



UNIT PLAN:

# Art & Community

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# Context

Clarke Central High School is a public school in Athens-Clarke County School district open to grades 9-12. The school building is large with several stories in the main building, several smaller buildings, and numerous sports fields and facilities. The school serves over 1,700 students. The school population echoes the socioeconomic, racial, and cultural diversity of the surrounding Athens, GA area.

The high school has Title I designation: "Title I is a federal financial assistance program for schools located in high-poverty communities. Funds are used to provide additional resources and support to help low-achieving students meet state standards" (CCHS Website). These funds are distributed throughout the school with the understanding that students in impoverished communities face external barriers to their education and may need extra support.

The school has a large fine arts department with ten teachers among the faculty. Heather Garland teaches sculpture and ceramics courses of multiple levels as part of student pathways. The classroom can host multiple small classes at once, for example Ceramics I and Ceramics II are held in the same period. The sculpture/ceramics classroom is medium-sized and organized with group tables and materials against each wall. The program has funding for materials so students have ready access to clay, glaze, and tools. Students in this classroom are generally independent in their project-based learning and engaged with the learning experience.

**The Clarke Central High School ceramics/sculpture classroom will serve as the planned context for the curriculum within this unit plan.**

# Unit Rationale

**Community is a broad concept that encompasses many fields of a student's lived experience. By confronting this multifaceted topic through artistic process and expression, students can better understand their place in their community and the arts as a powerful force within it.**

The unit breaks down the theme of community in new ways through focused themes for each project.

- The first lesson analyzes the meaning of home and its fluidity for students. This spreads empathy among students when expressing and reflecting their definition of home through their artwork.
- The second analyzes gift-giving and the power of art as service. This exemplifies the power of object art throughout history and its symbolic power, showing students the innate value of their creative expression.
- The third lesson focuses on place as a factor of community and asks students to contribute to their environment in a collaborative project. This connects students with a heightened awareness of place as generative for art-making conception, display, and engagement.
- The fourth lesson dissects how art can dissect historical narratives and empower stories of community. This lesson synthesizes the concepts of community previously discussed, confronts history of community harm and erasure, and empowers students to understand Afrofuturist art and its visualization of an inclusive future through activism.

This unit plan aims to build skills in Ceramics while expanding into mixed-media and material experimentation. The unit works from basic building skills to installation and curation practices through art-making experiences. The unit will incorporate lessons on slab-building, decorative techniques, sculpture, mixed-media exploration, installation, research, and curation. The unit intentionally grows in flexibility and independence through sustained research to empower students in their artistic thinking skills and practice.

# Essential Questions

## **Lesson 1:**

- How can we incorporate a three-dimensional element to a flat slab plate form?
- How can we define and experience our perception of 'home' through our art-making?

## **Lesson 2:**

- How can art symbolize an idea or feeling?
- How can art become a service for others?
- How can we synthesize a multi-sensory experience through artwork?
- What is your personal history with gift-giving? (Gifts received, gift giving, what does this mean?)
- What/who is the community you wish to give back to? Why?

## **Lesson 3:**

- How can collaboration become a generative art practice?
- How can we expand material use through mosaic murals?
- How can art contribute to and transform an environment through aesthetic and meaning? How can these visuals reflect our values of a space?

## **Lesson 4:**

- How can we confront systemic issues through narrative in art?
- How can artistic collaboration generate meaning?
- What narrative do you wish to share? How will you share it?

**How can concepts of community influence artistic process and purpose?**

**How can meaning-making arise through external forces such as environment, material, and collaboration?**

# Key Understandings

## **Lesson 1:**

- Students will learn the basics of slab-building, additive and reductive sculpture, and decoration techniques.
- Students will practice processing an abstract concept (such as defining home) by working through their art-making.

## **Lesson 2:**

- Students will understand the full process of creating a wind-chime as ceramic and mixed-media art work.
- Students will understand the significance and symbolism of the wind-chimes as a symbolic object throughout history and across several cultures.
- Students will consider the purpose of their artwork as a final object to instigate ideation and meaning-making throughout the process.

## **Lesson 3:**

- Students will learn the basics of mosaic creation and materiality of ceramics and found objects.
- Students will understand art's transformation of space and contribute to the larger school environment.
- Students will collaborate with their peers as a team of artists.

## **Lesson 4:**

- Students will explore historical narratives such as community erasure and the museum as a space of historical exclusivity.
- Students will understand dynamic modes of collaboration and principles of curation.
- Students will understand their artwork as visual communication of narratives they hope to express and empower.

**Students will understand new techniques in ceramics and mixed-media and recognize material as a component of meaning.**

**Students will understand the power of art in engaging with and responding to their community.**

# Connections to Standards

## ***Creating:***

- Students grow in skill and knowledge of ceramics through demonstrations and lessons in technique, but also in practice and problem-solving.
- Students practice and expand ideation strategies through introduction to contemporary artists, collaborative brainstorming, and recognition of environment.

## ***Presenting:***

- Students express narratives, research, and important facets of their life through their artwork.
- Students gain skills in speaking and writing about the process and concept of their artwork and others through group discussion and critique.

## ***Responding:***

- Students respond to their peers artwork, art history, and contemporary art practices.
- Students also respond to the community, cultures, and environment around them through artwork and discussion.

## ***Connecting:***

- Students synthesize external influences and internal curiosities to create meaningful art.
- Students connect their own artistic practice with the contemporary art world and practicing artists.

# Vocabulary

The following is a list of terms incorporated into each lesson that may need defining for students in the context of each lesson and experience. (Full definitions are included in each lesson plan).

## **Lesson 1:**

- Sgraffito
- Inlay
- Surface Painting
- Slab-building
- Additive/Reductive Sculpture

## **Lesson 2:**

- Wind-chimes
- Mixed-media
- Object art
- Symbolic art

## **Lesson 3:**

- Mosaic
- Mural
- Found Objects
- Deconstruction
- Space/Environment
- Installation

## **Lesson 4:**

- Afro-futurism
- Curation



# Resources

## **Lesson 1:**

- Powerpoint:  
[https://www.canva.com/design/DAFaGilZSCM/ffPD4A1dDSlBrRuL8RpjSA/viewutm\\_content=DAFaGilZSCM&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=homepage\\_design\\_menu](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFaGilZSCM/ffPD4A1dDSlBrRuL8RpjSA/viewutm_content=DAFaGilZSCM&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=homepage_design_menu)
- Artists: Jean Derval, Lena Guberman, Helen Kemp, Unknown (Wolfs Gallery)

## **Lesson 2:**

- Powerpoint
- Handout
- Artists: Lane Dukart, Early Eastern Asian cultural traditions

## **Lesson 3:**

- Powerpoint
- Handout
- Artists: Isaiah Zagar (Philadelphia Magic Gardens), Howard Finster (Paradise Gardens)

## **Lesson 4:**

- Powerpoint
- *Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room* Exhibition Materials:  
<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/afrofuturist-period-room>
- Handout
- Artists: Roberto Lugo

# Lesson 1:

# Defining Home

**Time:** 12:25-2:00

**Grade Level/s:** 9-12

### **Snapshot of the lesson:**

In this lesson, students will learn and practice slab-building, additive and reductive sculpture, and then build on previous knowledge of decoration techniques to create two plates. The students will focus on defining the concept of “home” and express their ideas on this topic through their artwork.

### **Lesson Rationale:**

The lesson focuses on one of the three building techniques: slab-building. The lesson also builds on the idea of community through defining home and its complex forms. Artists to discuss include; Jean Derval, Lena Guberman, Helen Kemp, Unknown (Wolfs Gallery). These artists were selected as contemporary artists incorporating sculptural elements into plate forms.



### **Key Concepts and Understandings for this Lesson:**

- Students will learn the basics of slab-building, additive and reductive sculpture, and decoration techniques.
- Students will practice processing an abstract concept (such as defining home) by working through their art-making.

### **Essential Questions:**

- How can we incorporate a three-dimensional element to a flat slab plate form?
- How can we define and experience our perception of 'home' through our art-making?

## **Lesson Standards**

### ***Georgia Standards:***

- VAHSCR.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art.
- VAHSCR.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.

### ***National Standards:***

- VA:Cr1.1.1a Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors
- VA:Cr1.2.1a Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.

## **Lesson Goals:**

### ***The students will know:***

- Students will know slab-building techniques, additive/reductive strategies and incorporating them.
- Students will know decorative techniques including sgraffito, inlay, and painting.

### ***The students will be able to:***

- Students will create an object portraying an abstract concept such as defining home.
- Students will work through solidifying ideas throughout the experimental process/trial and error.

## **Evidence of Understanding:**

Students will create two plates and approximately three tiles. Students should demonstrate experimentation and incorporation of new techniques. The two plates should each be built with slabs and incorporate a sculptural element. Students will respond to the prompt of defining home through their process, final work, and their final reflection.

### **Differentiation:**

Differentiation was incorporated through few enabling constraints on the requirements of the objects, a free-form brainstorming process, and more personal instructional strategies. The project itself is relatively open with few requirements and many options for direction in purpose, decoration, subject matter, scale, etc. This choice-based approach allows students to experiment and work toward their own interests. The brainstorming process suggests that students think while they work, discuss with one another, and/or sketch and write. This allows students to process in different ways as they think through next steps. It is advisable to have a short beginning lecture to sustain engagement and then a short demonstration of inlay in the middle of the class to break up work time. Working closely with students at the tables and around the room allows them to feel comfortable working at their own pace and asking questions when needed.

### Important Vocabulary, Definitions and Artists:

- *Sgraffito*: decorative technique using reductive method of scratching away underglaze to reveal the layer below.
- *Inlay*: decorative technique using reductive and additive methods by scratching in lines and flooding them with glaze. Once dry the glaze will be wiped away from the raised area to create thin drawn lines of glaze.
- *Painting*: decorative technique of painting on glaze to the surface.
- *Slab-building*: creating sheets/slabs of clay to build a form
- *Additive/Reductive Sculpture*: adding elements to a flat form to build a three dimensional form, subtracting elements through carving or molding a flat form to reveal a more sculptural form

#### **Artists:**

- Jean Derval, Lena Guberman, Helen Kemp, Unknown (Wolfs Gallery).

## **Resources and Materials:**

### ***Instructional Materials:***

- Powerpoint presentation
- Example work
- In-progress works to use as demonstrations and to work alongside students

### ***Physical Materials for the work:***

- Clay
- Underglaze
- Canvas
- Clay tools
- Paint sticks
- Rolling pins

## **Preparation:**

- Create powerpoint introducing the conceptual and practical components of the project.
- Prepare a flexible timeline for instruction and progress.
- Create and display examples.
- Assemble materials and set-up classroom for the lesson.

## Instruction (Activities and Procedures):

- **Starter:**
  - Allow students time to arrive in the classroom and take a seat. Students have examples placed on their tables and a title slide up while they wait.
- **Overview of lesson:**
  - Instructor begins by discussing the physical objects the class will be making (plates) and a quick description of the theme (home).
- **Tap into prior knowledge:**
  - Prompt questions about previous knowledge in slab-building, sculptural practice from the previous lessons, decorative technique experience, and the response to the broad question “what is home?”.
- **Introduction of artist:**
  - The artists within this lesson are chosen for their combination of sculpture and the plate form. Each artist found a different way to incorporate sculpture in their flat form whether it was a cake stand, a lifted bowl, or a half painted and half sculpted image. The educator should encourage students to think outside of the box with their sculptural element.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- **Art making activity:**

- Students begin by rolling slabs using the rolling pins and paint sticks for an even thickness. Students then use one of two sized plates as a mold with canvas in between. Students can shape the clay on the mold and trim the edges. When it is dry enough students may begin creating and adding sculptural elements or details such as a foot or rim. Before students begin surface decoration we will give a demonstration of the inlay technique as that is the only decoration style they have not tried. Students will then decorate their work when it is dry enough, fire, glaze, and then fire again.

- **Monitoring of students:**

- The teacher may sit at a table for the beginning of the lesson to work alongside students and monitor if they need help. Teachers should also move around the room at times to gauge student pacing and if anyone needs help or has questions.

- **Closure:**

- The closure for the two art-making lessons will be brief review of the theme for continued brainstorming and a brief intro to the next class. The end of the project will incorporate written and/or verbal reflection.

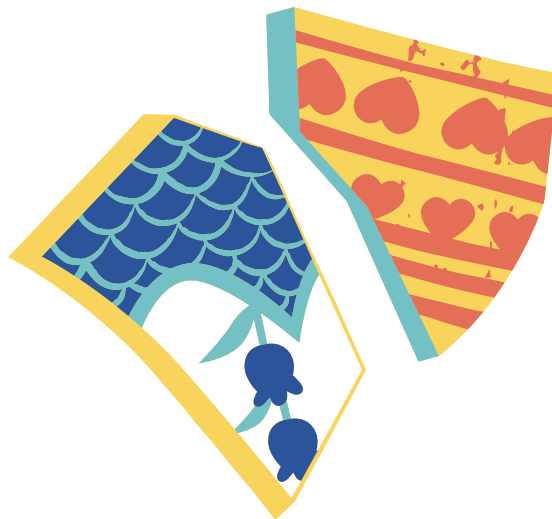
## **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Clean-up Procedures:***

- Depending on the classroom setting, students may already have a routine clean-up procedure, but can be reminded to put materials away and store clay and projects appropriately. A reminder ten minutes before class ends may be a helpful indicator it is time to start cleaning.

- ***Assessment and Feedback:***

- Through a brief final reflection/artist statement, one can gauge how students' ideas aligned with their execution and the overall prompt of 'home'.  
Ultimately, the project is about experimenting with new building or decorative techniques and creating an object that is meaningful to the student.



# Lesson 2:

## Art as Service

**Time:** 12:25-2:00

**Grade Level/s:** 9-12

### **Snapshot of the lesson:**

In this lesson, students will explore the power of art as service by responding and interacting with the concept of object art purpose through wind-chimes.

### **Lesson Rationale:**

This project focuses on gift-giving as a practice among many cultures and art as a contribution to community. Shifting student perspectives to consider art's purpose as service instigates a new avenue of meaning-making for their work. Vanessa German is an artist exemplifying the concept of art as a practice empowering, serving, and engaging with community needs.

Wind chimes are a good conduit for the theme of giving because of their symbolism throughout history. The wind-chime originated over 5000 years ago with intentions of warding off evil spirits. In China, a long tradition of wind chimes included the purpose of providing good luck. In Japan, wind chimes were and still are used as a symbol of protection. Consistently, these objects are hung on one's porch or near a place of residence to admire the visual and auditory beauty and themes of positive energy as a symbol.

Lane Dukart will also be incorporated for the physical making of the object. Students will gain skills in ideation while continuing building technique skills such as slab and pinch pots. The students will also combine ceramics with other mediums such as wood, string, and metal to create a mixed-media artwork.

### **Key Concepts and Understandings for this Lesson:**

- Students will understand the full process of creating a wind-chime as ceramic and mixed-media art work.
- Students will understand the significance and symbolism of the wind-chimes as a symbolic object throughout history and across several cultures.
- Students will consider the purpose of their artwork as a final object to instigate ideation and meaning-making throughout the process.

### **Essential Questions:**

- How can art symbolize an idea or feeling?
- How can art become a service for others?
- How can we synthesize a multi-sensory experience through artwork?
- What is your personal history with gift-giving? (Gifts received, gift giving, what does this mean?)
- What/who is the community you wish to give back to? Why?

### **Lesson Standards**

#### ***Georgia Standards:***

- VAHSCR.CR.5 Reflect on, revise, and refine works of art considering relevant traditional and contemporary practices as well as artistic ideation.
- VAHSCR.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.

#### ***National Standards:***

- VA:Cr2.1.IIIa: Experiment, plan, and make multiple works of art and design that explore a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept.
- VA:Re.7.2.IIIa: Determine the commonalities within a group of artists or visual images attributed to a particular type of art, timeframe, or culture.

### **Lesson Goals:**

#### ***The students will know:***

- Students will know the symbolism of object art across cultures through the discussion of wind-chimes throughout history.
- Students will know the power of art as service through a discussion and analysis of vanessa german's artistic process.
  - This acquired knowledge of symbolism and purpose in art should provide new perspectives for students' ideation.
  -

#### ***The students will be able to:***

- Students will be able to build a wind-chime through fundamental ceramics techniques and mixed-media strategies.
- Students will be able to envision an end goal through the purpose or destination of the final artwork.

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

Students will demonstrate understanding through discussion, ideation in sketches, writing and research and final product. Students should illustrate their understanding of the basic building techniques for wind chimes. Students should also demonstrate consideration of the object as a symbol and explain their choices through later reflection.

### **Differentiation:**

Ideation will be a flexible design for student needs. After the initial introduction and discussion, students will have time to write, research, sketch, or create a maquette as idea generation. This allows for students of varying learning needs and sensibilities to begin the process in a way that is comfortable and engaging to them. Students who may have sensory difficulties can be introduced to other materials for wind-chimes or alternate objects. For example, if someone is sensitive to the sound, they can create a stationary wall hanging with the same properties and themes of the main lesson.

### Important Vocabulary, Definitions and Artists:

- *Wind-chimes*: art objects usually made from ceramic, glass or metal that hang and create sounds when moved
- *Mixed-media*: multiple mediums incorporated into one artwork
- *Object art*: concept of craft arts involving the functionality of art and its role as an object
- *Symbolic art*: art involving meanings behind images and symbolism
- *Decorative techniques*: inlay, sgraffito, surface painting

### **Artists:**

- Vanessa German
  - "The artist's practice proposes new models for social healing, utilizing creativity and tenderness as vital forces to reckon with the historical and ongoing catastrophes of structural racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, resource extraction, and misogynoir"
  - <https://www.kasmingallery.com/artist/vanessa-german>
- Lane Dukart
  - ( <https://lanedukartstudio.com/bells-%2F-chimes.> )



### **Resources and Materials:**

#### ***Instructional Materials:***

- Powerpoint presentation
- Handouts for students
- Example

#### ***Physical Materials:***

- Clay
- Glaze/underglaze
- Found objects (scrap materials)
- String/ thin chain
- Paper
- Ribbon
- Cardboard
- Metal S hooks
- Resin (for attachments)

### **Preparation:**

- Create slide presentation including brief history of wind-chimes and their role in modern and ancient communities. The presentation will also include the conceptual basis with vanessa german discussion and goals of the lesson.
- Create and print copies of basic construction diagrams of wind-chime construction so the students can see their potential limitations before they start the ideation process and be reminded of structural points and needs.
- Prepare all materials and prep the classroom so materials are accessible and students have space to work.

### Instruction (Activities and Procedures):

- **Starter:**
  - Have on the board the questions: “What was the best gift you ever received and why?” and “What was the best gift you ever gave and why?” also include that students will not have to share with the class if they do not wish to, but they can write down brief notes for later.
- **Overview of lesson:**
  - Transition from the initial questions to explain the concept of art as service through vanessa german. From there, explain wind-chimes as the project in which the class will explore gift-giving and art as service. Introduce a brief history of wind-chimes and their symbolism and how this connects with art as power. Then, briefly explain the steps: Ideation, construction, decoration, assembly.
- **Tap into prior knowledge:**
  - Students will have an understanding of slab-building and decorative techniques through the first lesson, so introduce that as a component of the lesson. Conceptually, students will also have encountered conversations of home in a more abstract manner. They will use these critical thinking skills in discussions of art as symbol and service.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Introduction of artist:***

- The instructor will introduce vanessa german during thematic intro and discuss how she uses her art as a way to serve her community through acts such as the Love Front Porch and ARThouse. Introduce Lane Dukart later in the process introduction and talk more about his work. Include pictures of his chimes off of his website.
- Include discussion questions for both: Have you experienced art as service? What building and decorative techniques are recognizable in Dukarts work?

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Art making activity:***

- Stage 1: Students are expected to create a sketch and/or construct a mini mock up using the found materials and scraps in the classroom and scrap clay. Further explain that before they can move onto working on their final piece that they need to have a brief discussion with the instructor so they can collaborate on next steps.
- Stage 2: Instructor will demonstrate and explain different ways to construct wind chimes by showing different ways to attach ceramic forms to the base. Students will also be reminded to consider holes or attachment strategies proactively for final assembly. Encourage students who are moving quickly to add more decorative or sculpture detail to their work as well as incorporating found materials into their chimes.
- Stage 3: Instructor will demonstrate assembly and work with each student to create a stable structure for the final display. The students will be encouraged to add found objects or final elements as they observe the assembled wind chimes.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Monitoring of students:***

- The instructor should observe students as they work, ask guiding questions, and help redirect any technical missteps. During this time, the instructor can monitor pacing and adjust the timing of instructional stages, firings, etc. The instructor can also observe students' ideation and ask reflection questions in multiple stages of the process.

- ***Closure:***

- Invite students to share, jot down, or just think about how the entire process and how their work changed through each stage. The instructor should lead a group reflection and informal critique asking questions related to the theme of symbolism and art as service.

- ***Clean-up Procedures:***

- Make sure that students clear off all tables of all items they or their tablemates used and adequately wrap up and store their clay on the appropriate shelving. Final work should be carefully stored or packed to return home with students.

- ***Assessment and Feedback:***

- Students will be asked to create a 3-5 sentence artist statement that includes their overall idea for the project, its relation to art as service, and any process related discoveries.
- Feedback will consistently be provided for students throughout the process. Specific feedback will be provided at the end of the project as a reflection of student effort, growth, and demonstration of artistic thinking.

# Lesson 3:

## Place and Art

**Time:** 12:25-2:00

**Grade Level/s:** 9-12

### **Snapshot of the lesson:**

In this lesson students will contribute to a collaborative mosaic mural as a reflection on the school community and environment.

### **Lesson Rationale:**

The lesson focuses on collaboration as artists to contribute to a space through mosaics. These students will discuss the school environment as a space of community. They will then decide on an area of the school to display their work together as a cohesive unit to transform a space. Students will each create mosaic squares with a combination of ceramics and found objects. These mosaic squares will be assembled to form a sequence of mosaics connected through material, theme, and placement.

This lesson focuses primarily on Isaiah Zagar and the expansive mosaics of the Philadelphia Magic Gardens. Zagar exemplifies art as contribution to a space and community. The lesson will also incorporate a discussion of Howard Finster and the Paradise Gardens in north Georgia. Finster also created large scale mosaics with found objects that transformed a space and exemplified a local Georgia artist.

### **Key Concepts and Understandings for this Lesson:**

- Students will learn the basics of mosaic creation and materiality of ceramics and found objects.
- Students will understand art's transformation of space and contribute to the larger school environment.
- Students will collaborate with their peers as a team of artists.

### **Essential Questions:**

- How can collaboration become a generative art practice?
- How can we expand material use through mosaic murals?
- How can art contribute to and transform an environment through aesthetic and meaning? How can these visuals reflect our values of a space?

### **Lesson Standards**

#### ***Georgia Standards:***

- VAHSVA.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.
- VAHSVA.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.

#### ***National Standards:***

- VA:Cr1.1.IIa Individually or collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.
- VA:Re.7.1.IIa Recognize and describe personal aesthetic and empathetic responses to the natural world and constructed environments.

### **Lesson Goals:**

#### ***The students will know:***

- Students will know basic mosaic building techniques with ceramic pieces and found object.
- Students will know how to assemble and install a mural as a group.

#### ***The students will be able to:***

- Students will be able to work as a team to develop ideas, create, and install the project.
- Students will be able to contribute to their environment through art.

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

Students will collaborate on what the theme of their mosaic mural and where it will be installed with the school community. Students will demonstrate consideration of art as transforming space as seen through Isaiah Zagar's work. They will each create a square of the gridded mural format and show evidence of care and effort in their contribution. Students will explore material beyond ceramic pieces such as deconstructing found objects. Students will install their work among their peers and reflect on the murals transformation of space and contribution to the built and symbolic environment of their school.

### **Differentiation:**

Differentiation is incorporated in this lesson through student-led project components. Allowing students to conceptualize and generate ideas promotes discussion as a form of creative problem-solving beyond sketching or writing. If students are not comfortable sharing, they can write their ideas and all written and verbal contributions can be assembled and discussed by the teacher. Differentiated instruction can also mean accommodating sensory differences and material adversities. This can be done through teacher assistance in key stages with the additions of alternative materials such as cardboard, foam, plastic and more. Flexible pacing of the project also allows for students to work at a comfortable pace for their needs.

### Important Vocabulary, Definitions and Artists:

- *Mosaic*: an arrangement of small material pieces to form an image, typically glass, ceramic, stone, etc.
- *Mural*: a large scale work usually site-specific such as on a wall
- *Found Objects*: objects and materials traditionally discarded or recycled that can be used for art
- *Deconstruction*: a term to replace break or destroy, deconstruction transforms object into material
- *Space/Environment*: in terms of art, space or environment is a consideration for art purpose and placement
- *Installation*: involves the placement of art in a space with consideration of the space as an entity

#### **Artists:**

- Isaiah Zagar
  - Philadelphia Magic Gardens
- Howard Finster
  - Paradise Gardens



### **Resources and Materials:**

#### ***Instructional Materials:***

- Powerpoint presentation
- Handouts for students
- Example

#### ***Physical Materials for the work:***

- Clay
- Glaze/underglaze
- Found objects (scrap materials)
- Plaster
- Wood panels
- Hanging supplies

### **Preparation:**

- Create slide presentation including introduction to mosaic murals as practice, Isaiah Zagar, and the lesson goals.
- Create and print copies of handouts with prompting questions about the school community and idea generation for the mural.
- Prepare all materials and prep the classroom so materials are accessible and students have space to work.
- Collaborate with school administrators to plan possible spaces and rules for mural installation.

### Instruction (Activities and Procedures):

- **Starter:**
  - Facilitate students' usual routine and allow them to make their way into the classroom and to their seats at their pace. Have images of mosaic murals as visual interest in the classroom.
- **Overview of lesson:**
  - The instructor begins with an intro to mosaic murals and the project as a collaborative effort to contribute to the school.
- **Tap into prior knowledge:**
  - Prompt discussion of art as service as addressed in the previous lesson. This can lead to the concept of contributing to an environment and space with public art.
- **Introduction of artist:**
  - Introduce Isaiah Zagar and the Philadelphia Magic Gardens as a form of public mosaic murals that contribute to the aesthetics and empower a community and environment. Howard Finster Paradise Gardens also exemplify mosaic murals with found objects on a large scale.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Art making activity:***

- Students begin first with collaborative ideation to build their mural ideas and a solid plan facilitated by the instructor. Students will then begin their individual contributions to the larger mural. Depending on the chosen theme students may wish to sketch and develop a plan for their square. Students may then begin to lay out mosaic pieces and found objects to their desired imagery and composition. They can then place the pieces in plaster and seal the work. It will be assembled and installed as a team.

- ***Monitoring of students:***

- Teachers must act as a facilitator of this project, guiding and shifting discussion or ideas as needed to fit the project and environment requirements. The teacher should also intermittently include demonstrations for technical aspects of the mosaic process.

- ***Closure:***

- The closure for the lesson should be a reflection on the final mural and its effects on the space. Ask students to write or discuss their observations and experiences during their individual process and the collaborative process.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- **Clean-up Procedures:**

- Students may follow a routine with a ten-minute reminder at the end of class for time to appropriately store projects and materials. If the mural needs to be disassembled at some point the teacher can led a group of students to remove it.

- **Assessment and Feedback:**

- Assessment and feedback should focus on continual contributions to the group effort and individual exploration of material. Student assessment should focus on growth and exploration and feedback should be specific and constructive.



# Lesson 4:

## Curating Narratives

**Time:** 12:25-2:00

**Grade Level/s:** 9-12

### **Snapshot of the lesson:**

In this lesson, students will be introduced to art objects and their curation as a form of activism and meaning-making used to share narratives of community. Students will create and curate their own artwork through sustained investigation of a community or social issue of interest.

### **Lesson Rationale:**

This lesson introduces students to discussions of curatorial practices and their power in the art world. The project exemplifies the power of art in shaping and presenting narratives.

This project centers around the MET Exhibition *Before Yesterday We Could Fly: an Afrofuturist Period Room*. This exhibition dissects an untold narrative of a thriving black community displaced through eminent domain for Central Park. The room framed in brick and glass proposes what might have been if the Seneca Village was allowed to thrive. This culmination of artworks contribute to the presentation of this narrative of systemic racism and its disruption of community. Students will discuss the many artworks within the room and the construction and curation of the space itself as key elements of the story. The main artist of focus will be Roberto Lugo who creates vessels and objects with empowering imagery.

Students will then begin a sustained investigation into a narrative within the realms of social justice and/or community to create several objects with small groups in the class. They will also consider and construct a display for these works as a curatorial practice. This project should empower students in the art world and the narratives they want to share.

### **Key Concepts and Understandings for this Lesson:**

- Students will explore historical narratives such as community erasure and the museum as a space of historical exclusivity.
- Students will understand dynamic modes of collaboration and principles of curation.
- Students will understand their artwork as visual communication of narratives they hope to express and empower.

### **Essential Questions:**

- How can we confront systemic issues through narrative in art?
- How can artistic collaboration generate meaning?
- What narrative do you wish to share? How will you share it?

### **Lesson Standards**

#### ***Georgia Standards:***

- VAHSVA.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.
- VAHSVA.CN.1 Develop personal artistic voice through connecting uses of art within a variety of cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts.

#### ***National Standards:***

- VA:Cr1.2.IIIa: Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices, following or breaking established conventions, to plan the making of multiple works of art and design based on a theme, idea, or concept.
- VA:Pr4.1.IIIa: Critique, justify, and present choices in the process of analyzing, selecting, curating, and presenting artwork for a specific exhibit or event.

### **Lesson Goals:**

#### ***The students will know:***

- The students will know the historical practice of curation and its power in creating narratives.
- Students will know how art itself can present stories that are important to them.

#### ***The students will be able to:***

- The students will be able to plan, curate, and create an exhibit on a small scale.
- Students will be able to consider the implications of their artwork before and while it is made.

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

Students will show engagement and growth through discussion, planning and research, artistic response, and consistent collaboration. Students will engage with a narrative which they hope to change or uplift through extensive research in writing, mind-maps, discussion and more. Students will collaborate on planning what objects will be created and how they will be displayed through sketching, discussion, mock-ups. Students will show evidence of depth of concept through final displays and reflection.

### **Differentiation:**

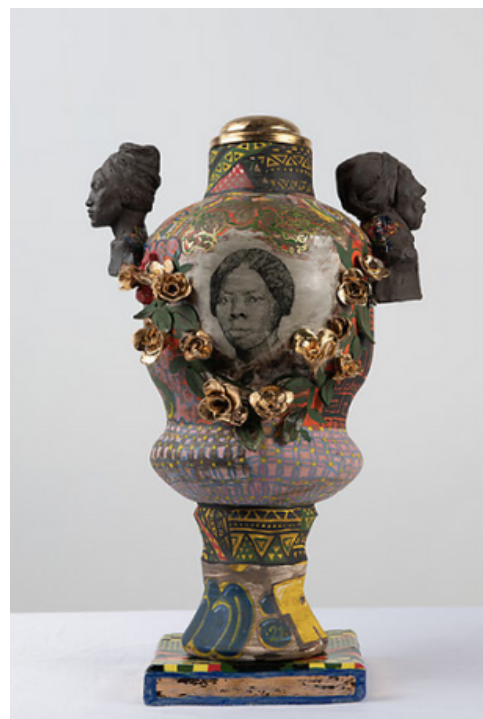
Differentiation can be incorporated in this project through the choice-based aspects of research, material and group collaboration. Students can choose different methods to research a chosen subject whether through video, podcast, books, articles, etc, this caters to multiple learning styles and needs. Several materials can be explored in the sustained investigation of students as they plan their art-making in terms of a story. This allows for material exploration and preference based on diverse interests. Group collaboration can also allow students to bring unique ways of thinking to team efforts. If a student has aesthetic interests in design they may focus on visual organization while another may focus on written language through label cards and writing.

### Important Vocabulary, Definitions and Artists:

- *Afrofuturism*- "Afrofuturism expresses notions of Black identity, agency and freedom through art, creative works and activism that envision liberated futures for Black life" (Smithsonian Institute)
- *Curation*- the consideration of art, its context and its relationships with other artworks to design exhibits and pose thematic questions

#### **Artists:**

- *Before Yesterday We Could Fly: An Afrofuturist Period Room* @ the Met
- <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/afrofuturist-period-room>
- Roberto Lugo



### **Resources and Materials:**

#### ***Instructional Materials:***

- Powerpoint presentation
- Handouts for students
- Copies of exhibition publication
- Article on critical curation
- Project proposal format sheet

#### ***Physical Materials:***

- Clay
- Underglaze/glaze
- Building and decoration tools
- Found objects and recycled material
- Display elements
  - Cardboard
  - Fabric
  - Boxes

### **Preparation:**

- Create powerpoint as introduction to sustained investigation.
- Create handouts as reminders of project goals, guiding questions, and context.
- Create a format for project proposals.
- Set a system for choosing or assigning collaborative groups.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures):**

***Preface for Instructor:*** It should be acknowledged this project is intended for 3-4 weeks to encourage depth of students' sustained investigation. This project is designed with the end of the school year or semester in mind, as a synthesis of ideas in creating, responding and a potential large exhibition.

- ***Starter:***

- Facilitate students' usual routine and allow them to make their way into the classroom and to their seats at their pace. Have images of the MET work on display as something students may reflect on independently.

- ***Overview of lesson:***

- The instructor will begin by discussing the MET Exhibition as a collection of artworks portraying a narrative. They will then explain students role in researching a narrative and collaborating to create an exhibition.

- ***Tap into prior knowledge:***

- Students will have built knowledge on building and decoration techniques while connecting to bigger themes. Students can utilize practiced ideation strategies.

- ***Introduction of artist:***

- Students will analyze and discuss the exhibition *Before Yesterday We Could Fly* from the MET and the artists within it such as Roberto Lugo.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- **Art making activity:**

- Students begin by forming groups and discussing possible research subjects. Once students agree on a narrative of interest they can begin planning the small exhibition and the art within it. At this point, groups will propose the exhibition and theme to the instructor for guidance and next steps. Once agreed on, students may move forward to create their artwork. This is intentionally open-ended to promote student independence and ownership. Ceramic objects are encouraged as exemplified by Roberto Lugo, but the work will depend on each student. After the work is created students will create and assemble a small exhibition and reflect on their work.

- **Monitoring of students:**

- This is a choice-based activity so it will require flexible guidance from instructors. Instructors should continually check in on groups and their progress to guide and redirect ideas toward their intended narrative visual impact.

- **Closure:**

- The closure for art lesson will be a class-wide exhibition and discussion of each curatorial project and the art within it. Students can then write a short reflection of the process and their experience with the project.

### **Instruction (Activities and Procedures) Continued:**

- ***Clean-up Procedures:***

- Students may follow a routine with a ten-minute reminder at the end of class for time to appropriately store projects and materials.

- ***Assessment and Feedback:***

- The project requires close observation and continual feedback throughout the entire process. Multiple meetings with student groups can balance student independence and instructor guidance. Specific and comprehensive communication is key for constructive feedback for this sustained investigation project. Assessment should be reflective of student collaboration, research, depth of thematic inquiry, and choices in art-making and display.

