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Unit Title: The Power of Words
Grade Level: 6-12 (adaptable)

YOUR RATIONALE:

It's important for students to understand the power that text can bring to an image. By studying examples found within Kruger's artwork and within contemporary society, students will be able to recognize how influential text is within our daily lives.

KEY CONCEPT:

Text is used in a variety of different ways within artwork and all around us (advertising, commercials, informational). We are all consumers of our immediate surroundings and the messages that are being subconsciously and consciously sent to us. It's our job as viewers to be able to decode this visual and textual information. We should know about it first to be able to then manipulate it ourselves.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How does text change your perception/ the meaning of an image? How does text affect us in our daily lives? Where do we see it? How do we use it? Decode it? How can we use text to promote something that we really care about by pairing it with an image?

SELECTED ARTIST (CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION):

ARTIST: Barbara Kruger

Key artwork: I am therefore I shop

Key ideas:

The artist uses words to present new information for the viewer to think about. Therefore the viewer is forced to think about what they are doing to help the issue. What are they doing to perpetuate the issue? How can they become more aware to make a difference?

Key art making strategies:

Kruger uses bold text over images to give additional information and persuade the viewer into new ideas.

RELATED STUDIO ACTIVITY

Key ideas:

Text adds to images by presenting more information, contradicting, or adding humor.

Sub-ideas:

By becoming aware of the real life examples all around us, we too can use text to express our ideas with imagery as well.

Choice of media, subject matter, formal limitations:

magazines for initial explorations- photography manipulation for finals
(technology integration: Photoshop manipulations can create a more professional advertisement feeling)

Personal connections:

Students see text and imagery all around them everyday and now they will be able to question what messages they are being sent and decode them.

Development of student ideas for expression:

Description of the activity:

Students will initiate the exploration of text and imagery through magazines and class discussion. Then create a final project by either taking their own photographs or finding more personal images and altering them through the addition of text. They will intentionally create meaning through the pairing of image and text.

CONCEPT MAPPING:

OBJECTIVITIES:

The student will create an example of text and image pairing within groups as a form of brainstorming.

The student will combine photography and text to create a final artwork addressing and calling attention to a problem propionate to their community.

The student will write the intentional meaning of their final in a reflective writing.

The student will present their final and take into understanding all of the different meanings that other students get from it.

The student will display their artwork to the audience to which it pertains.

AREA OF INTEGRATION:

ART AND Multi-Cultural and Social Studies:

The class will discuss what types of issues that their particular community faces (school or local). How can they draw attention to it so that they can promote change?

PROCEDURE:

Day 1

First begin by having a discussion about the importance of text vs. the importance of imagery in everyday life. Which do the view as being more prominent? When it comes to art, does text have a place in artworks? What changes as text and image are combined? What new meanings are created or destroyed? This discussion can take part as a class, in groups, as individual reflection, or a combination.

Next provide examples of how text and imagery are coupled in everyday life (advertisements, posters, artwork, etc.). The best method for this is PowerPoint but posters or handouts could be substituted if needed. Use contemporary artists examples to reinforce the idea that context changes meaning. The artist I picked was Barbara Kruger for her witty combination of text and context.

To start the art project, first have students pair up and practice some of the ideas on a smaller level before they begin their final projects. Gather magazines, scissors and glue sticks and have students search for images that are purely aesthetically pleasing and simple text phrases that are interesting. This will allow you to check for understanding of the main concepts presented. It will also allow students to ask questions of their peers if they don't understand.

Day 2

Group discussion is key at this point to make sure the students know what is expected of them on a larger, individual scale. A group critique after the partner practice will also model the critique that will be done at the completion of their final. You can catch any questions and problems that arose during the first try process.

For the final art project, students will be assigned to find or take their own images and pair them with short phrases or singular words created or discovered by individual research. Text and image will be combined to question or create awareness to an issue that the student

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

Kruger visuals
Magazines
Scissors
Glue sticks
Cameras (disposable or digital)
Acrylic Paint
Photoshop (optional)

VOCABULARY:

Consumerism-a modern movement for the protection of the consumer against useless, inferior, or dangerous products, misleading advertising, unfair pricing, etc.

Issue- a point, matter, or dispute, the decision of which is of special or public importance: "political issues".

Promotion-something devised to publicize or advertise a product, cause, institution, etc., as a brochure, free sample, poster, television or radio commercial, or personal appearance.

EVALUATION AND RUBRICS:

20 pts Brainstorm/group creation

10 pts Participation in group discussions/critiques

50 pts Final

- creativity 10 pts

- effort 10 pts

- photograph and text combination 20 pts

30 pts Writing

- personal reflection on created meaning 10 pts

- re-interpretation after presentation 10 pts

50 pts Presentation

- 2-4 minute explanation of your final artwork

10 pts Constructive Criticism

- pay attention to presentations and respond to what you think their artwork means in a one sentence summary-to be turned into presenter.

FOLLOW-UP:

I would encourage students to think about whom their audience was and if it would be appropriate to display their artworks somewhere that their intended audience would see them. (buses, malls, stores, parks, public places, school, etc)