

Lesson Plan

Surrealism: Visions of the Mind

Title: The Subconscious Poet

In response to Ian Hugo's *Caravan* and Mary Frank's *Hand and Two Objects*..

Please discuss students' regular curriculum with the Artmobile Educator, for possible referential connections to material with which the students are already familiar. This lesson incorporates writing components that align with the Common Core State Standards. This lesson may be adjusted and adapted to suit the physical limits and time restraints of the hosting venue. This lesson is adaptable to be appropriate for the developmental abilities of any audience. Please discuss your needs with the Artmobile Educator.

Lesson Overview: Students will observe the work in the exhibition *Surrealism: Visions of the Mind*. After the initial viewing, students will discuss what they saw, and then return to the exhibition. Students will be asked to respond to Ian Hugo's *Caravan* and Mary Frank's *Hand and Two Objects*. Students will be invited to engage in a conversation about gestalt theory through investigation of dada and surrealist poetry. Students will be given the opportunity to create a surrealist poem by selecting words from a grab-bag, and then ordering those words to create a poem. Finally, students will have the chance to illustrate their surreal poems.

Observe: Students will initially experience the exhibition while taking notes and making sketches of their observations. Students will be asked to study what they think is important, and then to share their observations. Students will be directed toward Ian Hugo's *Caravan* and Mary Frank's *Hand and Two Objects*. Students will be asked how they interpret the narrative of each of these pieces, and to explore the concept of gestalt.

Question: Students will ask questions and engage in a dialogue about how our minds can "fill in the blanks" when we are reading or looking at images.

Guiding Questions:

- What is Andre Breton saying in his definition of surrealism?
"Surrealism, n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual functioning of thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern" (Breton, 26).
- How and why do our brain's make sense of seeming non-sense?
- What can you do as an artist to limit reason's control on your work?
- Why would an artist want to abandon reason? How might this benefit the creative process?

Explore: A.) Students will be invited to read excerpts from the surrealist manifesto.

Create: A.) Students will select three phrases from a poetry grab-bag, and use those phrases to construct a poem.

B.) Students will be given the opportunity to illustrate their poems.

Reflect: Students will be given the opportunity to share their final images and reflect on the process of creating an image out of random words.

Suggestions for Teachers

K-4

Read “The Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carroll

Read “The Object Lesson” Edward Gorey

Read “The Boy Who Loved Words” by Roni Schotter

Read “You’re Toast and Other Metaphors We Adore” by Nancy Loewen

Possible Vocabulary: Reason, Random, Meaning, Metaphor

5-8

Read poetry by Garcia Lorca

Read The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster

Possible Vocabulary: Reason, Gestalt, Juxtapose, Metaphor

7-12

Read poetry by Garcia Lorca

Study the Renaissance and Enlightenment

Study Dada and WWI

Read the “First Surrealist Manifesto” by Andre Breton

Read the “Second Surrealist Manifesto” by Andre Breton

Possible Vocabulary: Reason, Gestalt, Juxtapose, Metaphor

Suggested Use in the Curriculum: The study of *Surrealism: Visions of the Mind* ties into multiple curricular areas including visual arts, performing arts, music, language arts, philosophy, history and social studies, science, math, engineering, and business.

Specific Connections to the Wyoming State Standards for Visual and Media Art

K-4

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 4.1.A.1; FPA 4.1.A.2; FPA 4.1.A.3; FPA 4.1.A.4; FPA 4.1.A.5; FPA 4.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 4.2.A.1; FPA 4.2.A.2; FPA 4.2.A.3; FPA 4.2.A.4

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 4.3.A.1; FPA 4.3.A.2; FPA 4.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 4.4.A.1; FPA 4.4.A.4

5-8

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 8.1.A.1; FPA 8.1.A.2; FPA 8.1.A.3; FPA 8.1.A.4; FPA 8.1.A.5; FPA 8.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 8.2.A.1; FPA 8.2.A.2; FPA 8.2.A.3; FPA 8.2.A.4;

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 8.3.A.1; 8.3.A.2; FPA 8.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 8.4.A.1; FPA 8.4.A.3; FPA 8.4.A.4

9-12

S1: Creative Expression Through Production: FPA 11.1.A.1; FPA 11.1.A.2; FPA 11.1.A.3; FPA 11.1.A.4; FPA 11.1.A.5; FPA 11.1.A.6

S2: Aesthetic Perception: FPA 11.2.A.1; FPA 11.2.A.2; FPA 11.2.A.3; FPA 11.2.A.4

S3: Historical and Cultural Context: FPA 11.3.A.1; FPA 11.3.A.2; FPA 11.3.A.3

S4: Artistic Connections: FPA 11.4.A.1; FPA 11.4.A.3; FPA 11.4.A.4

Inherent connections to the Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening exist within the lesson, along with possible connections to the Common Core State Standards for Writing.