

Engaging Rural Students in a Community Project

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Rural Students

Teaching art that is relevant to the students and the area one finds themselves working in can sometimes prove to be a challenge. Students and their interests in subject matter can vary depending upon their surroundings. I will share ways teachers can cater instruction towards rural students. Sometimes students in rural areas are in need of a better understanding of art and the importance it holds within the world today. Art is a cultural experience. It is an eye opener to social situations and has functions in fashion, dance and even food. I will conclude with sharing a unit plan, Rural Mural, that incorporates the ideas discussed. In this unit, students collaborate to develop and install a mural that reflects values of their community.

Get to Know Your Community

- Local History (founding of area, landmarks, etc.)
- Local Customs and Traditions
 - Events
 - Festivals
 - Parades
- Provision and Value of Local Resources
- Respect of the Community and its Inhabitants
- Actively Involving Parents



Involve Your Community

- Local Historians
- Elderly Citizens
- Craftsmen
 - both professional and amateur
- Cultural Experiences
 - such as food and events
- Local Sponsors
- Local Resources
- Art Openings or Exhibitions

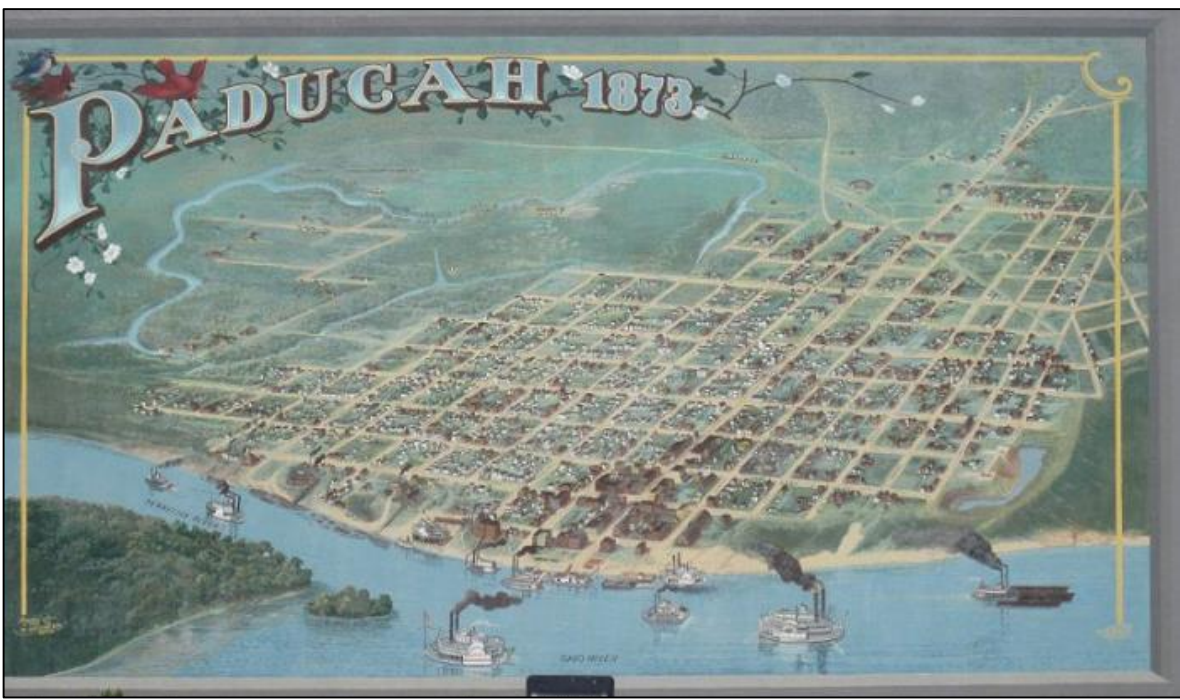
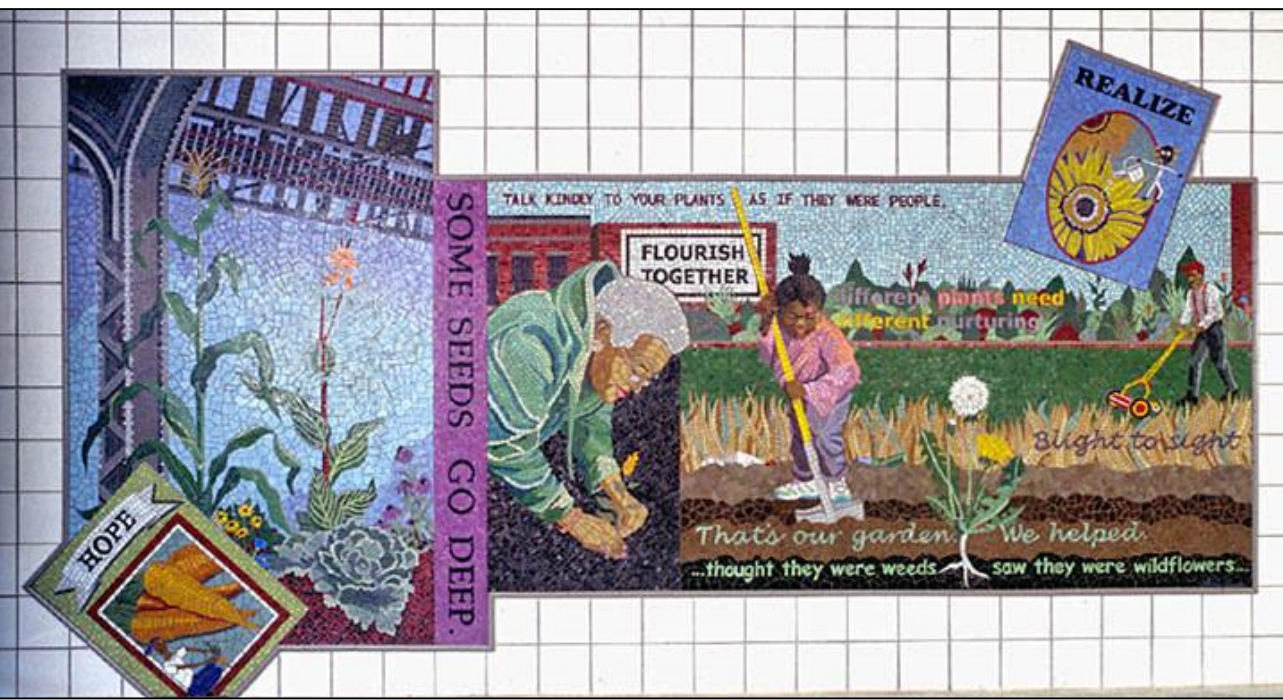


Unit Overview

Students and their communities have a huge impact on one another. However, both the community and the students don't always know how they benefit from one another. In this unit, students will look at exemplar artists, Diego Rivera, Olivia Gude and Robert Dafford's work in order to inspire and generate ideas that they can use as themes for their own mural designs. Students will begin their preparation for mural designs by engaging in presentations by community figureheads that teach students about the history and resources of their local area. Once students have thought of ideas for a mural as a class, they will project the design on a selected free space within the community and apply it to the surface. The unit will promote learning about the local community so that students understand what all their community contributes to, as well as what the students contribute to the community. This will then create a permanent artwork within the community that will document the students' learnings and share those learnings with the community.

Lesson 1: Classroom Community

On the first day of the lesson the teacher will ask students what they know about communities. The class will make a list on the board about what they believe a community is, and will then discuss their classroom community. Afterwards, the teacher will then explain their next project, the Rural Mural. It is a collaborative assignment in which students will work together to create and install a mural in the local community that documents or celebrates something about their community. The teacher will then prompt students to think about what their community offers and how it impacts them. Students will then view the work of exemplar artists Olivia Gude and Diego Rivera to grasp an understanding of what the assignment will be asking, as well as the work of Robert Dafford, who created local images in Paducah, Ky.



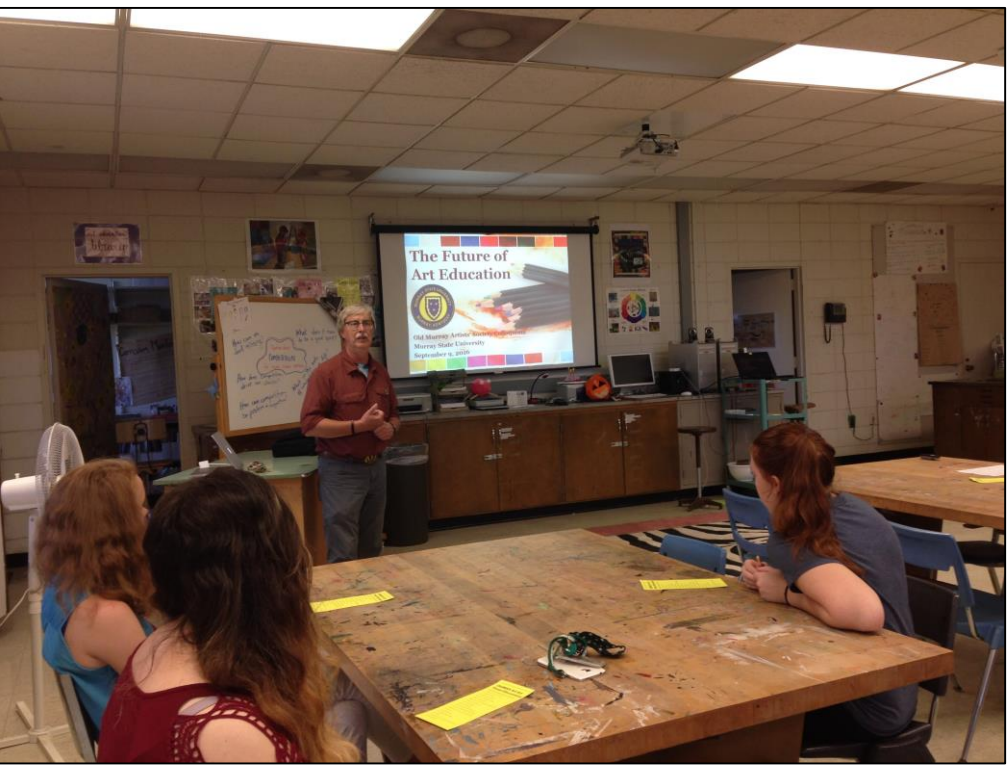
Standards

VA:Re.7.2.1a Analyze how one's understanding of the world is affected by experiencing visual imagery.

VA:Re8.1.1a Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.

Lesson 2: Speaking About That

The teacher will be introducing local figureheads, such as the mayor, historians and local resource providers, as guest speakers so that they can discuss with students the history of their community and what they individually contribute. Students are to take notes on what they learn to hopefully use this in their mural. Before the speakers present, the teacher will prompt students to think about the following: What does this person do?, What do they contribute to our community?

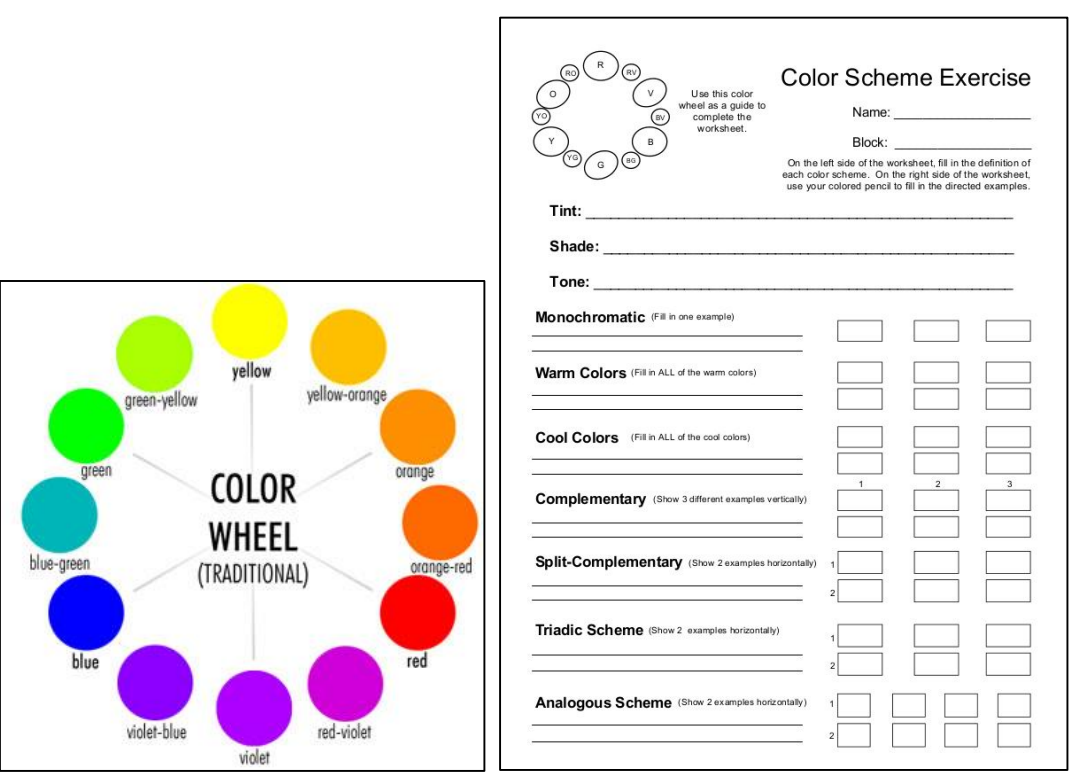


Standard

VA:Cn10.1.1a Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art making.

Lesson 3: The Grand Scheme of It All

Students will review their ideas sparked by the guest speakers in last class. Then the class will cover color theories, schemes and methods. This will assess their general knowledge of color and how they might use color when creating the mural. The class will also, with a list of approved areas, choose where to paint the mural near or within the vicinity of the school. Once this has been covered, students will begin to sketch out their ideas so that they might present them at the beginning of the next class.



Standards

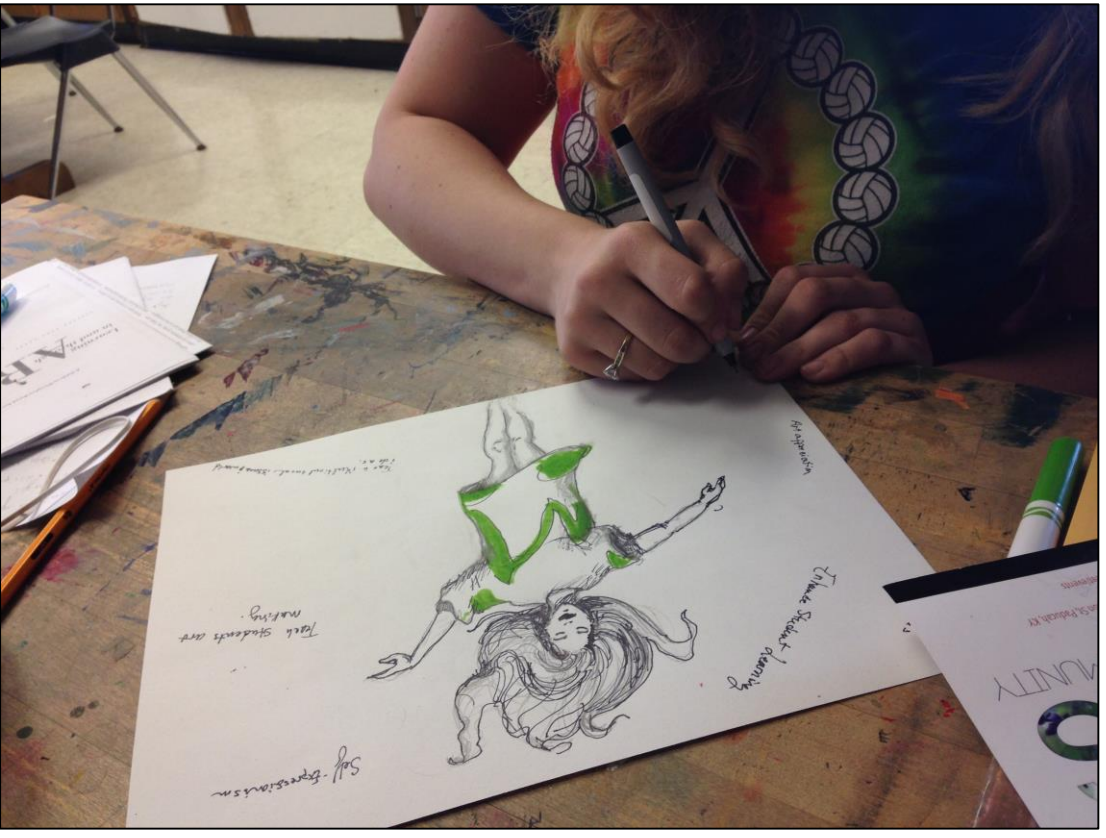
VA:Cn10.1.1a Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas.

VA:Cn10.1.111a Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art-making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design.

VA:Cr2.1.11a Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.

Lesson 4: What Do You Like?

Students will present their ideas in the beginning of this class and will identify the similarities and differences seen within the presented images. Students will then select either the best pieces of several artworks, so that they may mesh them together in a combined image. Students will then use those final ideas and thoughts to collaborate together in groups on a final image. Once the class votes upon a completed design, students in their groups will be assigned different sections of the mural to paint.



Standards

VA:Pr4.1.111a Critique, justify, and present choices in the process of analyzing, selecting, curating, and presenting artwork for a specific exhibit or event.

VA:Cr1.1.111a Visualize and hypothesize to generate plans for ideas and directions for creating art and design that can affect social change.

Lesson 5: Planning and Painting

Students will enter the class and will sit in their own groups. The class will move to the area that is to contain the mural and will use a projector to help them sketch it onto the wall first. Small teams of students will be assigned to be responsible for transporting and cleaning specific supplies and for completing specific areas of the painting. Once completed, the students will invite the local newspaper to capture an image of their work and will state upon their findings from their community and how they have incorporated it into the piece.



Standards

VA:Cr1.1.1a Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors

VA:Cr1.2.111a 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.

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