

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

ILLUSTRATING FABLES

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can an illustration represent a story using line and value?

GRADES

K–3

TIME

One to two class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Illustration, line, texture, value

MATERIALS

Black tempera cakes, white tempera cakes, soft and bristle brushes, heavy paper, and newsprint

TALKING ABOUT ART

Take a moment to look at *Gibbon Reaching for the Reflection of the Moon* by Yōgetsu. What do you think is happening in this artwork? What does the gibbon (a type of ape) appear to be doing? How would you describe the expression on his face? Is he happy, angry, calm, agitated? What is the setting of the painting? Describe the different kinds of lines (wavy, curved, spikey, etc.) you see in the painting. What kinds of textures do you see? How does the artist distinguish between the different elements in the painting, such as the gibbon, the water, and the moon?

Gibbon Reaching for the Reflection of the Moon illustrates a Zen parable in which a gibbon tries to catch the moon's reflection in the water. The moral, or message, of the story is that one should not mistake appearances for reality; no matter how far the gibbon reaches, he will never be able to hold the moon's reflection because it's not real, it's just an illusion. By using only lines and values (shades from light to dark), the painter, Yōgetsu, was able to depict a story and its moral.

MAKING ART

Think of a fable or story with a moral that you've studied in class. Who are the main characters? What is the setting? What is the moral of the story? How can you illustrate this fable in one image?

Begin by practicing painting different line qualities using a soft brush and black paint on newsprint. Experiment with different pressures, laying the brush flat, having it be dry, wet, etc. Practice creating values by adding white paint (shades going from light to dark, and vice versa).

Next, use the painting techniques to illustrate a fable studied in class. Think about which elements of the story need to be present in the illustration in order to show the full story. Consider how simple changes of line and value can enhance your drawing.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

Display your painting in your classroom, and discuss how your illustration and those of your classmates represent the fables being depicted. What kinds of lines were used? How was value used? How did each artist use painting techniques to tell their story?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.K-3

K.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts). 1.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events. 2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. 3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text. 3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.K-3

K-2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners. 3.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

SYMBOLS IN ART

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can an image represent people, things, and ideas?

GRADES

3–5

TIME

One class period

ART CONCEPTS

Symbols, shapes, accordion book

MATERIALS

4 x 17 inch strips of cardstock, 3 ½ x 3 ½ white paper squares to fit the accordion pages, glue sticks, scissors, pencils, erasers, colored pencils, markers, ultra-fine black sharpies, and paper

TALKING ABOUT ART

Take a moment to look at images of the Tibetan Altar Cabinet included in this packet. On the inside of the doors, the Eight Auspicious (lucky) Buddhist Symbols appear:

1. An umbrella, a symbol of the Buddha
2. A pair of fish, an ancient symbol of good fortune
3. A conch shell, a reminder that Buddhist teachings should be widely proclaimed
4. A lotus, a symbol of purity of mind
5. The standard of victory, a symbol of the victory of Buddhist teachings over evil
6. The vase of plenty, a symbol of good fortune and long life
7. The endless knot, a symbol of endless wisdom
8. The wheel of law, a symbol of the Buddha's teachings with eight spokes representing the eightfold path to enlightenment.

A symbol is something that represents or stands for something else. How do these images represent good fortune and the teachings of Buddhism? What are some examples of symbols that our society uses to show luck, protection, or gratitude? Can you think of symbols that are used by multiple cultures? What are their meanings? (For example, eye symbols meant to protect against evil like the Eye of Horus (an ancient Egyptian symbol of protection, royal power and good health), the *Hamsa* (a Middle-Eastern hand-shaped amulet with an eye at its center), and the *Nazar* (a Turkish eye-shaped amulet).

MAKING ART

In this activity we will develop symbols for our families and ourselves as well as symbols that represent things we like and look to for protection and good luck. Then we will make a small, simple accordion book to hold

MAKING ART (cont.)

the symbols and written descriptions. Like an altar, your books will stand, open, revealing the artwork.

Fan-fold the provided strips of cardstock to make an accordion book. The top section of your folded book will be the cover, which you can decorate as you like.

Then think of examples of symbols discussed in class, and some images and/or objects that you associate with your family and yourself. Use these examples and inspirations to design a symbol for yourself and a symbol for your family. Draw and color your symbols on the paper squares, and then add written descriptions of how your symbols represent you. Be specific. Then add drawings of things that you look to for protection and good luck around those symbols on the other squares of paper.

Finally, glue the squares onto the cardstock, in the order of your choice, to make a standing accordion book that represents you and your family.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

Display your books in your classroom, and discuss how your symbols and those of your classmates evolved. What kinds of images and associations were used? How are your classmates' symbols alike or different? Did any images appear in multiple students' symbols? How successful do you feel your book is in representing yourself and your family?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.3-5
3-5.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.

CCSS.VAPA.3-5

Grade 3.1.5 Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, space, and value. 3.1 Compare and describe various works of art that have a similar theme and were created at different time periods. Grade 4.3.1 Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life. Grade 5.2.7 Communicate values, opinions, or personal insights through an original work of art. 5.2 Identify and design icons, logos, and other graphic devices as symbols for ideas and information.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

READING GESTURES

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How is body language read and understood?

GRADES

6–9

TIME

One or more class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Emulation, gesture, posture, pose, representation, form

MATERIALS

An open space

TALKING ABOUT ART

View and discuss the image of the Buddha Shakyamuni sculpture included in the curriculum packet. What do you notice about the figure's stance, posture, mood, attire, and body language? Is there anything about those aspects of the figure that you find familiar? In what other contexts have you seen similar forms?

Within movement and meditative arts, objects and images are often used as aids to achieve a state of being or emulate an ideal or philosophy. Complex lyrical dance sequences are often built from visual references without much context; for instance, they may draw from static poses represented in cultural objects or images without accurate dates or attributions. In contrast, practitioners of contemporary yoga or dance might utilize mudras or gestures in order to reference specific philosophies in a transformative way.

MAKING ART

This movement exercise will allow us to focus on how observable states of being can transform the emotional, affective, or psychic state of those around us.

Drawing from the idea that observation of Buddha Shakyamuni's body language can inspire enlightenment, we will consider more broadly how our own feelings, moods, and levels of attention or distraction can be configured upon our observation of others.

Form a circle or line up in rows facing your teacher. Your teacher will guide you through a few suggested movements. These movements can be very specific—i.e. putting hands on hips or lowering eyelids until eyes are half-shut—or more general—shifting or isolating a body part of choice within a general area of the body, or making an adjustment to a breathing pattern. Notice internally what changes (physically, emotionally, and mentally) with each pose.

Find a partner, and work together as a pair. Partner A will create a gesture, pose, or movement based on the teacher's prompts. Prompts may

MAKING ART (cont.)

be broad or specific (i.e. “do something with X area” or “change something about X area”), or suggestive of a certain feeling without specifying a particular kind of movement (“express confidence using only your face”). Poses or gestures should be held for a set number of seconds. Partner B should watch and record on paper any feelings that arise from observing Partner A’s poses. It should be noted that the feeling Partner B gets from Partner A’s language is not necessarily indicative of the meaning of that pose or the intentions of Partner A.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

How can movement practices inspired by forms or ideas from history change how we think about bodies and intentions in the present?

Discuss the difference between responding to a gesture in a static representation (i.e. statues of the Buddha) and gesture-sharing (mirroring) between people in real life. Did any misunderstandings occur between you and your partner? How frequently do you think body language is misread? How does clothing affect how body language is perceived? Is it possible to be more accurate in how we judge people based on their body language and expression?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING. 6-9

6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. 9.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums, determining which details are emphasized in each account. 9.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.6-9

6-9.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.
6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

THE ESSENCE OF MY PHILOSOPHY

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can an artist condense complex ideas into a short text-based artwork?

GRADES

6–12

TIME

One or more class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Text-based art, sumi ink painting, 3D, design

MATERIALS

Pens, drawing paper, sumi ink, washi paper, gold foil/tape, construction paper or cardstock paper (in various colors), clear tape rolls, scissors, and music

TALKING ABOUT ART

Sutras are short texts or stories that depict lessons and serve as models for living. The Buddhist practice of sutra-copying is intended to aid in meditation. How can writing help aid meditation? Japanese Buddhist monks use sumi ink for sutra-copying, called *shakyo*. There is a certain fragility to using sumi ink on washi paper as a medium (washi paper can be extremely thin)—why do you think Japanese Buddhist monks use this medium?

Throughout Asia, sutra boxes are used to store these sacred writings. The 20th century Thai *Sutra Box* included in this packet is a gilded lacquer box which shows protector deities in a gesture of prayer. How does the look of the sutra box reflect the text inside?

MAKING ART

Begin by thinking of a philosophy that you live by. What values are inherent to this philosophy? Think of words, phrases, and quotations associated with this philosophy and write them all down in pen on paper. Also write down any places, objects, or other associations connected to this philosophy. Using the words you wrote for inspiration, create a short poetic text (3 to 10 words) to express this philosophy. Then, using sumi ink, write out your poetic text on washi paper. Finally, using construction or cardstock paper and tape, create a sutra box to hold your poetic artwork. As you are making your box, think about your philosophy and the artwork you just created. Try to make the outside of the box reflect what it will hold inside. Use gold foil and tape to decorate your box.

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

Arrange a display of all the sumi artworks and boxes on tables around the room. Ask students to walk around the room looking at all the artworks. Read your fellow students' philosophies carefully. Are their philosophies clear and easy to understand despite their condensed form? Look to see how each person's box design may relate in style to their sumi artwork. Does the artwork look similar in tone and style to the box? Why or why not? Why do you think the artist chose to design the box this way?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.4-12

4-12.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.6-12

6.7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. 7.7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium. 9-12.2 Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. 9-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. 9-12.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. 9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

LOOKING MEDITATION

ESSENTIAL QUESTION	How can we use the principles of meditation to increase our observational skills?
GRADES	4–12
TIME	One or more class periods
ART CONCEPTS	Point-of-view, close looking, walking meditation, reflection, collaboration
MATERIALS	Artworks or reproductions of artworks, pencils, and paper
TALKING ABOUT ART	<p>Show Yōgetsu's <i>Gibbon Reaching for the Reflection of the Moon</i> from the early 16th c. What might be happening here? Be sure to cite evidence from the image. How does the artist depict this animal's surroundings?</p> <p>The gibbon reaching for the reflection of the moon is a Zen parable that warns against mistaking illusion for reality. In the Zen tradition of Buddhism, meditation plays an important role in seeking true enlightenment. But meditation can take on many different forms: an inscription of another Zen painting in LACMA's collection, Deiryū Kutsu's <i>Mendicant Monks</i>, reads, "Walking, walking: this is also meditation." In Zen, <i>kinhin</i>, or walking meditation, is practiced between periods of sitting meditation. How does this concept differ from your associations with sitting meditation? (Consider images of Buddha Shakyamuni practicing sitting meditation.) Both of these practices share the fundamental ideas of focus or mindfulness in order to build awareness. In sitting meditation, practitioners might chose to focus on monitoring their breathing or how their bodies feel sitting on the floor. In walking meditation they pay attention to every step they take. Those same principles of mindfulness can be applied to other kinds of activities, too, like looking at art.</p>
GALLERY ACTIVITY	<p>Like the mendicant monks in Deiryū Kutsu's painted scrolls, begin to cultivate awareness through the practice of walking meditation. Have in mind a set time (perhaps five minutes) and destination.</p> <p>Remain silent for the duration of the walking meditation. Pay attention to each step you take, how your feet feel as they touch the ground, and how each step makes the rest of your body feel. As you are paying attention to your steps, also notice your surroundings. Your teacher may ring a bell at the beginning and end of the practice to signal its start and completion.</p> <p>Take some time to reflect on that experience in a full-class discussion. What was that like? How do you feel now? Did anything you notice surprise you? What was challenging? What was easy?</p>

GALLERY ACTIVITY (cont.)

Next, select an artwork that you would like to focus on for five to ten minutes. Your teacher might offer you several choices of high-quality reproductions of artworks from this curriculum or a fellow students' artworks. During the ten minutes, remain silent and focus entirely on the image. Your teacher may again ring a bell to signal the start and end of this silent close looking experience.

After the artworks or reproductions have been collected or, if at the museum, you have moved into another gallery; you will have five to seven minutes to write a written reflection without looking at the artwork you just focused on. What did you notice or wonder about the artwork? What was this experience like? You may either write about observations you made about the artwork, or how you felt being still with one artwork for ten minutes. Again, the teacher may ring a bell to signal the start and end of this written reflection time.

Direct students to form groups of two or three. Discuss the activity in your groups for five to seven minutes. What did you learn about the artwork or yourself through this experience?

PROMPTS FOR REFLECTION

As a class, would anyone like to share what you talked about with your partner(s)? What was this whole experience like? How did you best learn about the artwork you studied? How did you feel when you were looking at the artwork for ten minutes? How might you transfer the way you felt during this lesson to other parts our day?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. READING.4-12

4-12.1 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.

4-12.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. 4-12.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WRITING.4-12

4-12.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

4-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.4-12

4-12.1 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.

4-12.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.