enough is collected over time.
4. Next, ask the students to begin assembling their recycle sculptures by thinking about their feelings about trash and discarded objects. Ask them to glue the different types of objects to the inside of their container.
5. When the inside of the sculpture is dry, they can then attach different objects on the

outside of their container.

6. Ask them to reflect on how the act of recycling impacts our environment over time. Instruct them to create a satirical drawing that illustrates how they think our world would be different in 100 years if we didn't recycle now.

Assessment

Have students describe their works of art and explain what changes they would make for improvement. Did the student show an understanding of the techniques and materials used to create art from natural found objects? Does the student's sculpture communicate a recycling theme that relates to the environment? When looking at a work of art from the exhibition, is the student able to identify the choices made by the artist?

Culmination

Display the recycled sculptures in an outdoor installation at the school site. Once the students exhibit their work, ask them to interview the viewers in order to find out what these artworks make them think about the current state of the environment and the issue of recycling.

Extensions

Research and report on what various types of artists work with environmental issues and learn how their works play a role in our everyday environment. Provide a list of names to guide research.

Contact and Field Trip Information

Jennifer Hayes Silver, Field Trip Coordinator (call for information/brochure)

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