

Common Core Lesson: Exploring Composition in Art

Grade Level: 4th - 8th grade

Subject: Visual Arts

Objective: Students will be able to define composition in art, identify different elements of composition, understand how composition affects the visual effect of artwork, and create their own compositions using various art elements.

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Materials:

Visual examples of artworks with different compositions

Chart paper or whiteboard

Drawing paper

Drawing materials (pencils, colored pencils, markers, etc.)

Procedure:

Introduction (10 minutes)

Begin by asking students if they have ever noticed how different elements are arranged in artwork.

Explain that composition in art is the arrangement of different elements, such as shapes, colors, lines, and textures, to create a specific visual effect.

Show visual examples of artworks with different compositions and ask students to share their initial thoughts and observations.

Reading and Discussion (15 minutes)

Provide a brief reading passage or present key information about composition in art.

Recommendations below.

Have students read the passage individually or in pairs and highlight important details about composition.

Facilitate a class discussion, asking students to share what they have learned and any questions they may have.

Elements of Composition (20 minutes)

Create a chart on the board or chart paper with the following elements of composition: shapes, colors, lines, textures, and space.

Explain each element and provide visual examples to illustrate how they contribute to the overall composition.

Engage students in a collaborative discussion, asking them to identify examples of each element in different artworks.

Composition Exploration (20 minutes)

Distribute drawing paper and drawing materials to students.

Instruct students to choose a specific theme or subject for their artwork and experiment with different compositions using shapes, colors, lines, textures, and space.

Encourage students to think about the visual effect they want to achieve and how the arrangement of elements can contribute to their desired outcome.

Sharing and Reflection (15 minutes)

Invite students to share their compositions with the class.

Facilitate a supportive discussion where students can discuss their choices and the impact of composition on the overall visual effect of their artwork.

Culminating Activity (20 minutes)

Encourage students to further develop their compositions by adding details, shading, or additional elements to enhance the overall effect.

Provide constructive feedback and suggestions to students to refine their compositions.

Assessment: (optional)

Informally assess students' understanding of composition through class discussions and their ability to identify and discuss elements of composition in artworks.

Evaluate students' compositions based on their understanding and application of composition principles, such as the arrangement of elements, visual impact, and overall coherence.

Culminating Discussion (10 minutes)

Wrap up the lesson by discussing the importance of composition in creating visually appealing and meaningful artwork.

Encourage students to reflect on how they can apply the knowledge of composition in their future art projects.

Resources:

Book: "The Principles of Art" by Gillian Wolfe - This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the principles of art, including composition. It covers various elements of composition, such as balance, contrast, and focal points, in a way that is accessible to upper elementary and middle school students. It includes examples from famous artworks and practical exercises to encourage students to create their own compositions.

Book: "Picture This: How Pictures Work" by Molly Bang - "Picture This" is an engaging and beautifully illustrated book that breaks down the elements of composition and their impact on visual storytelling. It uses simple geometric shapes to explain concepts like tension, harmony, and emotion in composition, making it accessible to younger readers in the specified grade range.

Book: "The Art of Composing Images" by Matt Murray - This book is designed for young artists interested in photography and visual storytelling. It covers the principles of composition in both traditional and digital art. It explains concepts like framing, rule of thirds, and leading lines, offering practical advice and activities for creating well-composed images.

Extensions:

Analyze and discuss the compositions of famous artworks, exploring how different artists have used composition to convey meaning and emotions.

Experiment with different composition techniques, such as rule of thirds, symmetry, asymmetry, or focal points.

Explore the concept of negative space in composition and discuss its impact on the overall visual effect.

Research different art movements and styles and examine how composition played a role in each.