NAME OF TEACHER: Carly Huibregtse

LESSON PLAN TITLE: A Picture’s Worth 1000 Words

NUMBER OF SESSIONS: 2

BIG IDEA: Language is a system that we have not yet explored. We will examine how image inspires text and text inspires image. We will see how both text and image can be used to communicate and to miscommunicate, and how both of these forms of communication are open to interpretation.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEARNERS (graphic, social, and cultural): This lesson will take place in a mixed classroom of 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-grade students. At this age, children place high importance on the thoughts, opinions, and their interactions with peers. Through observation of and experience with this particular group, we have noted the social aspect of the classroom to be quite important to our students. For that reason, a highly collaborative artmaking activity will be ideal.

CENTRAL FOCUS: Practice the principle of interpretation that states that, “interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative,” (Barrett, 1994) by using the interpretive process to create stories. Develop craft in photomontage techniques demonstrated by John Baldessari while creating connections using a collaborative system to produce a triptych.

OBJECTIVES AND NATIONAL STANDARDS: Interpreting art

VA:Re8.1.7: Interpret art by analyzing art-making approaches, the characteristics of form and structure, relevant contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

-Students will analyze the artwork of John Baldessari using the vocabulary words “layering,” “repetition,” and “silhouette.”
- Students will interpret the artwork of John Baldessari based on the principle that “interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative.”

**Developing works of art/design**

**VA:Cr1.2.7:** Develop criteria to guide making a work of art or design to meet an identified goal.

- Students will develop craft in using photomontage techniques of layering, repetition, and silhouette, and will demonstrate understanding of techniques through writing.

- Students will practice neatness and demonstrate good craftsmanship in photomontage and text panel.

**Relating to art context**

**VA:Cr1.1.6:** Combine concepts collaboratively to generate innovative idea for creating art.

- Students will create connections using a collaborative system in production of their triptychs.

**VOCABULARY TO BE INTRODUCED THROUGHOUT LESSON:**

**Interpret:** to give or provide the meaning of

**System:** a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized scheme or method.

**Collaboration:** the act of working with someone to create or produce something. **Silhouette:** the dark shape and outline of someone or something visible against a lighter background, especially in dim light.

**Found photography:** the use of lost, unclaimed, or discarded photographs. **Photomontage:** a montage constructed from photographic images (collage). **Repetition:** one object or shape repeated. **Layering:** placing images on top of one another to create a new image. **Triptych:** a work of art made up of three sections.

**Text:** fine, large handwriting.

**Where vocabulary will be practiced through writing and art making:** Students will use vocabulary while interpreting John Baldessari’s artwork, writing about their own, and discussing...
classmates’ artwork in critique.

**LANGUAGE FUNCTION USED THROUGHOUT LESSON:** Type of language function: Interpretation Emphasis of language function: Discourse

**Where language function will be practiced:** Language function will be practiced while using Feldman’s Model to interpret John Baldessari’s artwork in the interpretation packet.

**LEARNING SESSION PART ONE:**

**MOTIVATION/INTRODUCTION:** Students will be introduced to John Baldessari and his artwork through teacher instruction and provided packet. By working through Feldman’s Model in the interpretation packet, students will demonstrate that art is open to multiple interpretations by creating stories based on Baldessari’s photomontages.

**Questions based on Images:**

**Essential:** How do we interpret stories in images? **Scaffolding:** What do you see in this image? Why does the artist cover up parts of the image? What story does this image tell?

**ART MAKING:**

**Supplies:** 8x8” black and white construction paper, uncut construction paper in all colors, tracing paper, rulers, magazines and other found photographs, scissors, x-actos, cutting mats, pencils, glue sticks, teacher sample.

**Teacher instruction:** Explain Baldessari’s system that will be used as inspiration for our project -- studio assistants give him a phrase to illustrate, or give him an image that he translates into a story. Introduce collaborative process that we will use -- each student creates a photomontage which will be interpreted by a classmate to create a story and text panel which will be illustrated by a classmate to create another photomontage, resulting in a triptych. Demonstration of layering, repetition, and creating a cutout silhouette from a photographic reference. Demonstration of x-acto use and gluing neatly. Give instruction to create an 8x8” photomontage using found imagery and at least two of the aforementioned techniques -- it will be the first
panel in the collaborative triptych.

**Students at work:** Students will peruse sources (magazines, found photographs) and select interesting imagery to create their photomontage. The goal is not to create an image with a clear story, but to create an image that can be interpreted in a new way by a classmate to create their own story. Students will demonstrate at least two of the three photomontage techniques discussed.

**Closure:** Students will write in their packets which photomontage techniques they used.
LEARNING SESSION PART TWO:

MOTIVATION/INTRODUCTION: Overview of last lesson -- John Baldessari and his system, and the system we will be using for our project. Discussion of use of text in Baldessari’s artwork.

Questions based on Images: Essential: How does text change the way we understand an artwork? Scaffold: How can text create clarity? How can it create confusion?
ART MAKING:

**Supplies:** artwork from previous session, 8x8” black and white construction paper, uncut construction paper in all colors, tracing paper, rulers, magazines and other found photographs, glue sticks, scissors, x-actos, cutting mats, pencils, sharpie markers, white chalk markers, teacher samples.

**Teacher instruction (demo):** Demonstrate creating an interpretive story by looking at photomontage from previous session and following Feldman’s Model. Demonstrate shortening story to six words to produce a story that can be interpreted in different ways. Six-word-story will be used to create text panel. Use ruler and pencil to measure guidelines on (new) 8x8” construction paper. Use stencils or freehand to write story on paper. Fill in with sharpie (for white paper) or chalk (for black).

**Students at work:** Students will each draw a classmate’s name from a hat, then will observe, analyze, and interpret the classmate’s photomontage to create a story. They will shorten story to six words that will be used to create a text panel, the second part of the triptych. When this step is complete, students will pull a name from a hat, once again, and use that classmate’s text panel to create their final photomontage, completing the triptych. Students will record in their packet whose photomontage and text panel they observed, and how each of their new panels relate, as well as what photomontage techniques they used.

**Closure:** Students will complete fill-in-the-blank statements about their pieces, what techniques they used, and how they were inspired by the classmates with whom they collaborated, followed by a whole class critique of all triptychs.

**ADAPTATIONS:** Letter stencils will be made available for students who struggle with neat handwriting to use while creating their text panels.

**RELEVANT THEORIES:**


Hetland, L. (n.d.). *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education*. 

**ASSESSMENTS:** **Initial assessment:** Students answer questions about how we communicate through text and image and how we read text and image differently.

**Progressive/Formative assessment:** Informal in-class consults with students while creating pieces. What techniques are you using? How does this connect to your classmate’s piece?

**Final/Summative assessment:** The summative assessment will be a rubric that will align with the lesson’s objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Analysis of art based on academic language of layering, repetition, and silhouette.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advanced</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Minimal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 points</td>
<td>Student uses 3 terms of academic language in the analysis of John Baldessari’s work using full sentences to demonstrate a strong understanding of their meaning.</td>
<td>Student uses 3 terms of academic language in the analysis of John Baldessari’s work using full sentences to demonstrate an acceptable understanding of their meaning.</td>
<td>Student uses 2 terms of academic language in the analysis of John Baldessari’s work and/or sometimes the student uses full sentences and/or demonstrates some misunderstanding of their meaning.</td>
<td>Student uses 1 or no terms of academic language, does not use full sentences, demonstrates a general misunderstanding of their meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Interpretation of John Baldessari’s work based on the principle that “interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative” (4 points)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Student writes interpretive story using <strong>five or more</strong> complete sentences, making strong connections between their story and their description of John Baldessari’s artwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Student writes interpretive story using <strong>three to five</strong> complete sentences, making some connections between their story and the artwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student uses fewer than three complete sentences and makes minimal connections between story and artwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student does not connect story to artwork.</td>
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**Develop craft in photomontage techniques (silhouette, repetition, layering) and demonstration of understanding through writing (5 points)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Student demonstrates use of all <strong>three</strong> techniques, and discusses in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>Student demonstrates use of <strong>two</strong> techniques, and discusses in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Student demonstrates use of <strong>two</strong> techniques, but does not discuss in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>Student demonstrates use of <strong>one</strong> or <strong>no</strong> techniques.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Creating connections (5 points)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advanced</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proficient</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Minimal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student writes in-depth about strong connection between their artwork</td>
<td>Student writes about connection between their artwork and both collaborators</td>
<td>Student makes a weak or unconvincing connection between their artwork</td>
<td>Student does not write about connection between their and their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>and both of their collaborators’ pieces.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>and their collaborators’ artwork in writing AND/OR Student only connects their artwork to one collaborator’s piece.</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning disposition / demonstration of neatness (2 points)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Both Photomontages: Pieces are glued together flatly, no pieces hanging over edge of page, no glue marks AND Text Panel: Pencil guidelines are erased. Writing is legible and bold.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>One or both Photomontages: Pieces are glued together flatly, but some glue marks are visible AND/OR Text Panel: Writing is legible and bold, but pencil guidelines can be seen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>One or both Photomontages: Borders aren’t clean. Pieces are coming unglued AND/OR Text Panel: Text is unclear or sloppily written</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>One or both Photomontages: Pieces are not sufficiently glued together AND/OR Text Panel: Text is illegible</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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John Baldessari

- American artist: based in California

- Taught art for almost 30 years, at high schools, junior colleges, community colleges, and universities. Also was married to a teacher.

- Started as a painter, is now known for making art with found photography and text.

- Uses image and text as systems of communication.

- Explores how we can communicate and miscommunicate. His artwork is open to interpretation.

“I think art, if it’s meaningful at all, is a conversation with other artists, you say something, they say something, you move back and forth.”

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

**Interpret**: to give or provide the meaning of

**System**: a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized scheme or method.

**Collaboration**: the act of working with someone to create or produce something.

**Silhouette**: the dark shape and outline of someone or something visible against a lighter background, especially in dim light.

**Found photography**: the use of lost, unclaimed, or discarded photographs.

**Photomontage**: a montage constructed from photographic images (collage).

**Repetition**: one object or shape repeated.

**Layering**: placing images on top of one another to create a new image.

**Triptych**: a work of art made up of three sections.

**Text**: fine, large handwriting.
What do you see in this image?

Where do you see repetition?

Create an interpretive story for this image. Use at least 5 complete sentences. Be imaginative.
What do you see in this image?

Where do you see silhouettes?

Create an interpretive story for this image. Use at least 5 complete sentences. Be imaginative.
ARTMAKING

John Baldessari works with the idea of language (words and image) and communication/miscommunication. He does an exercise with studio assistants where they will give him a phrase and he creates an image from it, or the other way around. We will do a similar exercise, using techniques of photomontage (layering, cutout silhouettes, repeated shapes) to create collaborative triptychs with classmates.

STEP ONE:
Use at least two of the discussed techniques with found imagery to create an 8x8” photomontage. It is not important to have a story or idea as you work, but keep in mind that a classmate will be observing your piece and creating a story from it.

STEP TWO:
Observe a classmate’s photomontage from day one. What do you see? What do you think is happening? Write a story or multiple stories of what you interpret. Reduce your writing to a 6 word story. Create an 8x8” text panel with your six word story.

STEP THREE:
Observe a classmate’s text panel. What imagery does this make you think of? How can you show this story through photomontage? Use at least two techniques and found imagery to do so (8x8” format).

The result will be triptychs (photomontage, text panel, photomontage in a row) each made by three different artists. Each series may or may not seem related (like this piece by Baldessari), but are connected in that they each inspired the next step.
Work Samples

Cats are taking over... Makeup Artists

The Red Clan is on fleek!

She's Queen of the Purple Planet.