

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

HAND IN HAND

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What can we do at home and in the classroom to help make the world a better place?

GRADES

PK–2 and SDC

TIME

One class period

ART CONCEPTS

Compassion, action, bookmaking

MATERIALS

Pencils, erasers, scissors, glue sticks, staplers, 9 × 12 drawing paper, colored paper, and heavy construction paper

TALKING ABOUT ART

Look at Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California*. How would you describe the mood of the photograph and the people in it? What can we tell about these people from looking at this picture? This photograph was taken in the winter of 1936 at a camp for migrant workers and their families. The crop they were supposed to harvest had been destroyed by freezing rain so there was nothing to pick, which meant no work or food, and most of the 2,500 people in the camp were extremely poor and hungry. Look at the photograph again. How would you describe the hands you see? Dorothea Lange took this photograph to bring attention to the situation of the crop pickers, and, as a result of her photograph, families like this one received much-needed help.

In this case one person's small action had a big impact in making things better for over 2,000 people. What are some other examples of small things people do to help other people?

In the classroom you raise your hands to speak, you put your hand over your heart for the pledge of allegiance, you use your hands to help someone up if they fall down, and you use your hands to share things with others. What else can you do to be kind to others and make your classroom or home a better place?

MAKING ART

First make a small book using thick construction paper for the front and back covers and 9 × 12 drawing paper for the pages inside. Staple the pages in between the covers to make your book. Next, use a pencil to trace your hand onto a piece of colored paper. Then cut out your drawn hand, and paste it onto the front cover of your book. Next think of all the things you can do at home and at school to help others and help take care of the earth and your space. Write or draw these actions on the pages of your book.

TIPS FOR PK AND SPECIAL EDUCATION ART CLASSES

Read a Story: It may be helpful to begin or end the lesson with a picture book such as *Beautiful Hands* by Kathryn Otoshi and Bret Baumgartena, an uplifting story about what you can do with your hands to make the world a better place. Or, browse your classroom library for another book with a theme of empathy and social justice. This will allow students to gather and focus before or after looking closely and making their art.

MAKING ART (cont.)

It's About the Process: Break down the steps in art making, repeat directions as many times as necessary for your students, and model the activity by providing samples. If students get through the first two steps, great! If not, maybe they will get to step three tomorrow.

Modify the Lesson: If cutting with scissors is difficult, try using loop scissors. These scissors are easier to handle and good practice for fine motor skills. Students may also tear the paper if scissors are too frustrating, or use tempera paint and make a handprint on the cover of the book instead of tracing and cutting out the handprint.

REFLECTION

Display all the books around the classroom, and walk around, looking at everyone's books. What ideas did you include in your book? What new ideas did you get from other students' books? How will you act on the ideas listed in your book?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.K-2

K-2.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. K-2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners. K-2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue. K.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail. K-2.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.K-2

2.6 Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WRITING.K-2

K-2.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Preschool Learning Foundations, Social Emotional Development: 3.1 Social and Emotional Understanding. Seek to understand people's feelings and behavior, notice diversity in human characteristics, and are interested in how people are similar and different. 4.1 Empathy and Caring: Demonstrate concern for the needs of others and people in distress. Preschool Learning Foundations, Visual Art: 3.1 Create, Invent, and Express Through Visual Art 3.1 Intentionally create content in a work of art.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

GOALS AND DREAMS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION	How can art invite us to reflect on our own goals and dreams?
GRADES	3–5
TIME	One to two class periods
ART CONCEPTS	2D art, multimedia art, watercolor painting, drawing
MATERIALS	Mirrors, paper (2 sheets per person), colored pencils OR watercolors, pencils, sharpies, scissors, and glue
TALKING ABOUT ART	Like so many other socially conscious artworks, Edward Biberman’s <i>I Had a Dream</i> is thought-provoking and conveys a powerful message. What about the title, subject, and composition draws the viewer in and makes you feel connected to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his dream? Do you think this artwork can be considered a call to action? Why or why not?
MAKING ART	As a group, name some different communities you are a part of (home, school, work, extracurricular activities, Los Angeles, USA, etc.). Choose one of these communities and, with a partner, brainstorm some ways you can improve those communities with your actions. Write your goal on the bottom of your paper. Next, take a small mirror and draw a close-up self-portrait (of your face only) on the second paper, using pencil and then sharpie. Then cut out your self-portrait and glue it onto the paper with the goal written on it. Finally, draw your community and how you improved it, in the background of your paper.
REFLECTION	Arrange all the self-portrait/goals around the room. Do a gallery walk and look for a goal that you feel is similar to yours, and one that is different from yours but that you feel inspired by. Then share out at the end. In articulating and sharing these goals through your artwork, like that of Biberman, art can function as a call to action.
CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS	VAPA 2.5 Use accurate proportions to create an expressive portrait or a figure drawing or painting. 3.1 Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life (e.g., in photography, quilts, architecture). 2.7 Communicate values, opinions, or personal insights through an original work of art.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

PRINT THE VOTE!

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How is the right to vote vital for impacting change in our political system and why has it been fought for by so many marginalized groups over the course of U.S. history?

GRADES

6–12

TIME

Three class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Relief printmaking, line, shape, primary colors

MATERIALS

Scratch foam (Styrofoam sheets), printmaking ink (red, yellow, blue, and black), brayers, white printmaking paper, pencils, Plexiglas sheets (or baking sheets), and large newsprint paper

TALKING ABOUT ART

Look at the artwork, *The 1920's...The Migrants Arrive and Cast Their Ballots* by Jacob Lawrence. What is going on in this picture? Describe the different activities happening in this piece. Whose point of view is this image depicting? What kind of people do you see in the picture? (young, old, etc.) How does Lawrence illustrate the figures? Why do you think the artist chose to depict the scene in such a simplified and graphic style?

African American artist Jacob Lawrence created this piece in honor of the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 1976. He and a group of twelve other artists were asked to create images that answered the question “what does independence mean to you?” For Lawrence, it meant the right to vote. This image features a subject that Lawrence had depicted before—the Great Migration, which began in 1915 and continued until 1970, referring to a phenomenon in which over six million African Americans left the rural South for the urban North in search of better economic opportunities and relief from the institutional racism of the Jim Crow-era South. The figures in Lawrence’s print become symbols of a community that has reclaimed their right to contribute to political change, while so many of their fellow citizens in the South were prevented, through a series of oppressive tactics, such as literary tests, poll taxes, and violence, from exercising that right.

Consider how this image is relevant in our country today. Does every citizen have an equal opportunity to cast their ballot? What are some obstacles facing minority groups in current elections?

Jacob Lawrence’s, *The 1920's...The Migrants Arrive and Cast Their Ballots*, was a screen-print, which is a form of printmaking. Printmaking is a process of creating artwork in which multiples of the same image are produced to create an “edition”, or series of identical prints. How is printmaking an accessible art form for the public? How do we engage with printed material in our everyday lives? (newspapers, ads, packaging).

MAKING ART

Think about the right to vote and how it allows you to be a part of political change. Now, design a composition that expresses what voting means to you and/or current issues in voting. Your image will be made into an edition of three relief prints.

MAKING ART (cont.)

To make a relief print, transfer your drawing to a Styrofoam sheet with a pencil. This will be your “printing plate”. The pencil lines should be strong enough to leave an impression in the foam, creating what is called the “relief”. When designing your composition, use simple lines and shapes. *Keep in mind that anything you draw will print backwards, so if you are using text make sure to write it backwards so it appears properly when you print.*

After you complete your drawing, you will go to the ink station. This area should be set up with 4 trays (or Plexi sheets), one for each color, and have brayers (rubber rollers) set up next to each tray. Squeeze a small amount of printing ink at the top of your tray and use the brayer to roll the ink out until it is smooth and the roller is covered, without looking sticky. Next, roll the ink covered brayer over your Styrofoam plate until it is saturated with color. The color should be even and *you should be able to see your lines.*

The next step is to bring your inky plate over to a clean area, lay a sheet of paper on top of it, and use your hand to rub it all around the paper so that the image transfers evenly from your inky plate to your paper. Using a registration guide (marking on the paper that allow you to control the width of your margins), will help you make your prints neat and keep the image centered on the paper. You can make a registration guide by lightly outlining your paper and plate on a large sheet of newsprint and taping it to the table you will print on.

Continue this process until you have three (or more) identical prints. You can experiment with rolling different colors on your plate or continue with the same colors used originally. When dry, sign your print on the bottom of the image by listing the edition number, title, and your signature, like so:

1/3 “Title” Signature

REFLECTION

Hang your prints on the classroom wall. Discuss the way you used simple lines and shapes to get your message across. What are some of the messages being portrayed by your print and those of your classmates? Why is such a basic right still such a controversial issue in this country?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCS. ELA. Speaking and Listening.6-12

6-12.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.

CSS. History and Social Science.8-12

8.3 Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it. 8.7 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the South from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced. 11.5.2 Analyze the international and domestic events, interests, and philosophies that prompted attacks on civil liberties. 11.5.5 Describe the Harlem Renaissance and new trends in literature, music, and art. 11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights. 12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

MOMENTARY: EXPRESSION THROUGH ABSTRACTION

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can abstraction be a powerful form of expressing emotions and thoughts on a significant social/political event?

GRADES

6–12

TIME

One to two class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Abstraction, action, expressionism, improvisation, rhythm, composition

MATERIALS

Black ink, art paper, brushes of various sizes

TALKING ABOUT ART

Look at *Elegy to the Spanish Republic 100* by Robert Motherwell. Describe what you see. How would you describe the mood of this painting? Describe the composition of the artwork—how did Motherwell arrange, or place the shapes in the artwork? Motherwell created *Elegy to the Spanish Republic 100* inspired by an event he had a direct connection with, the Spanish Civil War. His painting was created as an abstract memorial to the victims of this event in history. How does Motherwell's artwork express his feelings about the Spanish Civil War? Motherwell created over 150 paintings on this theme. What do you think he was saying about the Spanish Civil War? Why? What do you think Motherwell felt about war in general? Why do you think so?

MAKING ART

Begin by remembering a personal, historical, or political event that had a profound effect on you. It can be something that either positively or negatively affected you. For example, it can be experiencing conflict or war, immigrating to another country, taking part in a protest/march/walkout, or just being very moved by a story in the news. Think about how this news or this event made you feel. Channeling that energy and emotion, begin painting as you continue to think about this event. Experiment with various brush strokes (using long, fluid motions *or* make short, quick strokes) to draw new abstract shapes. Let your emotional energy flow through your arm, hand and brush as you paint. Visualize details of the event. Stop for a moment—is there a composition forming? If not, keep painting until it begins to take shape. Let your intuition guide you. Stop and reflect on your artwork. Does it feel complete? Have you expressed all that you could about this event? It may take a few different paintings to arrive at your complete expression of how this event impacted you.

After you have completed painting your artwork, think of a song or poem that is somehow connected to this event. (Motherwell was inspired by the poetry of Federico García Lorca, a poet who was executed during the Spanish Civil War). Finally, give your artwork a title referencing the event; the title can be inspired by the song or poem connected to this event.

REFLECTION

Arrange a display of all artworks around the room. Ask students to walk around looking at the artworks. Discuss how the paintings make you feel. Read the title of the artwork. Does the title seem to fit the painting, why or why not? Have you experienced similar events as those expressed by your classmates?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

ART AND ANTI-RACISM CRITICAL READING

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How might we examine cultural bias in our society in order to combat racism?

GRADES

9–12

TIME

One or more class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Social Justice, photography, anti-racism, race, cultural bias, Civil Rights Movement, current events

TALKING ABOUT ART

Look at Sam Durant's *Like, man, I'm tired of waiting* from 2002. What do the words initially mean to you? Could these words be interpreted differently?

Durant took these words from a sign he saw on a photograph of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the landmark protest in the struggle for civil rights for African Americans where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have A Dream" speech. Does the meaning of the words "Like, man, I'm tired (of waiting)," change for you once you know their original context?

How was the original 1963 anonymous author of the sign using writing to try to make change in the world? What might we learn from Sam Durant's appropriation, or re-use, of those same words in his artwork in 2002? What can we say about those same words in 2017?

MAKING ART

Read "A True Picture of Black Skin" by art historian, photographer, and novelist Teju Cole. The essay was originally published in *The New York Times Magazine* on February 22, 2015 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/22/magazine/a-true-picture-of-black-skin.html>) and reprinted in Cole's collection of essays, *Known and Strange Things* (Random House, 2016), pp. 144–151. Discuss the text as a class or in smaller groups. Use the following prompts organically in any order you wish, as needed, to help keep the conversation going.

What passages initially stand out for you? What questions does the text raise for you?

What sense do you get of Roy DeCarava as a photographer from the portrayal of him in Teju Cole's words? What perspective does Cole offer on the artist?

How does Teju Cole's reference to the philosopher Édouard Glissant's concept of "opacity" add to his argument?

How might you describe or attempt to classify the kind of cultural bias Teju Cole discusses in the paragraph that begins, "All technology arises out of specific social circumstances. In our time, as in previous generations, cameras and the mechanical tools of photography have rarely made it easy to photograph black skin."?

MAKING ART (cont.)

Consider the following quote from the writing of anti-racist educator Beverly Daniel Tatum:

[...] Prejudice is one of the inescapable consequences of living in a racist society. Cultural racism—the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color—is like smog in the air. Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it in. None of us would introduce ourselves as “smog-breathers” (and most of us don’t want to be described as prejudiced), but if we live in a smoggy place, how can we avoid breathing the air? If we live in an environment in which we are bombarded with stereotypical images in the media, are frequently exposed to the ethnic jokes of friends and family members, and are rarely informed of the accomplishments of oppressed groups, we will develop the negative categorizations of those groups that form the basis of prejudice. People of color as well as Whites develop these categorizations. Even a member of the stereotyped group may internalize the stereotypical categories about his or her own group to some degree. In fact, this process happens so frequently that it has a name, internalized oppression. [...]

Beverly Daniel Tatum. *“Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?” And Other Conversations About Race.* (Basic Books, 1997) pp. 5–6.

REFLECTION

What connections do you make between this passage and Teju Cole’s essay “A True Picture of Black Skin”? Are there specific passages in Cole’s essay that, to you, support or refute Tatum’s comparison of cultural racism to smog? Which ones? Why? What can be done to eliminate these kinds of everyday cultural bias? What role can art play in that struggle?

How is Teju Cole using writing as a catalyst to make a change in the world? How is Sam Durant using writing as art as a catalyst to make a change in the world?

What similar or different perspectives do Sam Durant’s artwork and Teju Cole’s essay present about the Civil Rights Movement and its resonance today? How does having conversations about racism and cultural bias help us become better prepared to work toward a less racist and biased world?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. READING.9-12

9-12.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. 9-12.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. 9-12.5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. 9-12.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. 9-12.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. 9-12.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.6-12

9-12.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. 9-12.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-History and Social Science.11-12

11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights. 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are strategies that artists, writers and readers can use to actively engage with history and current events? Through close looking, discussion, and prompts for expressive and critical reactions, young artists will explore what methods resonate most with them to navigate our current political moment.

GRADES

6–12, though it can also be applied to 4th grade audiences who are learning about primary sources and critical reading.

TIME

Two to three class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Negative space, positive space, gesture, abstraction, static, dynamic, memorial, series, automatic drawing, subtractive poetry, composition, geometric forms

MATERIALS

Newspapers or news articles and images, blank paper, pens, paint, colored paper, scissors, glue sticks, and name tags or note cards

TALKING ABOUT ART

Elegy to The Spanish Republic 100 is one of 150 large abstract canvases that Robert Motherwell painted as a memorial to the 700,000 victims of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). Motherwell expressed his reaction to the injustice of war through black and white, gestural, geometric compositions. He explicitly chose to avoid depicting any specific references to the war, believing that his statement would be clear through his abstract gestures.

What do you feel/ think when you look at this image? If its title did not refer to the Spanish Civil War, would you feel something different when you looked at this work? What about this painting invokes a theme of war, what about this painting does not? What can abstract forms accomplish that figurative forms might not? Why do you think Motherwell decided to focus on the Spanish Civil War? What aspect of war do you think this painting is about?

MAKING ART

Students will divide into groups of five and each will be provided with a current event article. (Alternative plan, each student must bring in their own current event article to class and they will read off the title of article to the full class and group themselves according to theme.) Students will independently read their article and ask themselves: 1. What is the author's perspective? 2. What is the author leaving out? 3. What is the author focusing on? 4. What is your (the reader's) perspective?

After students have read their article they will discuss it with the group and share their thoughts about the article amongst the small group. (Optional: students do a five-minute free-write on their reactions to the article. In a free-write spelling, sentence structure, and grammar do not matter, the only rule is for the student to write continuously, anything that comes to mind.) Then, each student will take a second look at the article, this time in search for the words that they think best sum up the overall feeling or theme of the piece, or how it most resonates with them. Each student

MAKING ART (cont.)

will then make a subtractive poem from their source, either by circling or cutting words to make a poem, or crossing out text. Students will take turns reading their poems to the group.

For the next class (or two) students will bring in articles and images that they will use to collage a composition, or inform/inspire an abstract image that the student feels expresses their thoughts or feelings on their chosen issue. As a 10 minute warm up activity students will be provided a blank sheet of paper that they can draw on, sculpt, cut, or tear in reaction to the current event they have chosen. For this automatic drawing activity students should draw on or manipulate the paper on instinct, trying to channel their feelings onto the paper. It does not matter if they can't describe why they are doing what they are doing; the goal is to move their feelings and thoughts onto paper, much like a free write, but through form and shape rather than text.

After this exercise students may choose to add to this automatic drawing piece, or create a new work. They may include words and images extracted from their source or respond through another automatic drawing, or a combination of all previously listed approaches. While students are creating they will be prompted to think about the most necessary forms and feelings they want to convey and imagine they are making a subtractive poem/picture as they create, self-editing so only the most essential components remain. While creating their work students should also consider what they will title their work. Will they choose a literal title, or a poetic one? How will their title transform the viewer's response?

REFLECTION

WRITING AND READING REFLECTION

How is the reading process different when you are attempting to read from the author's perspective versus your own perspective?

What is lost when you create a poem or creative work from an article?

What is gained?

VISUAL ART MAKING AND LOOKING REFLECTION

Students will arrange their artwork and title (written out on a name tag or note card and placed below the artwork) across the room. Ask students to reflect on what forms and images they see, and what feeling the artwork conveys to them. Did their perception change after they read the title of the work? What strategies did each student use to tell their story? Allow time for willing students to share their thought process behind each work. Does creating art work or writing about a current event change your thoughts about that event? What is the difference between when a text or image tells an explicit narrative, versus an abstract creative work that interprets an event? Can art help us connect to political struggles in a different way, how can art teach us to see or relate to current events in a different way?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCS.ELA. Reading Standards of Informational Text. 6-12

6-8.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 6-8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. 6-8.2 Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

(cont.)

or anecdotes). 6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. 6-8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. 9-12.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. 9-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper). 9-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

CCS.ELA. Writing Standards. 6-12

6-12.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

CCS. ELA. Speaking and Listening. 6-12

6-12.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions. 6-12.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. 6-12.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

CCS. ELA Reading standards for Literacy in History/ Social Studies. 6-12

6-12.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.