Middle School: Comic Books

Lesson One: Character Design

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

State Goals:

25.A.1d Identify the elements of line, shape, color, and the expressive qualities of mood and emotion.

26.A.1e Identify media and tools and how to use them in a safe and responsible manner

Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will create several characters for a comic book story. The designs will show the front, sides, and ³/₄ angle of each character, the designs will also show an attempt on the part of the students to depict their characters displaying different emotions. Finally, the students will also create full body designs that show clothes that the students have designed for their character.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

Students will be viewing and discussing different types of comics. These will be a variety of artists and subjects represented in the comics for the students to review and choose from. Artwork will be shown, from traditional superhero comic books, Manga comics, comic strip art, as well as from underground and alternative comic book(s).

Affective Objectives

Students will reflect on the images presented as well as past experiences to decide which artist and which comics interest them the most. Students will be lead through a review of illustration and layout techniques as well as storylines.

Concepts and Vocabulary:

Creative/Productive

Cropping: Selecting a portion of the total image area usually for a more pleasing composition.

Layout: The art of designing printed material

Exposition: The beginning of the story where the characters, the setting, and the problem, meaning, or purpose of the story is introduced

Climax: The most exciting part, "the point of highest tension" in the story.

Closure: The end where all the loose ends are tied up. Note, a good story, or closer does not necessarily have to have all the loose ends tied up.

Pacing: The composition of boxes and pictures in the boxes that create the speed and mood of the story being told, the equalivalent of edits in a movie.

Layout: the art of designing printed material

Dialogue: a written composition in which two or more characters are represented as conversing

Affective/Expressive

Identity: who you are, your interests, purpose, use, etc.

Viewpoint: A place or position from which people can look at something

Antagonist: One that opposes the protagonist, or a large word that means "the bad guy."

Protagonist: A large word that means, "the good guy" or "the hero in the story."

Personality: the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or

group; the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics

Materials:

books 12" x 18" drawing paper pencils pencil sharpener erasers

Book List

<u>Pokemon Adventures – Mysterious Mew</u> by Hidenori Kusaka

The Amazing Spider-Man, June 2002, June 2004, August 2005, August 2001

The Batman Adventures

Bulletproof Monk by Michael Avon Deming

Suki by Nanase Ohkawa

Neon Genesis Evangelion Vol. 6 by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto

Garfield Tons of Fun by Jim Davis

The Boulevard of Broken Dreams by Kim Deitch

Cartooning Basics by Duane Barnhart

Make Your Own Comics for Fun and Profits by Richard Cummings

Asterix and the Roman Agent by Rene Goscinny

The Red Sea Sharks by Herge

Motivation:

- The students will be given a handout that will ask them to reflect further about their story and characters before they commit to anything in ink.
- Then students will be given a sheet that will have boxes indicating that they should start to sketch out their concepts for their characters heads, then another sheet where they will have to show their characters expressing different emotions.
- Then the students, will begin to draw their characters full body, with designed clothes.

Procedures:

- 1. Students will be introduced to the project that they will be working on for the rest of the semester. Comic books will be shown to give the students examples of the different types and styles of comics they could create, along with the what to do with their characters.
- 2. Students will begin by filling out a survey-like handout about the character in their comic book. It will become the basis for who it is and what they do.

Handout Questions

What is your character's name? Identity?
What type of comic are you going to make?
What is the storyline?
What is the setting?
What is the basic layout?

- 3. Next they'll sketch out some ideas for the character(s) in their comic book.
- 4. When they have a solid idea of what they look like, they will begin to draw different perspectives of the character on a large, divided up piece of drawing paper. They will begin by drawing the head/face from different angles.
- 5. If they have time, they will draw out their character's body and outfit at different angles.
- 6. Clean-up

Assessment:

Assessment will be based on how well the students used the written handout to help them create their characters

Lesson Two: Layouts and Story

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

State Goals:

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26.A.1e Identify media and tools and how to use them in a safe and responsible manner

Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will share what they have come up with as far as their characters and storylines go. They will then learn about different layouts by looking at different comic books and styles of layout designs.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

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Affective Objectives

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The Red Sea Sharks by Herge

Motivation:

• The students will be given a presentation that will go into depth about different layout designs and how they are used to show different themes and ideas..

- The students will then be asked to create 4-5 different types of layout ideas that they could use for their comics.
- They will then begin forming their comic, writing out the actual story and the dialog.

Procedures:

- 1. Students will be asked to talk about what they had come up with for their comic books. If no one volunteers, then I plan on randomly picking students.
- 2. I will do a presentation on layouts. By showing specific examples and explaining how the artists used the layouts to suit the comics/stories, I hope to give the students some ideas as to what they could use for their own spreads.
- 3. Students will be asked to try to come up with 4-5 different layouts that they could use for their comics. They will be asked to write down why they feel it could be an option.
- 4. Students will then begin writing the story for their comic spread. Bringing in specific details of what might go on in each frame or so. They will also be asked to start developing the dialogue for the character(s) in the comic.
- 5. Clean-up

Assessment:

Assessment will be based on how quickly they grasp the concept of creating different styles of layout for their comics and how well they can create different styles of layouts.

Lesson Three: Rough Draft

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

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Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will get into small groups of 3 and share to each other their comic frame by frame. The students will be asked to critique each other's work and give feedback. Then will also begin working on their rough draft.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

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Affective Objectives

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Materials:

books 8" by 10" drawing paper 8" by 10" watercolor paper pencils pencil sharpener erasers

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Motivations:

- The students will put into groups of 3 and asked to read what they had come up with for each frame of their comics. The other group members will then give them their feedback.
- The students will then work on a final rough draft of their comic page going along with the dialogue and story they had written down frame by frame.
- Once they have the rough draft done, they will be given watercolor paper and will start to draw out their final project.

Procedures:

1. The students will put into groups of 3 and asked to read what they had come up with for each frame of their comics. The other group members will then give them their feedback. They will be given a set of questions/types of responses that they should be answering/giving.

Does the story make sense?

Does the dialogue fit the story? The characters?

Suggestions.

The groups will be made by having the students count off by 5.

- 2. Students will be given an 8" by 10" sheet of paper. They will use this to create a rough draft of their comic. They will be adding the backgrounds, the dialogue, and finalizing the layout. This should be done in quick sketches, and isn't meant to be the final draft.
- 3. Once they have finished the rough draft, they will be given a sheet of 8" by 10" watercolor paper. This will be used for their final draft. They will be paying extra attention to making sure that things are how they want them. Using rulers, the students will create "perfect" boxes if they have boxes as frames.
- 4. Clean-up

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be based on how successful they were with creating their comic frame by frame with the dialogues.

Lesson Four: Watercolors

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

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Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will learn how to use watercolors and explore different techniques that can be used with them.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

There will be images of watercolor paintings from the past and present on the tri-fold board.

Affective Objectives

Students will think about how they can use the different techniques they've learned in their comic book spread.

Concepts and Vocabulary:

Transparent/opaque

Watercolor wash

Value, intensity

Wet-on-wet (or wet-into-wet)

Wash

Wet-on-dry

Dry-on-dry

Overpainting

Materials:

small (about 4" x 6") pieces of watercolor paper scratch paper watercolor paints and brushes containers for clean and dirty water newspapers for covering desks/tables paper towels for blotting brushes and spills

Procedures:

- 1. Have all the students circle around the tri-fold board and demo area
- 2. Talk to the students about watercolors. Ask who has used watercolors before. What is special/different about watercolors?
- 3. Start explaining each of the techniques. Ask the class before if anyone knows what the technique is and if they can explain it to the class.

<u>Techniques:</u>

Wet-on-Wet Technique:

Creating a Wash

Explain: A wash is a very thin coat of paint. You can still see the paper underneath a wash as it is transparent. Washes are good for flat, light areas like sky or a large body of water.

On the back of one paper square, write your name and "wet-on-wet" or "wash." Make sure students pre-label the back of each piece of paper before painting.

Explain that washes are created using a technique called "wet-on-wet." This simply means you are painting with a wet brush on wet paper.

Take a thick brush and paint clean water evenly across your paper. The paper should become wet but not drippy—no puddles.

Select a color and paint across the paper in a horizontal band. Continue with the same color or choose another color paint a band next to it. Show your students how the colors bleed and blend together where they meet. Continue painting.

Point out that you brush once or twice then leave it alone—don't go back and brush over it (you aren't "painting a fence!"). Let the paint blend and surprise you!

Set aside to dry.

Wet-on-Dry Technique:

This technique is well-suited for the painting areas that require greater control and more saturated colors—as in the foreground of a landscape. Wet-on-dry means you work with a wet brush on dry paper.

Paint abstract shapes and lines. Experiment with the brush and the amount of paint and water than you use. Blend colors and note how they bleed when they hit other wet spots and stay put when they are applied to dry paper. Encourage students to experiment and stay abstract.

Dry Brush Technique:

By blotting your brush dry and applying it to dry paper you can get interesting textures, hard edges or really saturated colors.

Try out different brushstrokes and amounts of paint. Encourage students to experiment and discover the effects this technique provides.

Basics:

- 1. **Wash** The simplest technique take any brush load it up with plenty of water and some pigment and smooth it out on the paper. Experiment with various proportions of water to paint to get variations in value. At right is an example of a wash
- 2. **Opaque** Touch the tip of your brush with water and load it up with a lot of pigment use this. You can get it to be lighter if you add more water and push the paint further experiment with this to try out the variations

- 3. **Erasing**-The most important part of this method (*note you cannot do this on regular watercolor paper and non-plate finish bristol board will peel and be impossible to work on.) Use your flat rigid brush with some water to carefully take out the paint. Have patience repeat as necessary do not rub too hard, because even the best bristol board may peel. Experiment with this technique you should be able to pull out most of the paint and get the paper almost white.
- 4. **Tinting** tinting is very easy to do, but more difficult to control. For example you want your painting to have more red in it, to be warmer. what you do is take some very thin red paint (use a lot of water) and carefully go over the dried portion of the painting you wish to tint.

Watercolor Resists:

To preserve white areas or lines in watermedia, try resists. If you use wax-based colored pencils, like Prismacolor, watercolor slides right off. Draw with a white crayon across rough paper to achieve texture. Remember, when using clear or white wax resist, you can't see the lines until you lay the wash. So be sure you know where you want your lines. You can also use white glue, masking tape and oil pastel as a watercolor resist.

- 4. Students will gather materials row by row to keep things organized and so that the materials area doesn't get too crowded. Each student will be given a square of watercolor paper to experiment on. They are encouraged to try all the different techniques including using resists.
- 5. Clean-up

ASSESSMENT

Student assessment will be determined by how they use the different techniques in their final project.

Lesson Five: Final Draft

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

State Goals:

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26.A.1e Identify media and tools and how to use them in a safe and responsible manner

Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will continue working on their final drafts.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

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Affective Objectives

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Concepts and Vocabulary:

Creative/Productive

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Materials:

books

8" by 10" watercolor paper

pencils

rulers

erasers

thin sharpies

watercolor sets with brushes)

various brushes

cups

newspaper

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Procedures:

- 1. The students will be told what the plan is for the day in class. This includes where they should be at in the beginning of class and what should be done by the end of the period. They will also be told how much time they have left for the project.
- 2. The students will continue drawing their final drafts. They are encouraged to use rulers to create straight lines for boxes. It is also recommended that they go over their pencil lines with either a thin sharpie or gel pen.
- 3. The students will begin using the watercolors for their comic book spread. They are encouraged to try the many different techniques shown during the watercolor lesson.
- 4. The students will continue working on painting their comic book spreads. If a student finishes up early, they will be given additional sheets of watercolor paper. These can be used to add another page or to create a cover for their comic.
- 5. Clean-up

ASSESSMENT

Student assessment will be determined by how they use the different techniques in watercolors they were shown in their final drafts.

Lesson Six: Critique

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

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Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will be discussing their own artwork as well as others as a means to get a better understanding of how art can vary person to person.

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

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MATERIALS

critique handout pencils erasers

Procedures:

- 1. The process of critiquing will be explained to the students, the purpose and how it can help them. For the 5th graders especially, it will be explained that critiques are not meant to be negative, but a means of helping them find out what is good, what could be changed, and what could be added to make their work better.
- 2. Each student will be handed a comic of another students as well as a critique sheet. They will have 15 minutes to read the comic and fill out the worksheet. Questions on this worksheet include:

Who is the character? Is the character original? What is the comic about? Does the story make sense? Describe the layout. Does it go with the type of comic it is? How were colors used? Are they realistic or made-up? What watercolor techniques were used? Would you buy this comic? Why or why not?

3. The rest of the time in class will be spent having a class discussion about what the students wrote. The other students will be encouraged to add their own thoughts and opinions on each of the comics.

ASSESSMENT

Student assessment will be determined by how well each student can articulate the different aspects of comics other than their own.

Lesson Seven: Clay Sculpture

The students will try to gain a better understanding of themselves through a series of projects that will challenge their own personalities. The class will begin with blind contour drawings of each other (of someone the individual student is not particularly friends with). This will then be followed with a series of lessons on the basics of some of the mediums that the students are interested in learning. The end result of this class will be a final project that is based solely on themselves, trying to figure out who they are.

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Learning Objectives:

Creative/Productive Objectives

The students will be creating small 3d clay models of their main characters..

Multicultural/Historical Objectives

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Affective Objectives

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Concepts and Vocabulary:

Personality: the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or group; the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics

Wedging: A method of kneading clay

Ribbon Tool: Use for fine trimming, detailing and sculpting

Needlepoint Tool: Used for trimming and cutting pottery; used to add texture and lines to

the surface of a clay piece

Rib: used for smoothing the surface of a clay piece

Wood Modeling Tool: used for shaping and smoothing clay

Materials:

colored clay clay tools

Procedures:

- 1. The students will be shown some basic hand techniques for shaping clay such as wedging, creating coils, and pinching. The different clay tools will then be explained and demonstrated. Mixing clay to create different colors will also be shown.
 - 2. Each student will be given a set of clay including blue, yellow, red, and green clay. They will use their initial character drawing worksheet (with the four different views) to recreate their comic book character into a 3-dimensional sculpture.
 - 3. Clean-Up

ASSESSMENT

Student assessment will be determined by how well each student can articulate the different aspects of comics other than their own.

Comic Books

Name:

Who is the character? Is the character original?

What is the comic about? Does the story make sense?

Describe the layout. Does it go with the type of comic it is?

How were colors used? Are they realistic or made-up?

What watercolor techniques were used?

Would you buy this comic? Why or why not?