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ABSTRACT

This project is to help students learn about ways to investigate self-esteem and develop resiliency through the medium of visual art. The project is developed with middle school girls in mind but can be used with all people who experience some loss of self through socialization. The art studio lends itself to experiment with ideas and self-discovery with its more relaxed and open atmosphere. The course is divided into three themes: history, myths and folklore, and dreams. Learning activities include: (1) "Cave Paintings"; (2) "West African Women's Decoration on Houses"; (3) "Dream Room"; (4) "Caring"; (5) "Body Image"; (6) "Egyptian Sarcophagus"; (7) "Aboriginal Dream Painting"; and (8) "Assigning Color to Feelings." An evaluation proposal, bibliography, and suggested integrated reading list conclude the paper. (EH)

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# BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH VISUAL ART

*A Curriculum for Middle School Girls  
Designed by Ann Emerson  
April, 1994*

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SO 028 554

"One cannot divine nor forecast the conditions that will make happiness; one only stumbles upon them by chance, in a lucky hour, at the world's end somewhere, and holds fast to the days.."

--Willa Cather

### THE WOMAN IN THE ORDINARY

The woman in the  
ordinary pudgy graduate student girl  
is crouching with eyes and muscles clenched.  
Round and smooth as a pebble  
you efface yourself  
under ripples of conversation and debate.  
The woman in the block of ivory soap  
has massive thighs that neigh  
and great breasts and strong arms that blare and trumpet.  
The woman of the golden fleece  
laughs from the belly uproariously  
inside the girl who imitates  
a Christmas card virgin with glued hands.  
It is time to bust out of girls scout camp.  
It is time to stop running  
for most popular sweetheart of Campbell Soup.  
You are still searching for yourself in others' eyes  
and creeping so you won't be punished.  
In you bottled up is a woman peppery as curry,  
a yam of a woman of butter and brass,  
compounded of acid and sweet like pineapple,  
like goldenrod ready to bloom.

-Marge Piercy (1973)

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RESEARCH

There is a wealth of information on self-esteem in psychological and educational journals and periodicals. Because self-esteem is critical to a person's well being, studies and their statistics have been fostered by many foundations and universities and while there is much information associated with the problems of low self-esteem, there are only a few psychologists and teachers proposing solutions to the problems. Nel Noddings in her book The Challenge to Care in the Schools provides a definitive plan to change and offers a convincing argument for "now" rather than "later". The most helpful information about girls came from the rich Gilligan books and the Harvard project.

The many books I read were invaluable in presenting views of girls and women. I tried mostly to read information gathered by women on women and girls. Just as Feminist literature and thought has infused existing Eurocentric male dominant thought, study on adolescent girls widens all of our perspectives. Through a telephone interview with the originator of the popular program "Tribes", Jeanne Gibbs, I discovered that "Tribes" has evolved into a cooperative learning course and is now named "Conflict Resolution". Gibbs feels that the violence in women's and girl's lives is often not addressed. The limits

forced on girls in order to protect them take away from their ability to be in the outside world without fear and she feels training in "Conflict Resolution" benefits everyone.

Brainstorming with 6th and 7th grade girls at the Masters School about self-esteem reinforced my opinion that by listening to kids you find the real center of their concerns and questions. While the sixth and seventh graders questions were similar, 6th grade girls were more interested in themselves, and 7th graders clearly wanted to know what their peers thought of them. During that intense morning, girls revealed their desire to explore these questions:

#### 6th Grade

When someone insults you, how do you feel?  
 How do you show emotion?  
 What do you think of yourself?  
 How do you get self-esteem?  
 What do you think about yourself compared to what others think about you?  
 Why is self-esteem important?  
 How does self-esteem connect me to others?

#### 7th Grade

How does a person get self-esteem?  
 How does self-esteem affect me?  
 Why do different people have different levels of self-esteem?  
 What kinds of things raise or lower your feelings yourself?  
 Why do peers and family affect your self-esteem?  
 Why do you misinterpret other people's signals?  
 Why do people mask low self esteem?  
 How does self-esteem reflect and affect relationships with others?

## Rationale

The purpose of this project is to learn about ways that middle school girls might investigate self-esteem and develop resiliency through the medium of visual art. An emerging body of evidence points to a contracting sense of self young women typically experience at this developmental time. While this project has been developed with middle school girls in mind, I feel it is important to acknowledge that all people, regardless of gender, experience some loss of self through their socialization. This loss is often manifested by a decreased ability to recognize and to express what is truthful and by an increased separation between internal and external realities.

As an art teacher, I have sought to provide a deep, expressive and enduring sense of inner connectedness for my students. My experience in the classroom has been that only a handful of students are able to achieve this connection, and the foremost question in my own mind has been how to explore and somehow reproduce these moments of creation and connectedness in useful form. My work at The Masters School with adolescent girls has been a catalyst for my own thinking about how and in what setting I might further explore the inner voice and connection through the

discipline of art. These past three years it has become increasingly clear to me that young women often deny what they know to be true to belong to this culture. Their survival seems to depend on compromising, even abandoning, important parts of themselves.

Carol Gilligan challenges educators with new information from her studies of girls and women. In her book In A Different Voice(1982), she voices that females have a different, equally valid, relational, care-centered context for making decisions. Concerned with relationships and connections, they define themselves primarily in terms of relationships to others. The need we all have, to be actively in relationship to each other, is permitted and even encouraged until adolescence. Then the educational system and the culture at large steer girls away from their centers, fostering competition and creating separatists in the process. Conflicted messages from teachers, parents, peers and the media cause girls around the ages of 12 or 13 to assume a self-imposed silence.

Gilligan and Brown, in their 1992 book, Meeting At The Crossroads, contrast boys and girls modes of moral understanding. Their research indicates that boys use a hierarchical ordering to resolve conflict while girls describe a network of relationships. Gilligan and Brown examine the significance of these two modalities of solving moral conflict. Their study reflects on what is missing in women's development and also recognizes what is present.

Their realization that girls modalities of moral understanding are contextual and constructed helps curriculum makers and teachers expand programs to encompass gender differences.

Inspired by Gilligan, philosopher and former math teacher Nel Noddings proposes radical change in curriculum and teaching to acknowledge moral caring. In her book, The Challenge To Care In Schools (1992), she sees reform desperately needed in our secondary schools. Her proposal recognizes multiple intelligences in students and multiple aspects of life --physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual. Eloquently critical of education's limited agenda of today, Noddings argues that because of the social changes over the last 40 years and because schools are multi-purpose institutions, they should now be committed to caring for children, so that children will be prepared to care. Self-care, care for others, and care for our endangered planet offer many paths to study life's questions and the human made world.

A 1992 study commissioned by the American Association of University Women, "How Schools Shortchange Girls", indicated that 60 percent of elementary school girls feel positive about themselves; by high school that number falls to 29 percent. With boys, by contrast, the numbers drop from 67 percent to 46 percent--a significantly smaller

decline. The reasons for the drop in girls' self-esteem are complex and not fully understood. Many researchers believe the decline has its roots in deep-seated societal stereo-types. As girls mature, they confront a culture that exploits an idealized vision of femininity even as it assigns most women subordinate roles. (Teaching Tolerance P. 24)

These statistics show that teaching patterns and schools favor boys and indicate that school reasons for drops in self-esteem in all stu especially in girls, Schools and teachers recognized the turmoil that happens during adults have viewed this as a time of trans psychologists have called it a passage, it students are marked for life and never req themselves. Instead of matching programs needs in the Middle School years, educato the rules and students often fail to find meaning and connections in their school work. Distance between teachers and students increases at a time, when intimacy and the perception of others assume primary importance. Theories about adolescence say successful development results in a clear sense of self and emerging identity. Introspection is necessary and often becomes a preoccupation.

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This evaluation of one's self happens in several domains: academic performance, athletic ability, peer popularity, family acceptance and approval, and general



self-worth. (Pope, McHale, and Craighead, 1988) With girls, I would add the domain of body image because girls are taught from an early age that "Beauty is Good".

Dr. Jeanne Marecek, of Swarthmore College, calls for programs that communicate views of women's bodies that are powerful and in control of their own sexuality. Current Messages to young women, she remarks, "often identify women's bodies as sites of shame, objectification, danger, and coercion." (Marecek, 1990) Physical appearance is of the utmost importance as girls feel more negative about their bodies as they go through puberty. Girls believe these changes reinforce gender stereotypes and lead to a decline in self-esteem. (Greenburg, Lake 1991) The media projects images of sex in terms of violence or power, and sexual activity is spoken about primarily in negative terms, making sexuality for many teenagers extremely confusing. It seems that there is hardly an area of human life where self-esteem does not play a part. Health problems attributed to low self-esteem include substance abuse, school dropout, depression, suicide, and eating disorders. Eating disorders affect mostly young women with 90 to 95 per cent of all cases of anorexia/ bulimia occurring in girls.

Because dieting is such a widespread phenomenon in this culture, adolescent girls are particularly at risk as they try to straddle and make sense of their internal and

external worlds. Girls suffering from eating disorders have yet to reject images of "Superwoman" and the cultural values which link success with separation and independence.

Director of research at the University of Minnesota Adolescent Health Program, Dr. Michel Resnick, emphasizes the need to move to research on resiliency and resistance. He acknowledges that there is a consensus among many researchers about actions that work. He finds that parents and schools have a stronger influence on adolescents' self-esteem than have their teenaged peers. He also identifies "academic connectedness" as the second most important predictor of resiliency. Teachers are especially critical. Spiritual connectedness and low level family stress are the other two key factors which positively affect teens.

Psychologist Susan Harter finds that development is most likely to be promoted by adults who model, as well as encourage, the communication of a personal point of view that may be different from others. This viewpoint can be held while at the same time being open to the view of others. She also observes that in the past, programs that have tried to directly work on self-esteem have not been successful. Most programs now try to work on self-esteem in the context of some other issue, like math or science learning.

(Harter, 1990)

Carol Gilligan offers "five psychological truths" for the language of the psyche. The psyche is a dynamic process that is in constant dialogue with parts of itself and with others.

1. The psyche's logic is a logic of association as well as a formal logic of classification and control.
2. What is unvoiced or unspoken, because it is "out of relationship," tends to get out of perspective and to dominate psychic life.
3. What is dissociated or repressed-known and then not known--tends to return and return and return.
4. The hallmarks of loss are idealization and devaluation which cover rage, and under the rage, feelings of sadness, which hide feelings of utter helplessness and vulnerability.

One learns the answers to one's own questions, which change over time.

By using the five rules of the psyche, a person can recall those moments of conflict and of resistance and reclaim the authentic self. " (Debold, Wilson, Malave 1993)

The studies of Gilligan and other researchers indicate that the inclusion of adolescent development questions and recognition that girls have traditionally been left out of humanities curriculum has lead me to search for ways to intertwine the study of self-esteem, which is a prime concern for middle school girls, with the visual art discipline.

The art studio lends itself to experiment with ideas and self-discovery with its more relaxed and open atmosphere. In the studio, students and teachers tend to work collaboratively and in less competitive and less judgemental ways. In this milieu students regularly discuss not only their on-going art projects, but every aspect of their lives. These questions and concerns about the emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of oneself leads to self inquiry and the ability to generate original ideas. These same art processes give rise to alternatives and expand possibilities. Different points of view are perceived by the student through discussion and the responses of others. Art processes allow the student to look inward to uncover and explore inner conflicts. Discussion with other students about one's own art work can become lenses for self-perception and understanding. There are no wrong answers in the art studio. These higher order thinking skills reach many areas of knowing.

Through Fine Arts every child can experience success. It doesn't matter what academic success the child attains in other subjects. Art speaks many languages. Jacques Barzun, in the 1973 Mellon Lectures on the Fine Arts declared that "art is power." He said that art influences the mind, the nerves, the feelings, the soul" and that it "carries messages of hope, hostility, derision and moral

rebuke. It can fight material and spiritual evils and can transmit the ideals of a community now living, long past or soon to be born. "The arts are a multi-generational communicator." (Washington Post 3-21-93)

GOALS

- I. Foster connections in experience of adolescent girls.  
to help reconcile crisis in self esteem which often takes  
place at this point in development.
  - A. Historical Level
  - B. Community/ Peer Level - Myths
  - C. Personal Level - Dreams
  
- II. Capitalize upon and maximize developmental moment  
through visual art curriculum.
  
- III. Build artistic and aesthetic skills through problem  
solving and creating one's own artistic expression.

**BUILDING SELF ESTEEM THROUGH VISUAL ART**

**HISTORY**

Personal  
 Women as artists  
 Images of Women  
 Body Image  
 Family

**MYTHS/FOLKLORE**

Heroines  
 Goddesses  
 Totems  
 Symbols

**DREAMS**

Night  
 Day  
 Desires  
 Romance  
 Career  
 Adventure

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. What is self-esteem? Who am I?
2. How do I develop healthy self-esteem?
3. How does self-esteem connect me to my world?

## OBJECTIVES

1. Introduce and recognize women visual artists as an important part of the historical perspective.
2. Discover appropriate women models.
3. Understand Art as a language without words, a language which gives form to feelings/emotions.
4. Analyze how women have been portrayed through history.
5. Produce art works that express emotion or tell a story.
6. Understand how values are transferred from culture to self.
7. Research the loss of connection.
8. Discover multiple views of one's self.
9. Create group respect and cohesiveness.
10. Recognize conflict as a part of life.
11. Connect individual with larger social and historical context.

## ORGANIZATION

This course is divided into three themes: History, Myths and Folklore, and Dreams. Art History gives us the historical level, myths and folklore relate to the community peer level and dreams connect our personal psyche to ourselves and others.

The arts have long been a universal language to study History. Art images have been with us since the early cave dwellers and continue to comment on society. Integrating middle school students social studies curriculum with Art will connect the two classes to each other and reinforce the idea of knowledge overlapping time and place. The advantage of using different times and cultures present useful lessons about the relationships between people. This multi-cultural approach to Art and History helps students relate to diversity and find what connects them both in time and symbols. Also understanding another culture by actually engaging in an art activity takes on a personal meaning. Artists reflect, record, and confront the social part of society. Artists also give tangible form to feelings. Artists through time have offered their own innovative ways of seeing. Art History comments on politics, war, gender and the spiritual side of a culture. Through painting and

sculpture we can discover how women were portrayed in a particular time period. We can find relationships between peoples beliefs and ideas. We can question what art is telling us about the political, religious, and personal lives of women. We can also bring to light any women who were artists, and research womens resistance to power.

The folklore of different cultures reflects varying historical and regional perspectives. The comparative study of folklore has revealed a nucleus of stories or myths which have been told again and again throughout human history. Interestingly enough the universal themes of these stories are common to all cultures. Naturally there are regional and historical particulars to these tales, but such themes as creation, marriage, union and division, heroism, death, afterlife, and the tension of good and evil remain a constant. The psychologist Carl Jung has called such themes archetypal patterns, and he has further identified archetypal roles that players in folkloric drama assume. For example, the notion of the healer, the teacher, the warrior, and the hero/heroine exists within every cultural pantheon. Adolescent girls are particularly at risk today because the popularly-held notions of archetypal forms often undermine their psychological wholeness. Is the anorexic model draped over a BMW, cigarette in hand, an appropriate heroine? Will they feel honestly healed by

being encouraged to separate from their families of origin and quest alone into the world in search of their independence?

Joseph Campbell says "Myths are public dreams, dreams are private myths." The unconscious nourishes and directs the world of our dreams, and these dreams may be entirely personal or adhered to on a cultural or national level. The symbolic realm, which certainly encompasses the visual arts is the primary expression of these universal themes. For example, within the Native American tradition women have always been visually portrayed as equal to men while within the history of Western art women have been primarily depicted as objects of possession. Much of our current advertising springs from the legacy of the Euro-centric nude who was painted to be owned, looking out at her audience as a spectator and not a participant. Given the power of the visual images which bombard us today, the self-esteem of adolescent girls is inevitably undermined as they continually witness female objectification. How many healthy and inspired public dreams exist for young women currently coming of age? How can we create a new mythology which honors both women and men, which exists as an enhancement of female self-esteem, and which embraces the beauty and the mysteries of life?

### TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Link Art to Social Studies/History, Science and English if possible to integrate learning and build connections. This will stimulate professional growth in teachers and increase enthusiasm and creativity.
2. Rely on student interest and input to help set the agenda. Teachers and students working together will determine what they see as the most important questions.
3. Depend on students and teachers to work together in order to create an environment where caring about each other's opinions, feelings, and learning predominates. Stay open to dissenting or controversial opinions. Show students how feedback can be helpful and give them a choice on whether they are willing to accept it.
4. Value creativity and flexibility. Change the format if necessary to make connections with any group of students.
5. Keeping a journal, guided imagery, and group work enrich every participant and focus attention on connections.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

## CAVE PAINTING

### Introduction

The arts have been a universal language since human life began. Art carries symbolic meaning, understood without words. The Lascaux paintings in France and the Tassili Frescoes in Southwest Africa overwhelm viewers with their sense of power and remind the world of the technical capabilities and genius of artists recording their culture and enlisting the help of the spirits. Archeologists have written that animals ranked on the level of Gods and Kings. There was a connection between hunting and fishing and the notion that the world is governed by magic or religious power. It is thought that the drawings were part of a larger religious ceremony.

1. What are the stories these paintings tells us?
2. How were the paintings "seen" in the darkest of caves?
3. Do you think that Paleolithic humans might have painted their walls simply for decoration?
4. What do paintings and posters that we hang on our walls mean?
5. Does graffiti mean anything to us? What does it tells us about power. Who does graffiti?

### ACTIVITY

#### Part I

On illustration or hard-board re-create the texture and color of a cave with tempera paint. Compare both subtle and intense color. Point out the power of color. Use dry sponges, plastic bottle tops or anything that students invent to make texture. Demonstrate the effect of light over dark.

## Part II

Ask students to think of a story about themselves or simply to draw things that are important to them. Tell them to pretend this is a wall in their cave. Suggest pets, parents, siblings. They might want to draw something they are afraid of or an activity they especially like or a musical instrument that they play. Emphasize the simplicity and imperfections of the lines and shapes in the examples of original paintings. Markers, pastels, and conte crayon work well over tempura. Discuss how different lines, colors, shapes, and space establish moods and feelings.

## Journal

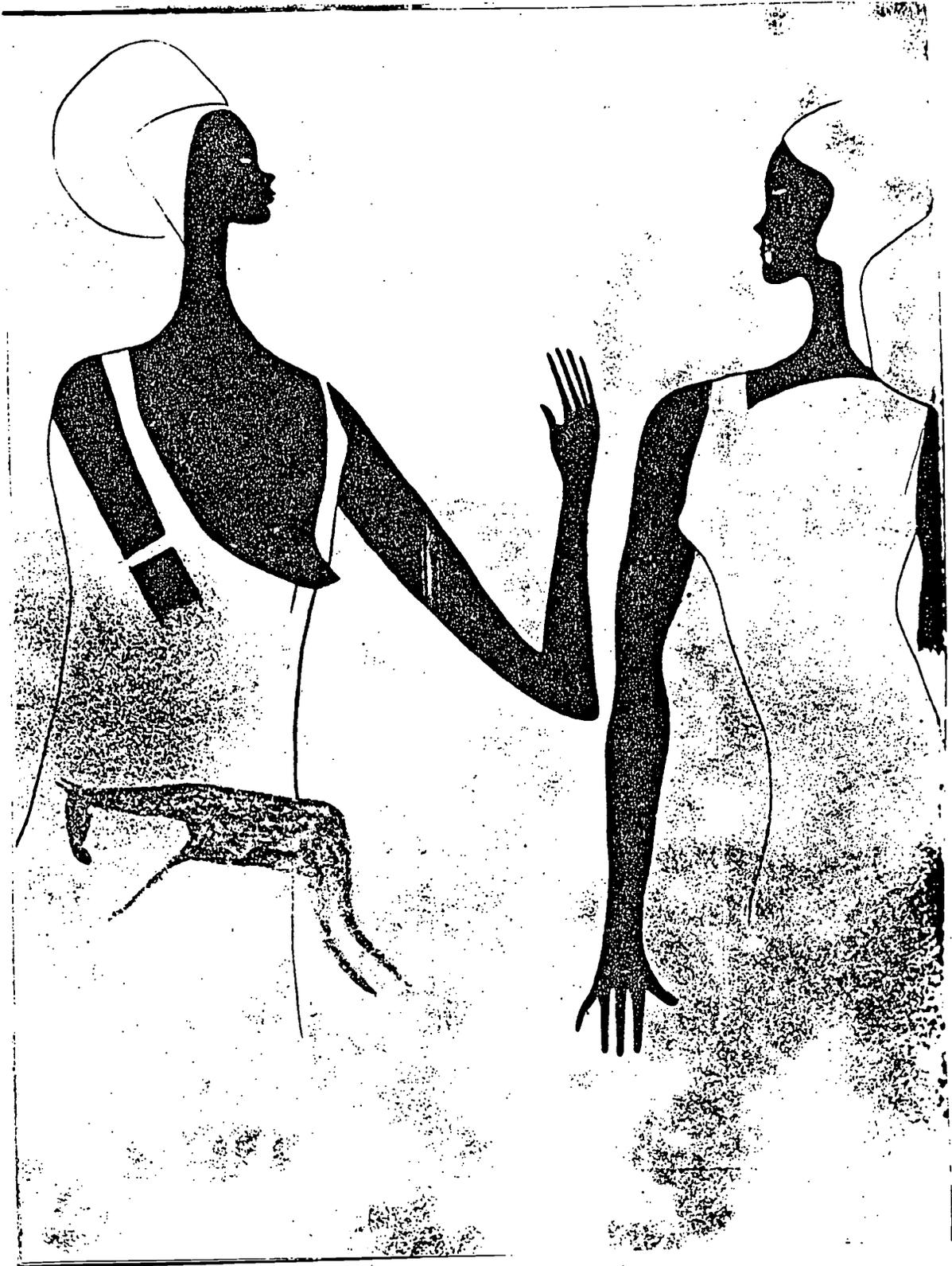
Describe a tradition or celebration that you take part in. Tell what it means to you, why it is important and how often it happens. What is the part you like the most.

or

Describe your cave painting. Tell the meaning of the drawing and talk about the value of the color. Why did you choose that particular idea.

## References

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- Davidson, Marshall (1984). A History of Art. Random House, New York
- Lhote, Henri (1959). The Search For The Tassili Frescoes. E.P. Dutton, Inc. New York
- Sporre, Dennis J. (1987) The Creative Impulse. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey



TSIISAB GORGE S. WEST AFRICA



BIRD-HEADED GODDESSES  
SO W. AFRICA.

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LARGE GIRAFFE

ADJEFOU GORGE  
SOUTHWEST AFRICA

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## WEST AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECORATION ON HOUSES

### Introduction

Women combine their practical day-to-day domestic responsibilities with their art. Wall painting is an accepted activity and a joy of life. This is a means of beautifying the space in which they and their families spend a great deal of time. The magic of the mural painting activity comes from the actual applying of the paint to the wall. This tradition has been handed down from mother to daughter generation after generation. The patterns and motifs are a result of the cultural and religious influences over time. Decorating wall surfaces is the collective effort of several women. The walls are not meant to be permanent, but are recreated each year to celebrate new events and social activity.

Africa is the place of origin of homo sapiens. Western African women were and are artistically advanced people. Their roots of design go back to 300 B.C. West African women's dress designs and patterns are said to set European standards for modern modes and are often found transformed in the western image of high fashion.

1. How do we decorate our houses? Do we design our walls?
2. Who chooses what we put on our walls?
3. How does the climate affect the kind of dwelling built in an area. Name different kinds of dwellings

## ACTIVITY

Students will draw their geometric designs on masonite panels and carefully fill in with different colors. (If each person uses one color that is the same as the person next to them, the final mural will hold together with a common color.) Using wallboard plaster mixed with tempera colors they will work with the colored pigments as African women work with clay, tar and pigment. One of the most notable characteristics of house painting among the women is the commaraderie found among the women sharing the design.

After everyone has finished, I assemble them with mastic into one large design on a piece of plywood. If they don't fit exactly, leave a small space and grout in between each panel. They can also be hung individually and then taken home.

## MATERIALS

Wallboard compound mixed with tempera. Colors are ochre, black, white, yellow beige, blue-black and another more subtle blue. A 15" x 15" x 1/4" piece of masonite for each student. (Size is optional) Painting knives, forks for texture, old stiff paintbrushes. Gloss medium to varnish when all are glued and grouted. Framing is easy with plywood backing.

## JOURNAL

Describe what the word "home" means to you. If you could live in any kind of house what would it be? Describe your dream house?

## REFERENCES

- Clarke, Margaret Courtney (1990) African Canvas., New York: Rizzoli.  
 Glubok, Shirley (1965) The Art of Africa, New York: Harper and Row Publ.

This is only one part of an entire trimester of African Art. This project could follow African Indigo cloth design and dyeing and a unit on African pottery, also made by women.



AFRICAN CANVAS

## DREAM ROOM

Girls have dreams and desires of the most perfect room. This could be any room, bedroom, bathroom, or a combination. This room could also be a room they have dreamt about. The only limit is their imagination. Possibilities might include a room that included a horse stall and feeding area, or a stage with a bed that changes into a curtain. Discussion of strange or unusual rooms that they have seen in movies or on TV will stimulate ideas.

1. Does your room have straight walls or are they curved?
2. What do you do in this room?
3. Were you influenced by anything you have seen anywhere else?
4. How did you decide on the colors? Do they have special meaning for you?

## ACTIVITY

Using white or porcelain clay, demonstrate rolling slabs, coils, and attaching parts with scoring and slip. Show how drawing with a pencil or needle tool adds to the decoration. After they have been bisque fired, show the techniques of painting.

## JOURNAL

Describe in detail something in your room that means a lot to you. Tell why you have it, how you got it. Did you include that in your perfect room? Why or Why not? Choose a color from the paint swatch box that describes your feeling about this object. Glue it in your journal.

## REFERENCES

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- McShine, Kynaston, (1984) An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture., New York: The Musuem of Modern Art. 130.147.

## CARING

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history women artists have depicted caring in their painting and crafts. Women and girls participating in quilting, weaving, spinning, ceramics, and clothing and dwelling decoration have been recorded through drawing, paintings and often woodblock prints. Mary Cassatt, an American painter, painted life around her, primarily women and children. Faith Ringgold, a currently popular African American quiltmaker introduces viewers to the black experience of caring on many different levels. Also as an illustrator of childrens books, Ringgold reinforces the importance of caring and connection between all people. Begin the activity by telling students that the art you are going to show them exhibits caring. Discuss with them the kind of colors used, the textures, lines, and overall feeling of the painting, drawing or quilt. Refer to the line chart and talk about the different kinds of lines. Students have previously written in the journal about an object or a person that they care about. (With the 6th grade, I ask them to refer to a favorite stuffed animal)

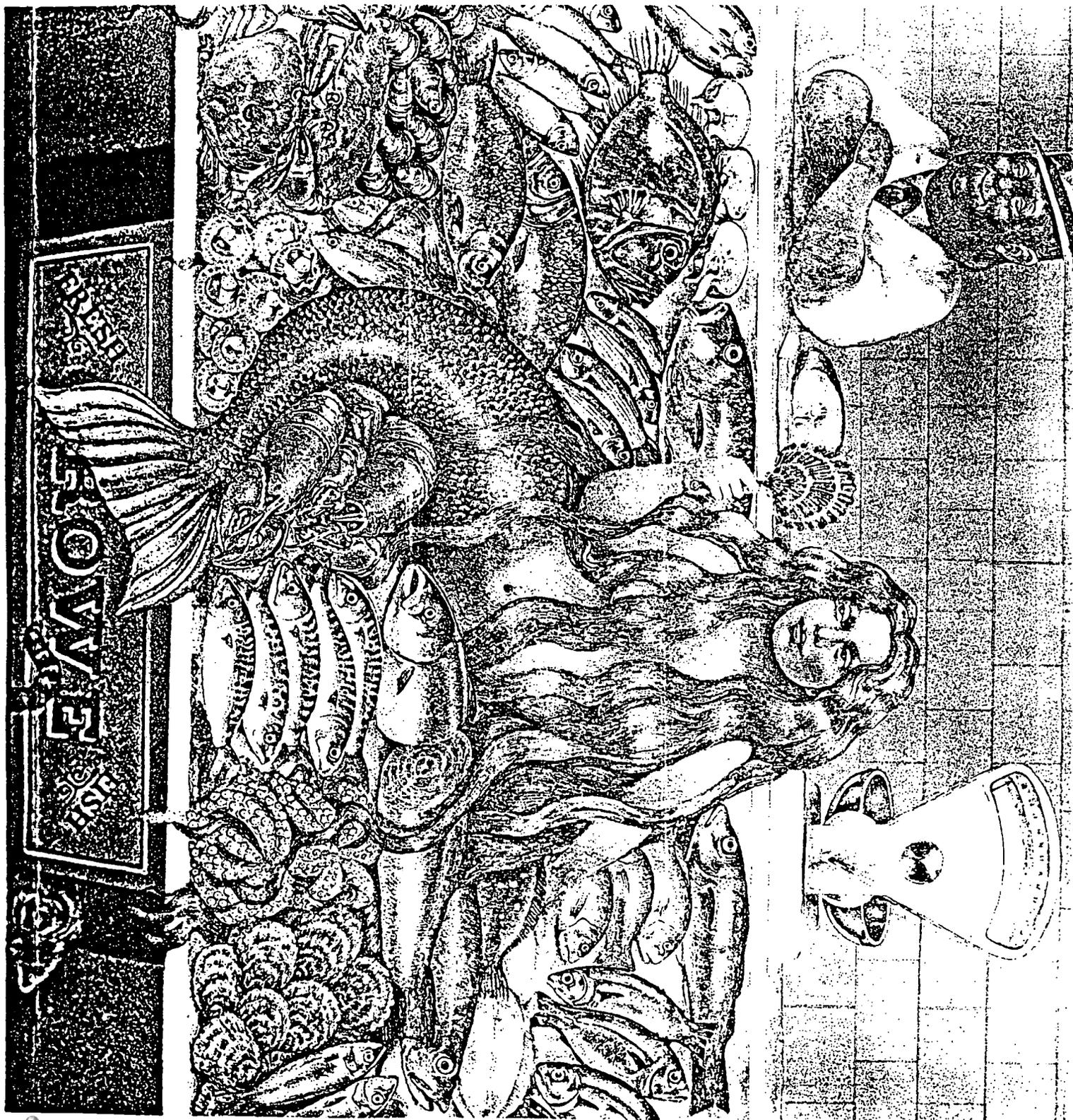
### ACTIVITY

Ask students to draw the object or the person they care about and to include themselves in the drawing. Using pastels on colored paper illuminates the drawing and encourages them to add color to important spaces. Reassure them that overlapping lines and shapes are good. This is a difficult concept for all beginners, even adults.

### REFERENCES

Women Artists: Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, Faith Ringgold, Constance Marie Charpentier,  
 The Painting: Arnolfini and his Bride, Jan Van Eyck.  
 The Painting: The Lovers, Pablo Picasso  
 The Painting: The Peaceable Kingdom, Edward Hicks

Copied from: Mermaids by Beatrice Phillpotts New York: Ballantine Bk.  
Mermaid in the Fishmonger's painted by Pauline Ellison, 1979.



Who does she care for? Who does he care for?

## BODY IMAGE

Since young adolescent women are overly concerned with looks, and this concern manifests itself in dieting and negative body image, it is important to name the problem "of girls feeling no control over their maturing bodies."

Examining the images and beauty ideals that are unattainable and the bias of television and the media will give girls the opportunity to resist these unhealthy messages. Discussion of the real barriers that they feel will perhaps help them find ways to distinguish between what they know and feel to be true and the rules imposed by society.

The following activities will analyze the media and societal messages, discuss patterns that prove successful and unsuccessful and integrate art expression. This unit will be divided into recognition, acceptance, coordination, and integration. Really learning to see and recognizing imperfection as central to the human condition can lead to greater self-acceptance. Discovering how the parts of the body and mind work together helps girls get in touch with their strengths and weaknesses and connects them to others through building skills and activities with common purposes.

## BODY IMAGE

## RECOGNITION

Self Portrait  
Part I

Demonstrate how to draw a face. Begin by talking about the egg shape. Students need to draw with you. I use a large sketch pad. Students want to know how to draw people and with work and demonstration most develop the ability to critically see in a short time. After you talk about shapes of faces, and the position of eyes, spend time on each part separately. Bring in large photographs from magazines of famous people. Analyze each part unto itself and then in relation to the rest of the face. I often draw a colleague or talk about my own face in order to transcend judgement on any student. I think it's important to point out that unusual features often make a distinguished, or outstanding face. I often sit for a class period and instruct students to draw me. We first draw parts. Using metaphors to describe shapes, such as the lower eyelid being similar to a sideways question mark helps students analyze what they are seeing. After students reach a level of proficiency, ask them to draw their least favorite part of their face. Pass out mirrors and precut size paper and tell them to fill the space. Then do the exercise again asking for their best part. I assemble these in a collage of the worst face and the best face on the board so everyone can see the importance of relationships to each other. Depending on the number of students we often have enough parts for several faces. Decisions on what goes where, can be made by students. Usually someone chooses hair, and will need a large piece of paper.

Discussion of how the parts make up the whole. Looking at the kinds of lines and value. Describing what has power and what recedes from the eye help students with critical thinking and developing visual skills. Looking at the possibilities and imagining other constructions of the face lead to humorous discussions and self-discovery. Sometimes the face will bring up the discussion of Frankenstein.

Frankenstein was written by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851) as a young girl. The book about a scientist's creation of a monster who haunts his creator, was her first and best known novel. While Mary Wollstonecraft did enjoy writing, her favorite pasttime was daydreaming. She writes her "dreams were more fantastic and agreeable than her writings." Living next to Lord Byron one rainy summer, she, her husband, Shelley, Lord Byron and another writer Polidori entered into a ghost story writing contest simply for amusement. Lord Byron and her husband had long conversations and extensive philosophical discussions. She was almost always a silent listener. During one of these discussions they talked of the principle of life and Darwins preserving a piece of vermicelli in a glass case until it began to move with voluntary motion. Could parts of a creature be manufactured, was her question.

#### JOURNAL

Write about a waking dream or a sleeping dream.

Or

Create your own herione.

Be sure to include the feeling you have about your dream or your herione.

Letting go of preconceptions, appreciating possibilities, communicating with oneself and learning the five elements of shape are important lessons in this self-portrait unit.

#### IMPORTANT VIDEOS

Killing Us Softly and Still Killing Us Softly, Cambridge Documentary Films, Cambridge, Ma. (American Advertising and their hatred of women)

"Man Oh Man Growing Up Male In America Vide-New Day Films (Looking at cultural forces that mold boys into men in America) 212-645-8210.

# THE 5 BASIC ELEMENTS OF SHAPE

## THE DOT AND CIRCLE FAMILY

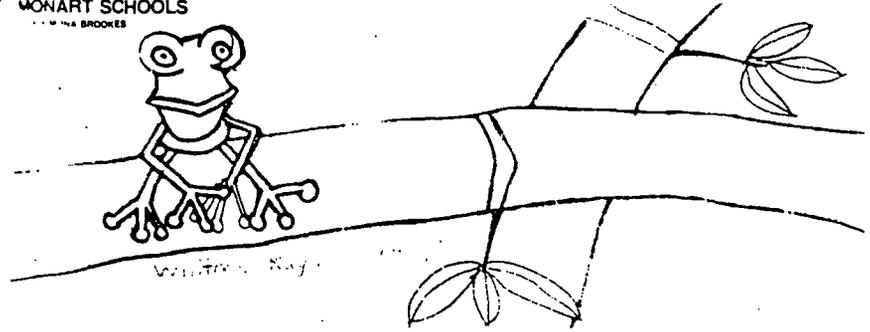
	<p>THE DOT FAMILY: ANYTHING ROUNDISH THAT IS COLORED IN.</p>
	<p>THE CIRCLE FAMILY: ANYTHING ROUNDISH THAT IS EMPTY</p>

## THE LINE FAMILY

	<p>THE STRAIGHT LINE FAMILY</p>
	<p>THE CURVED LINE FAMILY</p>
	<p>THE ANGLE LINE FAMILY</p>

FIGURE 3.1  
 THE ALPHABET OF SHAPE  
 The contour edges of the objects you wish to draw and the spaces between them are represented by continual patterns of the same five visual elements.

MONART SCHOOLS  
 BY MONA BROOKES



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 Los Angeles, CA 90036



## Part 2

### ACCEPTANCE

Moving away from the face to look at the total body.  
Ask yourself "What is the best part of my body image?"

### ACTIVITY

Give each student a bisque 4" x 4" white ceramic tile. Demonstrate glazing techniques and stress that the colors do not mature until they are fired. I have a chart of fired colors that we constantly refer to. Ask students to draw their best body part with pencil on the tile. I have an ongoing wall that I am adding tiles to in the Music building foyer. Find a noticeable place in your school where students can add a part of themselves to the community.

### JOURNAL

Think of one word that describes you. For example, "I am flight." Get in touch with that part of yourself and describe why it is a metaphor for one part of you.

The tile project shows the importance of one piece and emphasizes how much a collective endeavor is able to accomplish.

## JOURNAL

After watching the video "Killing Us Softly", watch TV for 30 minutes on two different days. Time how much time is spent on advertising and what the advertising says to and about women. You are smarter than your television. What tricks do you notice. Who's making money from the ad? Include the music and tone of voice in your analyzation. Is the program or the advertising biased? Why or why not?

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## Part 3

## COORDINATION

Ask students to choose an animal or bird that they identify with in some way. The animal could possess a quality that they would like to have. For example, it could be a physical quality such as beautiful hair, or a more symbolic quality like the shell of a turtle to give them added protection or a feeling of a safe haven. Many animals hold ancient symbolic meaning. A bat in Chinese culture represents long life and happiness. The toad with a jewel on its forehead sees the sacred in all living things. The spider web symbolizes that which holds life together. Native North Americans teach us that the pig portrays the rainbearer, which brings life to all living things. The stag and the tree sometimes are synonymous representing the tree of life. The raven was thought to be wise and sly by Native North Americans, but in the middle ages it was believed to bring bad omens. Jaguar's eyes in South American cultures are thought to be a pathway to the realm of the spirits. Others are the Eagle with acute vision, the cock representing pride and courage, and the lion with valour and protective power. The Alaskan Eskimo believes that every natural object and living thing has a spirit, or "innua". Usually, an innua will reveal itself to a person in the form of a small, humanlike face on the back, breast, or the eye of a creature. Masks which show these spirits are worn on ceremonial occasions.

Now students should take their own best feature or personality quality and their worst and combine these three features into a mask of power.

## MATERIALS

A selection of many kinds of plastic bottles that can be cut into geometric shapes for noses, ears and basic backings for the masks. Shapes can be cut out and cardboard glued on to make them face shaped and more three dimensional. Chicken wire, medium mesh works nicely to form basic shapes. After the basic shape of the mask is taped together, students can cover the entire piece with two layers of pariscraft. (Papermachie also works if you use large pieces of brown grocery bags, especially if your budget is tight. Paint with Acrylic or Tempera paint.

A glue gun works well to attach beads, feathers, tapestry tape any thing else that you have handy. Tin can tops make spangles and rope adds ridges. Bottle tops can be eyes or horns or teeth. Once you begin suggesting ideas, students quickly begin to see possibilities in shapes.

## CEREMONY

After the masks are finished, plan a ceremony where everyone relates to each other. Let each person share her feelings and ideas and allow everyone to respond.

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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#### Part 4

#### INTEGRATION

Choose from a selection of long and thick rope and pieces of fabric. Strips include velvet, silk, taffeta, lace, rope, jute, cotton, chenille, wide ribbon, and any other possibility you see at the fabric store. Each person should tack their piece with copper tacks to the board.

After each person has added their strip we will do a group weaving. In order to keep the weaving from getting small in the center, I weave something rigid through every so often. Side boards with nails also work.

Collaboration gives students the benefit of insight of several students and gives the teacher an opportunity to recognize happy accidents and build on a multitude of ideas.

#### JOURNAL

Explain why the texture and the color of the strip of cloth is like you. What did you like about the finished piece. What did you like least about it. Did you gain any insights about yourself or the group? If so what were they?

Egyptian Sarcophagus  
Grade 6

Activity  
Day 1

Write in hieroglyphics your name on a long thin piece of paper. Use markers, watercolors, craypas for color. Set aside for a few days.

Day 2

We draw our portraits together, with girls looking in the mirrors. We make our face shape, mark half way for eyes, we draw noses and mouths. We discuss and look at pictures of real mummies and use black to outline eyes. We mix paint to match our skin color.

Day 3, 4, 5.

We cut from brown paper a mummy coffin shape approximately the same size as we are. We glue on the front the piece with our name on it and glue on the face. We analyze different types of hair and hair coverings and cut and decorate with paint and glitter. We paint other designs that symbolize things that we want to take with us to the after life. We paint the outside with magic spells to protect the coffin on the trip through the underworld.

Eye ointments were used both to enhance beauty of the eye and to protect the eye against fly-borne eye diseases. Trachoma continues even today to be a major health problem across North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, spread from person to person by the ever-swarming flies. Both men and women painted their eyes. Egyptian painting shows many scenes of domestic harmony.

## JOURNAL

The style of dress in Egypt was quite simple. Flax that grew along the river was made into linen. White was the favorite color. Men wore a simple wrap around from waist to mid-thigh and women wore a loose gown that went from shoulder to ankles. Sometimes the gowns had long sleeves. They often enhanced their dress with a large collar of beautiful stones or a gold necklace.

Describe the style of dress that you prefer. Tell how you enhance what you wear and why you prefer one style over another. Do you and your friends prefer the same style?

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## ABORIGINAL DREAM PAINTINGS

## ACTIVITY

Most aboriginal art originated out of oppression. Land and water were taken away by white Australians. Displacement, cultural imperialism, ill health and the introduction of new religions influenced painting. To each artist, his or her painting is more than an act of expression. They express their relationship to the land. The Aboriginals have a religious relationship with his or her country. Every painting has a story. There are many levels of meaning to every story.

Remember to a time that you felt a connection to a place or scene. It could be an imaginary scene, a scene you have dreamed about, or a real place that you feel attached to. Include animals, people and birds if they inhabit your scene. Paint with little dots of color. You may use craypas with watercolor over the top or small dots of acrylic paint.

## JOURNAL

Write a short description or poem about a place you would like to visit, or place that you have visited. It can be a very personal place in your yard or a park or in your memory.

## REFERENCES

Crumlin, Rosemary., Knight, Anthony., (1991) Aboriginal Art and Spirituality, Australia: Harper Collins Publ.  
The Australian Gallery, Greene Street, NY, NY offers a first hand view of Aboriginal Art and Books

## ASSIGNING COLOR TO FEELINGS

### INTRODUCTION

Color can express feelings in both representational and abstract art. Abstract art embodies the same elements as representational art. These are line, shape, color, and space. Line often implies rhythm. When we think of color, we often think of a meaning that goes with it. Red or purple red can symbolize love, fire, anger, or blood. Blue can mean water, sky, sorrow, elation, justice. Demonstrate how shades of color are mixed and how secondary and tertiary colors are made from the three primary. Bring attention to the intensity of color. There are many people who have used color for expression. Color is probably the one most important element we have. Contrast the difference between black and white TV and color TV.

### ACTIVITY

#### Part I

Ask students to choose a partner, or the teacher may want to pair people. The first person describes to the second person a color that they especially like or dislike. They use as many metaphors as they can think of to tell the other what the color is. The second person must go to the color swatch box and choose the color that has been described to her. She should bring it back, but not show it to the person doing the describing. This person should then go to the color swatch box and choose the color. Repeat the exercise again.

#### Part II

Choose a word from the feeling list that describes a feeling that you have experienced in the last week. Go to the color swatch box and choose two colors to express your feelings. To achieve different shades, mix the colors

feelings. To achieve different shades, mix the colors together and use white. Try to paint your painting using these colors in tempera paint. Think in shapes, so you won't need to outline.

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# FEELING WORD LIST

## Happy

alive  
amused  
anxious  
calm  
cheerful  
content  
delighted  
ecstatic  
elated  
energized  
excited  
fantastic  
fortunate  
friendly  
fulfilled  
glad  
good  
great  
hopeful  
lively  
loving  
motherly  
optimistic  
overjoyed  
peaceful  
pleased  
proud  
refreshed  
relaxed  
relieved  
rested  
satisfied  
spirited  
thankful  
thrilled  
turned on  
up  
warm  
wonderful

## Sad

awful  
bad  
blue  
bummed out  
crushed  
depressed  
desperate  
devastated  
disappointed  
dissatisfied  
distressed  
disturbed  
down  
embarrassed  
gloomy  
glum  
hateful  
hopeless  
hurt  
lonely  
lost  
low  
miserable  
painful  
sorry  
terrible  
turned off  
uneasy  
unhappy  
unloved  
upset

## Angry

agitated  
annoyed  
bitter  
burned up  
critical  
disgusted  
dismayed  
enraged  
envious  
fed up  
frustrated  
furious  
hostile  
impatient  
irate  
irritated  
livid  
mad  
outraged  
perturbed  
put out  
riled  
resentful  
seething  
sore  
ticked off  
uptight  
worked up

## Scared

afraid  
anxious  
apprehensive  
awed  
cautious  
chicken  
edgy  
fearful  
frightened  
hesitant  
horrified  
insecure  
intimidated  
jumpy  
lonely  
nervous  
panicky(ed)  
shaky  
tense  
terrified  
threatened  
timid  
uneasy  
unsure  
worried

## Confused

anxious  
awkward  
baffled  
bewildered  
bothered  
crazy  
dazed  
disorganized  
disoriented  
distracted  
disturbed  
embarrassed  
frustrated  
helpless  
hopeless  
jolted  
lost  
mixed up  
panicky  
paralyzed  
perplexed  
puzzled  
shocked  
stuck  
stunned  
surprised  
tangled  
trapped  
troubled  
uncertain  
uncomfortable  
undecided  
unsure  
upset  
weak

## Weak

ashamed  
blocked  
bored  
defenseless  
demoralized  
disorganized  
distracted  
discouraged  
embarrassed  
exhausted  
fragile  
frail  
frustrated  
guilty  
helpless  
horrible  
ill  
impotent  
inadequate  
incapable  
insecure  
lifeless  
lost  
overwhelmed  
powerless  
quiet  
run-down  
shaky  
shy  
sick  
small  
stressed  
stupid  
timid  
tired  
unsure  
useless  
vulnerable  
worn out

## Strong

active  
aggressive  
alert  
angry  
bold  
brave  
capable  
confident  
determined  
eager  
energetic  
happy  
healthy  
intense  
loving  
mean  
open  
positive  
potent  
powerful  
quick  
secure  
solid  
spirited  
super  
sure  
tough

This list of words  
is borrowed from  
The Art of Helping  
by Robert B. Carkhuff  
Human Resource Development  
Press, Amherst, MA

## EVALUATION

Since the content of this course includes multiple opportunities for self expression from each student and also group work, strategies for assessment need to take place in a variety of ways. Teacher observation of student's performance including leadership skills, participation, intergroup dynamics, along with self, and peer evaluations allow both student and teacher input to be heard. Clear expectations of what is expected in terms of craftsmanship, originality, comprehension of ideas, effort and improvement will be shown through examples of past work and comparisons made throughout the year.

The journal could be a communication device between the student and the teacher and a record for the student to illuminate observation, growth and self-examination. I think it is impossible to impose judgement on a journal, however, some reward could be arranged for simply keeping up on the journal assignments. Self assessment with input from the teacher has proven for me to be quite successful.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment Description: \_\_\_\_\_

DOMAINS AND INTENDED OUTCOMES	1 <b>MARGINAL</b> Does not demonstrate awareness of and/or fails to meet the intended outcomes	2 <b>BASIC</b> Demonstrates rudimentary achievement of the intended outcomes	3 <b>ADVANCED</b> Achieves all of the intended outcomes and forms own plan of action	4 <b>EXEMPLARY</b> Achieves all intended outcomes, forms own plan of action and exceeds scope of the assignment	
<b>COMPREHENSION/EVIDENCE</b> Demonstrates grasp of the ideas and the materials used in class by: - addressing the question or fulfilling the task outlined in the assignment - expressing an idea or opinion  - making connections between ideas					
<b>CLARITY</b> Conveys material in a manner that is: - understandable					
<b>CREATIVITY</b> Seeks novel ways for solving problems Experiments with new ideas or materials Shows evolution of an idea					
<b>CRAFTSMANSHIP</b> Shows good execution in the presentation of an idea Shows appropriate uses of available tools (metaphor, details, media, etc.)					
<b>EFFORT &amp; IMPROVEMENT</b> Shows investment of time and thought Takes into account previous feedback Demonstrates progress from prior work					
COMMENTS:					<b>TOTAL</b>

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Discipline \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

For the following questions please circle the most appropriate answer:

- |  |                   |           |               |
|--|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1. I enjoy and work well in groups:                            | Yes, a great deal | Somewhat  | Not Very Much |
| 2. I enjoy and work well by myself:                            | Yes, a great deal | Somewhat  | Not Very Much |
| 3. I am willing to listen to the ideas and opinions of others: | Yes, always       | Sometimes | Rarely        |
| 4. I am able to express my own ideas and opinions:             | Yes, always       | Sometimes | Rarely        |
| 5. I am diligent, consistent, and focused in my work:          | Yes, always       | Sometimes | Rarely        |
| 6. I tend to procrastinate and be unorganized:                 | Yes, always       | Sometimes | Rarely        |

Complete the following statements by considering your: study habits, listening skills, leadership qualities, self-motivation, interpersonal skills, level of participation, confidence (ie., ability to express your opinion), etc.

7. I think am particularly good at: (Give examples)
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
8. I think I could use some help with: (Give examples)

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9 I am satisfied with the work I accomplished in this course because: (Consider the domains and intended outcomes)

10 I am not satisfied with the work I accomplished in this course because: (Consider the domains and intended outcomes)

11. What are some of the special qualities you discovered about yourself this year?

12. The final grade I would give myself in this course is \_\_\_\_\_. Explain why.

Additional comments and observations:

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12. What were the most interesting aspects of this course, and why?

13. What were the least interesting aspects of this course, and why?

14. In what ways, if any, did this course influence your thinking or broaden your perspective?

15. What, if anything, would you change about this course?

Comments or suggestions about the course or teachers:

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Grade 7 Summer Reading

Jacob Have I Loved

Summer of My German Soldier

Watership Down

A Light in the Forest



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