LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
5905 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90036
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

LACMA

CREATIVITY IN (AND OUT OF) THE CLASSROOM

Creativity seems to be at the forefront of many educational initiatives and discussions about the essential skills required for the future. While some may consider creativity intangible and mysterious, reserved only for certain artistically inclined people, more and more evidence points to creativity being an innately human endeavor, one that can be observed, nurtured, and developed. In our increasingly complex and intertwined twenty-first-century world, creative thinking regularly comes up as a prerequisite to success—how often do we hear the phase "think outside of the box"? As educators, it is our responsibility to deliver instruction that is relevant for twenty-first-century citizens, and creativity is front and center.

DEFINING CREATIVITY

Experts in various fields have attempted to capture the essence of creativity and creative thinking. Educators associate the feeling of the creative act with problem solving and expressive qualities, as Dr. Betty Edwards suggests:

> Creativity is the ability to find new solutions to a problem, or new modes of expression; thus it brings into existence something *new to the individual* and to the culture. (Emphasis added)

Psychology professor and writer Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes the profound human need for the creative process. He states, "First, most of the things that are interesting, important and human are the results of creativity." He also discusses the intense physical enjoyment of the creative process:

> ...creativity is so fascinating...when we are involved in it, we feel that we are living more fully than during the rest of life. The excitement of the artist at the easel or the scientist in the lab comes close to the ideal fulfillment we all hope to get from life, and so rarely do.

The new modes of expression to which these thinkers allude are embodied in the work of the artists included in this packet. Pablo Picasso and Frida Kahlo mastered traditional forms and then reinvented them to find new ways of expressing grief, Vija Celmins made the familiar seem strange, and Edgar Degas and Utagawa Hiroshige experimented with composition across different mediums. All of these artists were immersed in their domain of knowledge, the visual arts, gaining the language and skills with which to experiment in order to create challenging new art.

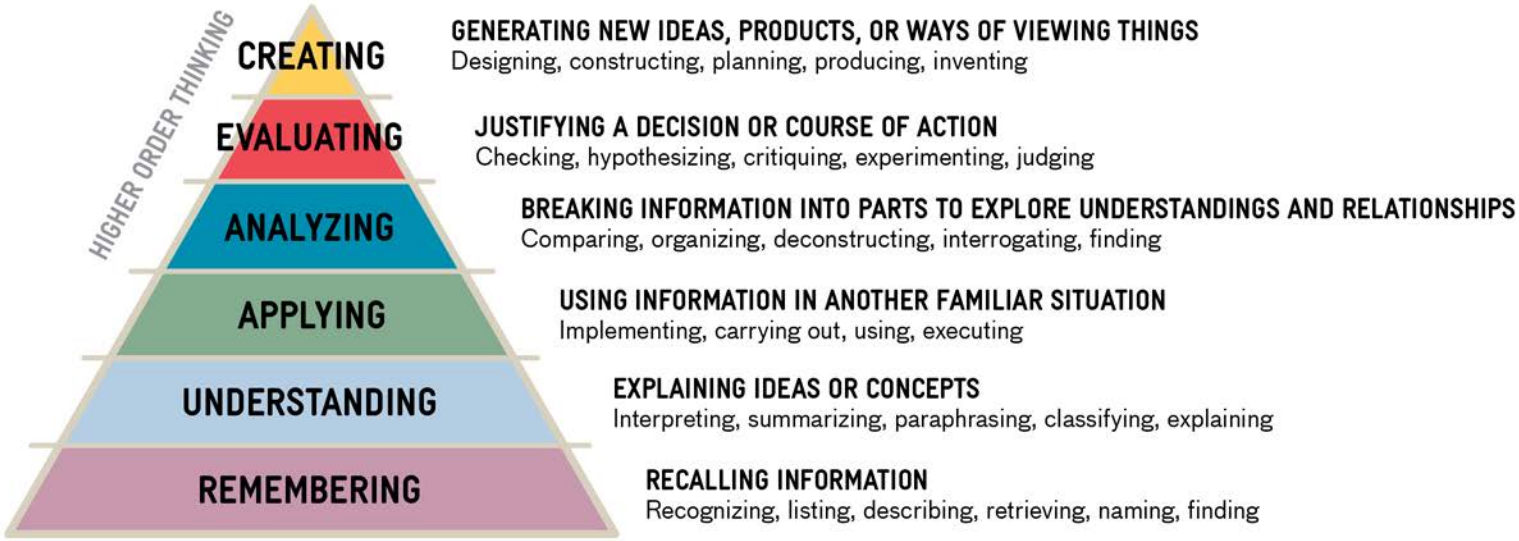
THE CREATIVE PROCESS

According to Csikszentmihalyi, there are five stages to the creative process. The first is *identification* of a problem that needs to be solved. This problem usually comes from personal experience (you personally experience a problem or situation that you feel needs to be addressed), the requirements of your area of expertise (you encounter something within that domain that you feel needs to be solved), or social pressures (society has a problem that needs to be solved).

Once you have identified the problem, the next step is the *incubation* period. Your mind thinks of ways to solve the problem, either consciously or unconsciously. This incubation period can take minutes or years, as in the case of Hiroshige, whose greatest innovation came at the end of his nearly fifty-year career. Incubation leads to the third step, a unique *insight* into the problem—the "aha! moment" when you come up with a potential creative solution to the problem. The next step is *evaluation*—is this insight worth pursuing? The final step is *elaboration*; the hardest and longest step in the creative process requires transforming thought or insight into being. As Edison noted, creativity is 1 percent inspiration, 99 percent perspiration.

As the creative process is better understood, even the widely used teaching and assessment tool Bloom's Taxonomy has been revised. During the 1990s, a group of cognitive psychologists led by Lorin Anderson (a former student of Benjamin Bloom) updated the taxonomy to reflect its relevance to twenty-first-century learning. In the updated taxonomy, students reach the pinnacle by demonstrating their ability to "create"—to use their learning to make something of *their own individual design.*

BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY



SO WHAT CAN YOU DO TO FOSTER CREATIVITY?

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MASTERY Teachers can provide rich and stimulating experiences for students. Exposure to the arts, the social sciences, mathematics, literature, and scientific inquiry allows students the opportunity to develop an interest in any of these areas, an interest that should be stimulated and nurtured. Once students have expressed an interest, teachers should actively teach students the critical analytical or technical skills necessary to become competent in that domain. Picasso was liberated to pursue different forms and ideas because he had a strong foundation in representational art and art history. As noted earlier, creativity can only happen once a person gains competence within their domain. By becoming conversant in a field, one can begin to question, experiment, change, and further knowledge in that field.

CREATE NURTURING ENVIRONMENTS People are either inspired or defeated by the environments around them, so it is important to create an environment that nurtures and recognizes creativity, in both the physical and the emotional sense. Kahlo, despite personal struggles, was encouraged to keep painting by her husband, artist Diego Rivera, and was inspired and nurtured by her stays in Paris, San Francisco, and New York, where she exchanged ideas with and gained acceptance among intellectuals and artists like Picasso. Your surroundings can create excitement and inspire and nurture ideas. Create a classroom that is visually stimulating, thought-provoking, and student-centered. Encourage students to collaborate, brainstorm, and be divergent thinkers by establishing a non-threatening environment. Create spaces that allow for exploration and experimentation: provide a table with different art-making materials or a table where students have the opportunity to share and discuss ideas. Experiment with the arrangement of your classroom.

Decorate your classroom with artworks and objects from around the world, and use these objects in your lessons. Objects can be used for inspiration and to expose students to different cultures and allow them to imagine different places and time periods.

BE CURIOUS! Curiosity is one of the most important traits of creativity. Degas was not content to depict dance in the same way as other painters; curiosity drove him to try to incorporate the influence of Japanese prints and photography. Be curious about different disciplines, and, most importantly, be curious about your students. Students should also be encouraged to find problems that they would like to solve creatively. They cannot do so unless they are curious and asking the right questions, so urge students to question. It was only through reexamining the mundane objects in her studio that Celmins arrived at her disorienting series of sculptures. Encourage students' curiosity by modeling your own; continue to wonder and be willing to be awestruck.

ENCOURAGE FAILURE AND PERSISTENCE Most inventors failed multiple times before "succeeding." However, each failure contributed to their knowledge and pushed them forward. Therefore, it is important to remember that

creativity is an iterative process rather than an endpoint. Picasso approached the subject of the weeping woman more than sixty times, each slightly differently, before being satisfied with the outcome. When we ask students to write, we often include drafts as part of the process; we should think of learning in any subject area in the same way. By creating "drafts" of artworks, students can learn new skills and gain new insights. Thus, we should think of failure in a more positive light—as an experience that educates, promotes resiliency and persistence, and leads to creativity.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The artists included in this packet worked hard to build their skills and produce innovative art; they failed at times, but continuously tried to problem solve through their artwork. They created unique, individual works of art that reflected their personal, lived experiences. These artworks are meant to inspire you to expand your creativity in your classroom. Schools can and should provide access to curricula and instruction that develop these elements of creativity.

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CREDITS

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KINRYŪZAN TEMPLE, ASAKUSA (ASAKUSA KINRYŪZAN)

1856, seventh month
From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (Meisho Edo hyakkei)
Utagawa Hiroshige

THE DANCERS

1898
Edgar Degas

Utagawa Hiroshige was a preeminent designer of landscape prints in nineteenth-century Japan. Kinryūzan Temple, Asakusa is included in *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo,* an innovative series of prints the artist completed at the end of his career. In Kinryūzan Temple, Hiroshige employed a startling new compositional technique to depict Edo, the city of his birth, after nearly sixty years of living there. A large lantern hangs in the extreme foreground, so close to the picture plane that the entire object will not fit within our frame of vision, and its right side and upper portion have been cropped out. The lantern dominates the composition and, together with the edge of a screened in enclosure at the left of the print, frames a distant scene of trees and buildings that appear tiny by comparison. While the detailed foreground elements integrate viewers into the scene by giving them points of reference, they simultaneously create a sense of separation between the viewer and the world seen in the background, mimicking the effect of looking out a window at a far-off landscape.

Kinryūzan Temple depicts the temple complex of the Buddhist deity Kannon in Asakusa, a district of Edo (modern-day Tokyo). Dating back to 645, it is the oldest and most venerated Buddhist temple in the region, far older than the city itself. The red, two-story building in the distance is the great Gate of the Two Kings, the facade of which is mostly obscured by snow-covered trees, and a five-story pagoda can be seen at the right edge of the print. The viewer is positioned on the threshold of the famous Thunder Gate looking in, but the Main Hall of the temple is completely hidden behind the pagoda, our view of the Gate of the Two Kings is almost entirely blocked by trees, and all we see of the Thunder Gate is a partial view of its lantern (at the top of the print), threshold stone (at the bottom of the print), and railing (along the left side of the print).

Forty-two years later and on a different continent, French painter and draftsman Edgar Degas took inspiration from the prints of Hiroshige and his contemporaries in nineteenth-century Paris. In *The Dancers,* Degas employs a compositional technique similar to Hiroshige's to depict the conventional and very popular subject of dancers, placing the viewer backstage in the middle of the action but with only a partial view of the scene and no view of any actual ballet. The corner of a tutu and the edge of some wooded scenery in the extreme foreground frame the scene and make the viewer feel immersed in the tight quarters of backstage. Degas pushes this device even further, cutting off the head and knee of the ballerina on the far right. This innovative cropping not only invokes Japanese prints like Hiroshige's *Kinryūan Temple* but also reflects the new medium of photography, seeming to capture a spontaneous moment—albeit one that was meticulously planned by the artist.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

• Create a postcard of your favorite place that doesn't actually show the most memorable or significant part of that place. How will you capture the feeling of your subject without revealing its main attractions?

• Utagawa Hiroshige designed the series of prints *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo.* Create another postcard of the place you chose earlier, but show it from a different vantage point. What elements are the same as the first print? What elements are different?

• Find an artwork from another culture in LACMA's collection that speaks to you. What drew your attention to the artwork you chose? What elements of this artwork would you like to incorporate into your artwork?

KINRYŪZAN TEMPLE, ASAKUSA
1856, seventh month
Utagawa Hiroshige
Color woodblock print
Image: 13 3/8 × 8 3/4 in. (33.97 × 22.23 cm); sheet: 13 7/8 × 9 3/8 in. (35.24 × 23.81 cm)
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, promised gift of Barbara S. Bowman (PG.2012.21.49)

THE DANCERS
1898
Edgar Degas
Pastel on paper on board
29 x 24 in. (73.66 x 60.96 cm)
Frame: 36 × 30 × 2 in. (91.44 × 76.2 × 5.08 cm)
Partial, fractional and promised gift of Janice and Henri Lazarof (M.2005.70.21)

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WEEPING WOMAN WITH HANDKERCHIEF

1937
Pablo Picasso

Over the course of his career, Spanish painter Pablo Picasso went through Blue, Rose, Cubist, Neoclassical, and Surrealist phases, and dabbled in sculpture and design in addition to painting, drawing, and printmaking. Although he is best known for his more abstract paintings, Picasso was a skilled painter and draftsman who received a traditional training before developing groundbreaking new styles. This strong foundation and familiarity with art history allowed him the versatility to play with form and color with confidence, and to reinvent and be inspired by classical forms and subjects. In his own words, "Whenever I had something to say, I have said it in the manner in which I have felt it ought to be said. Different motives inevitably require different methods of expression."

In April 1937, General Francisco Franco, with the aid of his German ally, Adolf Hitler, bombed the undefended town of Guernica in northern Spain. Although Picasso was living in Paris at the time, he read accounts of women and children shot down as they fled the burning buildings, and his mother wrote to him from Barcelona, also in northern Spain, telling him that the smoke from the burning city made her eyes water. Picasso's response to the atrocity, a painting titled *Guernica,* is now one of the most famous depictions of war in the history of art, along with his Spanish predecessor Francisco de Goya's *The Third of May, 1808.*

However, the subject of suffering continued to preoccupy Picasso after *Guernica* was completed. This preoccupation took the form of a single weeping woman who appeared in numerous drawings and paintings that year including this painting. The weeping woman was a personalization and manifestation of widespread despair. She was the grieving mother and the stunned survivor; and she was a symbol of Spain, Picasso's home, which was being torn apart by civil war. Within a year of depicting his first weeping woman, Picasso had created nearly sixty drawings and paintings of her, changing forms, compositions, and styles in each iteration.

In painting this subject, Picasso drew on a long history of depictions of suffering in Spanish art. In many paintings and sculptures, especially those from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Virgin Mary was frequently depicted weeping while mourning the death of her son, Jesus. Iconic seventeenth-century Spanish painters like Francisco de Zurbarán and Jusepe de Ribera used dark backgrounds—like the one that appears in Picasso's *Weeping Woman with Handkerchief* —to depict saints who suffered in isolation, and in the nineteenth century Goya famously used a similarly dark palette in his bleak and haunting Black Paintings. The connection between Picasso's painting and the history of Spanish art is further reinforced by the weeping woman's mantilla—a veil or shawl draped over a woman's head and shoulders, first worn in sixteenth century Spain, and associated with piety—and the hand fan, another element of traditional Spanish costume, formed by the woman's fingers at the bottom of the canvas.

Picasso takes these conventions and distorts them with elements of Cubism and Surrealism. The woman's tears hang from her eyes like chained beads, and her nostrils take the shape of tear drops. Eyelashes cling to her eyes in clumps and furrowed lines cut deep slashes down her forehead. Her nose and cheeks are flushed, not red but a sickly lavender, with crying, and her lips are the same putrid green as her mantilla, clashing with the red of her hair. This palette gives her an unnatural appearance that is reinforced by the gray-purple cast of her skin and the acid-yellow of her dress. A shapeless cloud of handkerchief frames her distraught face, floating like an empty speech bubble, and the folds of her neck radiate outward from her head like sound waves illustrating the wails emitted from the screaming mouth above.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- In *Weeping Woman with Handkerchief,* Picasso uses and distorts elements from historical artworks to help him express how he felt about contemporary events in Spain. Choose a topic or current event you feel passionate about. How could you use symbols or images associated with that topic, or the place/culture in which it is occurring, to make an artwork that expresses how you feel about it?

- What images do you associate with Los Angeles? How could you use these images to create an artwork that communicates your thoughts about current events in Los Angeles (for example, the drought, traffic, etc)?

WEEPING WOMAN WITH HANDKERCHIEF
1937
Pablo Picasso
Oil on canvas
21 x 17 1/2 in. (53.34 x 44.45 cm)
Frame: 29 × 25 1/2 × 2 in. (73.66 × 64.77 × 5.08 cm)
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mitchell (55.90)

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WEEPING COCONUTS (COCOS GIMIENTES)

1951
Frida Kahlo

Best known for her revealing self-portraits, Frida Kahlo suffered from debilitating pain stemming from a streetcar accident in 1925, when she was a teenager. Kahlo began painting during her recovery from the accident and continued under the encouragement of her husband painter Diego Rivera and the influence of their artist and intellectual friends during their stays in cities across America and Europe. Twenty-six years later, after seven operations on her spine and a prolonged hospital stay, Kahlo was discharged from the hospital, but she remained primarily confined to her bed, under the influence of strong painkillers and with full-time nurses attending to her. It was under these circumstances, toward the end of her life, increasingly uncomfortable and with her senses and skills dulled by pain and medicine, that she turned to still lifes like *Weeping Coconuts.*

Still lifes had traditionally been one of few acceptable genres for women painters because they were considered less important than landscapes and portraits and focused on tame domestic subjects rather than subjects outside the home.[1] On the surface, *Weeping Coconuts* is a very conventional example of this undervalued, lady-like genre. However, in Kahlo's hands, these otherwise common household objects become symbols of disturbing violence and turbulent emotions.

The most striking demonstration of such feelings is the personification of the coconuts, whose "eyes" (really stoma, or germination pores) emit tears of coconut water and seem to avert their gaze, hiding from the scrutiny of the viewer. Their husks resemble disheveled hair, and, depending on the viewer's perspective, the various fruits around them could either be forming a protective barrier between us and the coconuts, propping them up, or smothering them.

Rather than showing a placid assortment of fruit like those painted by her female predecessors, Kahlo depicts fruit that, like her, is wounded and suffering. In the words of her biographer, Hayden Herrera, Kahlo "probe[s] the insides of fruit and flowers, the organs hidden beneath their wounded flesh, and the feelings hidden beneath stoic features." The papaya is sliced open, and both of the oranges in the foreground have been damaged: the one closest to the picture plane has been ripped into, revealing its insides, while the other has been punctured by a Mexican flag (without the eagle at its center). Like Kahlo herself, these fruits are native to Mexico, a fact that is highlighted by their colors, which echo the Mexican flag, and the inclusion of the flag itself in the center of the work. On the flag, Kahlo has included an inscription, "Pintó con todo cariño, Frida Kahlo" or "Painted with all my affection, Frida Kahlo." Originally this still life was intended as a gift for a friend, but the friend returned the painting, a deceptively simple depiction of fruit, because she found it unsettling.

[1] You can see an example of a seventeenth-century still life by a woman painter at collections.lacma.org/node/221448

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

• What fruits or vegetables are native to your region? Create a still life using several native fruits and vegetables that reflect how you feel about where you live.

• Think of a typically disregarded or undervalued subject or art form (for example, motivational posters, children's cartoons, advertisements, objects from your daily life, etc). Brainstorm ways to use this subject or art form in a way that changes people's perceptions of it and makes a forceful statement.

WEEPING COCONUTS (COCOS GIMIENTES)
1951
Frida Kahlo
Oil on board
Frame: 14 × 16 3/4 × 2 1/2 in. (35.56 × 42.55 × 6.35 cm)
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Bernard and Edith Lewin Collection of Mexican Art (M.2004.283.2)

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UNTITLED (COMB)

1970
Vija Celmins

In the early 1960s, young Latvian American artist Vija Celmins began painting life-size depictions of the mundane objects in her studio. These paintings changed the context of these otherwise ordinary things and reframed them as serious, almost unfamiliar subjects worthy of great art. By the end of the decade, Celmins had expanded this theme, making sculptures of familiar objects related to her childhood such as puzzles, pencils, erasers, and this comb. Executed on a monumental scale, these renditions are both serious and playful, a tone inspired by the quiet deadpan of French artist René Magritte. Celmins was particularly inspired by the oversized comb from Magritte's painting *Personal Values.* In this painting, Magritte explained, the comb loses its "social character" and becomes a useless object, stripped of its function. Celmins's sculpture echoes this transformation; it plays with scale, depriving the utilitarian object of its intended use and repurposing it as art.

In discussing her inspiration for this piece, Celmins also credits memories of a comb her parents owned when she was a child. Celmins's childhood nostalgia is both relatable and complicated by the fact that her childhood took place in Latvia and Germany during World War II (she moved to Indiana with her family at the age of ten). In her words,

> I missed my childhood. ...When I finally left my family and moved to Los Angeles to go to graduate school, I spent years working out my longing for that lost childhood. ...Because the first ten years of my life had been so dominated by the war in Europe, I found myself reaching back to it. I re-created the toys and puzzles and other things remembered from my school days.

Looking up at the oversize comb makes the viewer feels small. The distorted scale inspires a childlike sense of wonder and the mild confusion of seeing a familiar object out of context.

At the time the sculpture was conceived, Celmins was newly married, and the comb is the same height as her husband, perhaps bridging the gap between her old family and her new one. To make the sculpture, Celmins began by drawing the comb on a large piece of wood, and then took the wood to a lumberyard, where workers roughly cut out the shape of the comb. Celmins then slowly filed and sanded the wood to create the teeth and desired texture before spraying it with lacquer to imitate the faux tortoiseshell exterior of her parents' comb. Finally, she had a friend paint on the name of the Swiss comb company, Balloid, together with the word "handmade." The sculpture took her two years, on and off, to complete.

This is not a decorative sculpture, and, despite its "handmade" label (and the fact that it is actually handmade), it maintains the cold look of a mass-produced object. Its position in a corner of the gallery, like the comb in the Magritte painting, lends it a sense of isolation that is reinforced by the inherent strangeness of a six-foot-four-inch comb. Thus an intimate item connected with one's daily routine acquires a newfound peculiarity and a (literally) heightened status.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- How can you challenge people to look at something they usually take for granted in a new way?

- Pick a favorite artwork on view at LACMA, then think of a way to reinvent it and make it your own by changing the context, medium, scale, or content.

UNTITLED (COMB)
1970
Vija Celmins
Enamel on wood
77 × 24 in. (195.58 × 60.96 cm)
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Contemporary Art Council Fund (M.72.26)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: COMPOSING A SCENE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can artists invite people to look at a place in new ways?

GRADES

6-12

TIME

One or more class periods

ART CONCEPTS

Landscape, composition, perspective, and multimedia art.

MATERIALS

Phone camera or digital camera, drawing pencils, drawing paper, color pencils, drawing pens, color markers, and rulers.

TALKING ABOUT ART

Utagawa Hiroshige's prints give viewers a unique perspective on specific locations in Japan. By utilizing innovative framing and compositional techniques, his landscape works give viewers the sense of being in those locations.

How does Hiroshige arrange the composition? Where does he place the viewer in relation to the rest of the scene?
How do Hiroshige's prints create new perspectives of a place? Why do you think he composes the scene the way he does? What effect does it have on the way the viewer relates to the scene?

MAKING ART

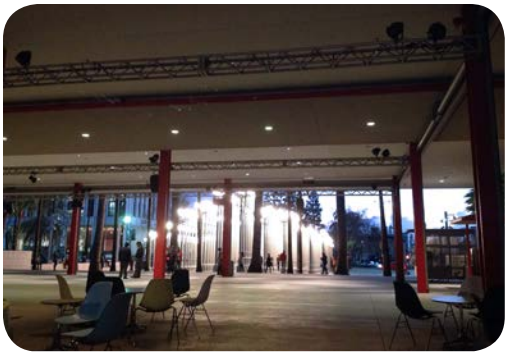
Divide into groups of three. Have each participant pick their role in the group: photographer, sketch artist, or writer. As a group, go outside and choose a location on campus. Look around: what elements are in, behind, above, or below that location? Choose a vertical element in that location as your focal point, then have your group's photographer take photos and your sketch artist draw simple sketches of the site incorporating the vertical element. Listen for what sounds can be heard there. What do you smell? Does the location have any historical significance? Has anything remarkable happened there in the past? Does the site have a purpose? Have your group's writer write down all sensory information and stories, words, or thoughts that arise in that location. During this time, share what you are experiencing with other members of your group. The process outside should take about 15 minutes.

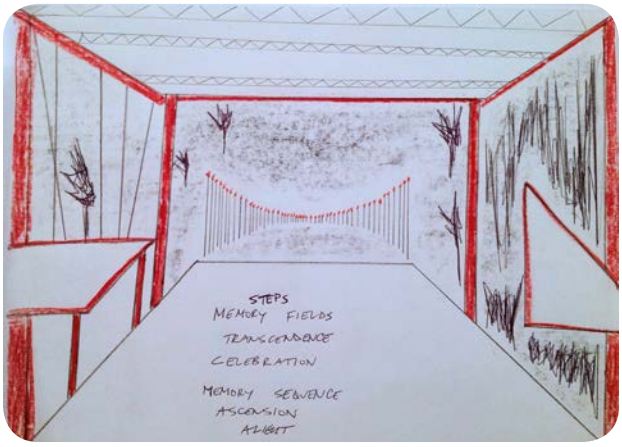
Back in the studio, look at your group's sketches, photos, and text. Choose ONE view of the location and create a rough sketch based on that view for one large artwork, incorporating words into the artwork. Continue to discuss all of your experiences from the time you spent in that location. Keeping these experiences in mind, use color pencils, pens, markers, and rulers to create your final artwork. The artmaking process back in the studio should take about 30 minutes.

REFLECTION

Arrange a display of all the sketches, writings and final artworks by each group around the room [if available, download camera photos onto computers and have slideshows running]. Ask students to walk around looking at the artworks. Discuss how each group's artworks portrayed their location. Are the locations recognizable? How does the composition transform the way you see that location? The gallery walk in the studio should take about 10 minutes.

EXAMPLE





CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

6-12.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) 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. 9-10.7 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. 11-12.5 Analyze how an [artist's] choices concerning how to structure specific parts of [an artwork] contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING- HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES. 6-12

6-10.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose. Compare how [artists] treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize. 6-8.7 Integrate visual information with other information in texts. 11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: EMPATHY EXERCISE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can you better empathize with a character from an artwork?

GRADES

K–4

TIME

Two class periods

CONCEPTS

Character, identity, and narrative.

MATERIALS

Brown paper bags, scissors, tape, popsicle sticks or pipe cleaners, colored paper, drawing materials, pen, and sketch paper.

TALKING ABOUT ART

One of the key aspects of interpreting art is the ability of a student to project her- or himself into the place of the subject-character depicted. Taking an empathetic stance and imagining the feelings of a character provides the opportunity for a student to think of experiences in which they found themselves thinking or feeling in a similar way.

Pablo Picasso's *Weeping Woman with Handkerchief,* 1937 features a woman who is crying. Strike the pose of this woman, and use exaggerated facial expressions and gestures to step into the role of the character depicted. How does it feel to strike this pose? Does it give you a better sense of what it feels like to be the woman in the painting? How do you think she feels? What could make you feel this way?

MAKING ART

This 45-minute workshop is designed to engage students with a quick and easy puppet-making activity with the goal of staging performances that are inspired by basic and complex figural scenes depicted in art.

Choose an artwork from LACMA's collection online, and make a list of some of the defining features of a key character in that artwork. What are his or her most recognizable characteristics? Consider defining the character's abilities, skills, and common activities using easily identifiable attributes. Make a quick sketch of the individual referring both to the image and the list of features that you have made.

The seam of the folded edge at the bottom of your brown paper bag will serve as the mouth, and the bottom of the bag will serve as the upper portion of your character's face. Define the head, face, and body of your character using colored paper, drawing materials, scissors, glue, and tape.

After the basic puppet is constructed, practice introducing your character to another student-character. Practice greeting another character by name as way of introducing the character into a scene. For instance Captain America might say, "Hello, Thor. Nice to see you on such short notice. Glad you brought your mighty hammer to the fight. It was just about to get sticky in here." Describe the setting of the scene, and think of ways in which the setting affects the characters' activities. Why are they there? What are they doing? Where will they go next? With a partner, use a pencil and paper to write down or act out a few lines of dialogue in sequence between the two characters. Establish identity, place, and motive in sentences that form a dialogue.

EXAMPLE

REFLECTION

As a pair, act out your scene for the class. Speak about who you depicted, why you chose that character, and how he, she, or it played an important role in the scene. Compliment your peers on the aspects of their performance that were most inspiring with the phrase, "I like that you..." Summarize how your production took shape, from the time you chose your character through the time you formed the dialogue, and even how it felt to do the performance. Reflect on surprises that you encountered during the activity. Did anything unexpected come up during the process? Did your ideas about your character change? What did this project teach you about empathizing with the people in your life and those you encounter in art?

CURRICULUM CONNECTION

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

K-4.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING- LANGUAGE.K-4

3-4.2 Paraphrase or determine main ideas in information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.K-4

K-1.3 Identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. K-2.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events. 3-4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WRITING.K-4

3-4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: EMOTIVE FRUITS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do artists convey emotions in still lifes using the objects in their immediate environment?

GRADES

3–5

TIME

One class period

ART CONCEPTS

Composition, still life, perspective, historical context, and objective and subjective.

MATERIALS

Several still life compositions (one per group), one box filled with strips of paper on which different emotions are written, pencils, pastels, and paper.

TALKING ABOUT ART

View and discuss *Weeping Coconuts (Cocos gimientes),* 1951 by Frida Kahlo. What are your initial observations when looking at this work? What emotions or descriptive terms are captured in this image?

This painting contains fruits in a state of emotional despair. Without the presence of humans, how can objects express emotions? How does Kahlo imbue the fruit in the painting with emotion? Is this painting an objective depiction of fruit or a subjective one?

Traditionally, fruit and flowers were among the few subjects that were acceptable for women to paint, so this subject takes on an additional layer of meaning for a woman painter like Kahlo. Why do you think still lifes were considered more respectable for women painters to depict? What does this tell us about women's role in the history of art?

MAKING ART

First, break up into small groups, then pick a view of the still life that you find captivating. As a group, draw a single strip of paper from the box of emotions. Then find a way to apply that emotion to the still life in front of you.

Each group member should spend at total of 30 minutes drawing their still life. Use the first 15 minutes to lay out your composition in pencil. Draw your view of the still life, organizing and altering the objects in your composition to project the emotion you chose. Use the next 15 minutes to finalize your drawing by adding texture and color with pastels.

REFLECTION

Post all of the drawings on a wall and take your time looking at the various visual interpretations of the still life compositions and the different emotions. Do you recognize certain moods? Is it a simple or difficult task to infuse an inanimate object with a human emotion? What was the most challenging aspect of the drawing process? Analyze another still life from your group, do they appear similar or different? Compare and contrast your composition with theirs.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION

To address the History-Social Sciences Standards: research, evidence, and point of view, as we analyze the context in which the painting was created we can establish a deeper connection to the social and political atmosphere in which it was created. Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories. This exercise facilitates historical Interpretation: students explain the central issues and problems from the past, (women's limited role in society) placing people and events in a matrix of time and place.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.3-5

3-5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners. 3-4.2 Paraphrase or determine main ideas in information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.3-5

5.9 Compare and contrast [artworks] in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: MINI GALLERIES

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How does context change the way you see a work of art?

GRADES

3–8

TIME

One or more class periods

ART CONCEPTS

2D and 3D art, medium, composition, spatial relationships, scale, theme, variety, and unity.

MATERIALS

A box with windows or without the lid, or cardboard to build a 2-3 wall diorama. Small, precut papers that will fit inside the box, and a variety of art-making media such as: colored pencils, paint, small paint brushes, pastels, markers, various papers, glue sticks, tape, scissors, pipe cleaners, modeling clay, recycled materials, etc.

TALKING ABOUT ART

View and discuss an image of Vija Celmins's *(Untitled) Comb,* 1970. What is the function, or purpose of this object? How do you think this sculpture was made?

Take a look at the dimensions of the sculpture (77inches x24inches). How does knowing the size of the sculpture change how you feel about it? Why would the artist choose to make such a large sculpture to depict such a small object? Why would the artists choose to make such a large sculpture of such a mundane object?

How is it different seeing this object in a gallery versus a barbershop? If you were going to put this sculpture in a museum gallery, what other objects would you put around it and why? Would you choose small pieces or large pieces? Where in the gallery would you put it (i.e. in the center of the room or off to a side)? Why?

Share your observations, interpretations, and inferences with a partner.

MAKING ART

Create your own gallery show. How will you decide what kind of artworks to make and show in your gallery? Working individually or collaborating in pairs or small groups, decide on a theme for your gallery, possibly by drawing a theme out of a bag filled with slips of paper with different themes written on them.

Themes can be specifically connected to an art concept like perspective, or themes can be broad like abstract or representational art inspired by Los Angeles.

Use small, precut papers provided by your teacher to draw, paint or collage artworks for your gallery or cut your own "canvases", making sure they'll fit inside your gallery. Use pipe cleaners, wire, clay, and small recyclable materials to make sculptures for the floor space of your gallery.

Next look at your artworks and decide how to arrange them in your gallery. How do they fit together based on subject, size, and medium? How can you create a balanced gallery space that highlights similarities and differences in the artworks and delivers a strong thematic message? Drawings, paintings, and collages can be adhered to the inside walls using glue stick or tape.

REFLECTION

Display the mini galleries in the classroom and facilitate a tour around them. Ask students to verbally share or write about how they interpreted their theme in each of the artworks that are on display in their gallery and why they arranged the gallery that way.

EXAMPLE

CURRICULUM CONNECTION

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.4-9

3-8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners. 6-8.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING- LANGUAGE.3-8

3.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING- HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES.4-8

6-8.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize an [art installation], including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
5905 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90036
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

LACMA

RESOURCES

BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

A MORE BEAUTIFUL QUESTION
Warren Berger

Journalist Warren Berger shows that one of the most powerful forces for igniting change and creativity is a simple, under-appreciated tool—questioning.

"THE CREATIVITY CRISIS"
Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman
Newsweek, July 19, 2010, 44-50

This article addresses the decline in creativity among American students and the many applications of creativity beyond the arts.

CREATIVITY: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DISCOVERY AND INVENTION
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

A classic study of the creative process by a legendary psychologist.

FLOW
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's famous investigations have revealed that what makes an experience genuinely satisfying is a state of consciousness called flow, in which people experience deep enjoyment and creativity.

SERIOUS CREATIVITY: USING THE POWER OF LATERAL THINKING TO CREATE NEW IDEAS
DeBono Edward

A fundamental book on deliberate creative thinking from a world-renowned expert in the field.

A WHOLE NEW MIND, WHY RIGHT-BRAINERS WILL RULE THE FUTURE
Daniel Pink

This book outlines the six abilities that are essential for professional success and personal fulfillment.

CREATING CREATIVE MINDS
Robert J. Sternberg and Todd I. Lubart.
Phi Delta Kappan, 8, 608-614

This article explores both what creativity is, and how to encourage its development in the classroom.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY IN ART LESSONS
George Szekley

This text explores creative ways to teach art.

MAGRITTE AND CONTEMPORARY ART: THE TREACHERY OF IMAGES
Stephanie Barron

This catalogue explores the influence of René Magritte on contemporary artists.

DEGAS AND THE DANCE
Jill Devonyar and Richard Kendall

This book illuminates Degas' innovative treatment of dance in his artwork in its historical context.

PICASSO AND THE WEEPING WOMEN
Judi Freeman

This text examines Picasso's development of the motif of the weeping woman.

FRIDA KAHLO: THE STILL LIFES
Salomón Grimberg

An exploration of Frida Kahlo's still life paintings.

HIROSHIGE: ONE HUNDRED FAMOUS VIEWS OF EDO
Henry D. Smith

Featuring exceptional reproductions of all 118 prints in the series, this catalogue offers a detailed discussion of each plate's artistic and cultural interest.

ONLINE RESOURCES

"CAPITALIZING ON COMPLEXITY" AND "LEADING THROUGH CONNECTIONS"
IBM

http://goo.gl/G09Dn4
http://goo.gl/en66BI

Insights from IBM's 2012 and 2010 investigations of what CEOs consider the most in-demand skills for today's work force.

DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY?
TED Talks

https://goo.gl/ouVvwh

Ken Robinson advocates creating an educational system that nurtures rather than undermines creativity.

21ST CENTURY MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES
Institute of Museum and Library Services

http://goo.gl/zyr3yI

Discover why libraries and museums are well-positioned to build the skills Americans need in the 21st century.

ARTIST VIJA CELMINS (VIDEO)
LACMA

http://goo.gl/gBQeUL

Vija Celmins speaks about the creation of *Untitled (Comb).*

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

PERFECT SQUARE
Michael Hall

This book follows a perfect square as it undergoes a number of transformations that encourage young children to think about form in new ways.

HOW THINGS WORK
Okido

This book encourages young children's curiosity about the world around them by following a group of children who take things apart, ask questions, and draw conclusions from their discoveries.

BEAUTIFUL OOPS
Barney Saltzberg

This book teaches kids that it's OK to make a mistake, and, in fact, a mistake is an adventure in creativity, a portal of discovery.