

Enduring Idea: Human Curiosity

Grade: Middle School

Rationale: As long as human have been around them have been exploring, inventing and experimenting due to the nature of our human curiosity. If this enduring idea is used in art it would be easily interrogated into other subjects such as: art science, and in English such as mysteries stories. They can also take a personal interest by building their own knowledge base by research and experimenting with it.

### Key Concepts

- Curiosity in science experiments
- Curiosity of the earth
- Curiosity of space
- Curiosity of historical objects
- Curiosity of animals
- Curiosity of materials
- Curiosity can lead to innovation
- Curiosity can lead to accruing knowledge
- Curiosity can lead to inhuman practices
- Curiosity killed the cat

- Curiosity of the world around you
- Curiosity can lead to experimenting and innovation
- Curiosity is a theme in human culture which gets expressed in art, science and writing

### Questions

- What do you do when you're curious about something?
- What can curiosity lead to?
- What are you curious about?
- What other subjects deal with human curiosity?

### Objectives

- Students will gather and use an information base about something they are curious about.
- Student will connect with other subject areas connected with curiosity.
- Student will experiment with new materials and have both success and failures.

# Lesson one

- Find an everyday object, to research and observe

## Lesson objectives

- Students will collect different versions of an object that they are curious about and choose one to document.
- Students will gather information about their object online and have three interesting facts printed out for their drawing later.

## Artist

John James Audubon

## Materials

Pencils, paper

## Instructions

- Students will be asked the week before to select an object which they find interesting, and that they can both find at least five examples of and so they can use in an art piece its self (The object can be natural or manufactured)
- We will then take a look at their science text books and have a discussion about the illustrations asking the questions:
  1. What did they do before photography to document things?
  2. Why do they draw them instead of photographing them today?
- Then a slide show and discussion of Audubon books. Teacher should talk about how documentation was inspired by human curiosity and became popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And also how the art is influenced by its function.
- Discussion questions:
  1. What things do we document today?
- Have a demo on how to google their object. Show them how to pick out good websites and Wikipedia is just fine to research on but warn them of it not being scholarly information and to check the resources.
- Then students will research their object on the internet to find three interesting facts about their object and type and print them out. The teacher will give these example questions to guide what kind of information they should get.

### Manufactured objects

1. When was their object invented?
2. Where are they manufactured?
3. How much does it cost to make it?
4. How much it cost to buy it?

### Natural Objects

1. Where is their object found in nature?
2. What purpose does it have in nature?
3. Is it used by humans for anything?

**Interdisciplinary:** Biology would be a good subject to connect with this lesson and lesson two. A science book could even be an example of this kind of illustration. It would be great to do this lesson while they are doing a dissection so they could examine the object the same way they do an organism.

Note: If computers are not available Lesson could be redesigned so they are put into groups and share knowledge they already know with each other.

## Assessment

Did students bring in an object: 0 or 5 points

Did they stay on task while researching: 0 or 3 points

Research questions:

Incomplete or did not follow directions	Completed and followed direction
0-9 points	10 points

## Lesson Two

A new Audubon

### Lesson Objectives

- Students will learn to contour draw through a demonstration
- Students diagram their objects using contour line drawing in pencil, to correctly observe the shape of the object. (ultimate goal is to color in with water color)

### Artist

John James Audubon

### Materials

Pencils, paper

### Instructions

- A demonstration will be given on contour drawing. Show the students how to make ellipses with a center axis, how to measure proportion and sight diagonals with a sight stick and to notice details in the line. Remind the students not to shade in the outline.
- The students will draw two different sides of their object on one piece of paper leaving room to insert their facts.
- The teacher should circulate giving tips on individual objects.
- At end of lesson the teacher should ask the students what their drawing hasn't documented about their object. Looking for that they will be looking at color the next Class.

## Assessment

Did they stay on task during class: 0 or 3 points

Did they use techniques discussed in demo when appropriate with their object: 0 or 5 points

Did they complete the task as directed: 0 to 10 points

## Lesson three

Color observation

### Lesson objective

- Students will have a demonstration of water color and observation
- Students will use techniques from demo to water color their contour drawings

### Artist

John James Audubon

### Materials

Water colors

## Instructions

- Discussion: Compare and Contrast an Audubon bird and a real photograph of the bird

Discussion questions:

What color is the bird in the photograph?

How many colors and shades can you find in the painting?

- Remind the students that it is their human curiosity that they should be looking for more than one color.

(List on board)

- Give demonstration on water color: Show the student how to observe the dark side/light side of the object, show them how to observe color shifts and how to mix the colors (using complementary to make duller, and that no color should be used straight from the palate)
- Students will then water color in their contour drawings using techniques from the demonstration.
- When they are done they will be instructed to cut out and glue their facts about their objects onto the paper.
- The drawings will be hung on the wall so they may reference the drawing throughout the unit

## Assessment

Did students stay on task: 0 or 3 points

Did students use techniques from the demonstration: 0 or 5 points

Did students complete the task as directed: 0-10 points

## Lesson Four

- How many ways can you draw/paint an object

### Lesson objective

- Students will produce 3 drawing with 3 distinctly different styles of drawing.
- Students will choose their favorite drawing and share why with the class.

### Artist

Patrick Caulfield

Wayne Thiebaud

### Materials

Charcoal, markers, watercolor, pencil

## Instructions

- Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to figure out how many ways they could fold a piece of paper. Give the students 1 minute.

Discussion question:

Did you find how many ways you could fold a piece of paper in a minute?

Teacher should explain that it is similar to how many ways you can draw a single object.

What style did we use to draw/paint your object already?

- A slide show showing different types of still lives from old too modern. Teacher should discuss how styles get put into genres and characterizes of those genres.

Noting line quality, placement on paper, proportions, materials and color.  
Remind the students that these are styles that have already been discovered but there are new styles to be invented by them.

- The students will make 3 drawings in distinctly different styles in paint or drawing material.
- Tell the student to choose a favorite and decide why.
- The students will then get into groups of five and share their drawing and why it is their favorite. The students will then discuss the questions and have one person record the answers:
  1. How do you as an artist decide what style is best?
  2. Does it mean it's your best or the best?
  3. Why do artists feel the need to keep inventing new ways to draw and paint?
  4. What do these drawing say about your object that your contour water color drawing did not?
  5. Now that you have done these drawings is just the documentation of objects like you did on your contour water color, like in your science books art?

## Assessment

Did student stay on task: 0 or 3

Did they complete task as assigned: 0-10

Did the student with their group answer the question: 0-5

## Lesson Five

- Martial experiments

### Lesson Objectives

- Students will invent ways of painting/drawing with material that is not considered traditional and make five small studies of their invented technique.
- They will decide if the experiment is successful and how it fits with their object

### Artist

Pollock

### Materials

Paint, anything that I can gather that makes a mark, dirt, Kool-Aid, sponges,

### Instructions

- Every one will have a paint brush in front of them.

Questions to ask them:

1. What is this object?
  2. What is it used for?
  3. Who says so?
  4. Do people use other things to paint with?
- Then show them a few images of Pollock and explain how he painted and his philosophy. He is an example of inventing his own technique for a conceptual reason.

- The teacher should discuss how there is no one way to paint, remember how many ways you can fold a piece that's how many ways you can draw and paint and with how many things you can paint with. Even though things like art there are imposed "rules" that you use paint and a paint brush, human curiosity helps us push boundaries and feel free to explore. That today they will be conducting experiments to see if they can find a technique that could relate to their object. Remind them about the way Pollock painted gave meaning to his paintings.
- The teacher should explain the materials provided and any instructions and how to use them.
- Students will be asked to make 6 studies of their object and in each using an unconventional paint or unconventional tool. Underneath their study they will list what this technique would help them convey about object or does it have nothing to do with their object and is a failed experiment.
- At end of lesson the teacher should discuss when using experimental technique there are always failures, you have to practice a lot and with the experimental "paints" it won't be as stable as regular paint.
- Before they leave ask the students: Why do people experiment? (human curiosity)

## Assessment

Did student stay on task. 0-3 points

Did student complete task as directed 0-10

## Lesson Six

- Illustrating a mystery

## Lesson Objectives

- Students will compose a mystery about how their object was "stolen".

## Materials

Paper, Pencil

## Instructions

- I will read a short story mystery and stop reading before it tells who done it.
- Then discuss with the class:
  1. What types of emotions do you feel from hearing that story?
  2. What kind of images do you get in your head?
  3. How does that illustrate those emotions?
  4. How is human curiosity involved in solving a mystery?
- Then the ending of the story will be read.
- Students will be asked to write a short story about the mystery surrounding how their object got stolen and how it was recovered.
- The teacher should discuss a format to make sure they have a beginning, middle and end. The story should contain these elements
  1. Whose object it is?
  2. Why it is important to this person?
  3. An investigation of who stole the object
  4. Finding the person who stole the object
  5. The reason and how the person stole it
- Then have a partner read it to correct errors and write down feedback on these questions:

1. What type of emotions do you get from this story?
2. What kinds of images do you get from the story?
3. What was your favorite part of the story?

Interdisciplinary: Should be combined with English class. This is obviously more of an English assignment than an art assignment so it should involve the English teacher so they can recall what the students have learned in class.

## Assessment

Did student stay on task 0 or 3

Does the story have a beginning, middle and end: 0-5 points

Does the story have the elements requested: 0-5 points

Did they help correct and answer the questions for their partner: 0-5 points

## Lesson seven

- Illustrating a mystery two

## Lesson Objectives

Students will learn how to put together a book

Students will make two illustrations

Students will write out their story and then bind their book

## Art

Books from the library

## Materials

Paper, Pencil, color pencil, markers, watercolor, construction paper, materials to bind books.

## Instructions

- Books (short stories so the students can read them quickly) with illustrations will be passed around the class room
- In small groups they will discuss these questions addressing a few books.
  1. How do illustrations help a story?
  2. What different styles do they see in the books?
  3. How is art in books viewed differently from art on walls?
- Then a demonstration will be given on bookmaking. Go over on how they will place their text and how they will place their drawings on the paper so they can staple it in place and put a cover on it. Have the paper cut into the format ready.
- Students will then be asked to make two illustrations that help their story, with color pencil, markers, or watercolor
- They will neatly write their story in the proper format.
- Then they will be given construction paper to make a cover with a title and their name and staple their book together.

## Assessment

Did student stay on task: 0 or 3 points

Did they follow directions in making the book 0-10 points

Did they make two drawings that their story 0-10 points

## Lesson Eight

- Design a package for your object

## Lesson Objective

- Students will design a color scheme and font for a label that would be on the packaging for their object.

## Art

Packages for products that could be found at the local store

## Materials

Colored paper, glue, color pencil and sharpie markers

## Instructions

- Students will be asked to bring in an envelope or box that their object fits into.
- There will be different products set out among the students (cereal boxes, toothpaste boxes, ect)
- They will talk in smaller groups about these questions: write down to share with the class
  1. What about a package makes you curious enough to buy it?
  2. How do the packages reflect the product? (name, information, color)
  3. How does color affect the design?
- Then have a demonstration on color schemes that are attractive using the material they will be given. Go over complementary colors, cold colors, warm colors and how a gray or duller color next to a bright color makes them luminescent.
- Students will then be given paper and color pencils:
 

Things required in their package:

  1. A color scheme that reflects their object
  2. Information about their object
  3. Name of their object.
  4. overall goal is to make people curious about their object
    - When the products are finished the class will vote on the one we would want to buy most and discuss why that is.
- Then ask one final question: Is this art? Why or Why not?

## Assessment

Did the student stay on task: 0 or 3 points

Did they include a color scheme on the package: 0 or 5 points

Did they complete the task as directed: 0-10 points

## Lesson Ten

- Installing their objects in groups

## Lesson Objectives

- Students will collect many of their objects and then manipulate or arrange them into a contrasting image.

## Artist

Tony Craig

## Materials

Objects, spray paint, string wire, board to attach it to if they wish

## Instructions

- Students will bring in their five different versions of their objects



- Explain installation art, it is a sculpture using a space, and is often not permeate with found every day objects and how they have ideas behind them and show slides of the artist Tony Craig and how he uses everyday materials. Explain how installation art often uses the element of human curiosity to attract the viewer. That the art piece disturbs our normal every day places to make us curious of what they are about.
- Then ask the students to get out their objects and place them on their desk. Discuss with the students if their objects are already art or are they just material, for the purpose of this project they are material but remember it could become art if put in a context of art and to remember that they only need to go far enough to convey their idea and put the object into the context of art.
- Students will get into groups of three and decide:
  1. What idea they want to communicate?
  2. How they are going to communicate it?
  3. How they want to arrange their objects (hang, attach to wall, stack, or arrange)
  4. If they want to change their objects?
- The group will write down the idea they want to communicate and how they are going to convey it in their installation.
- Then students will decide what they want to do and propose what they are going to do and what materials they need to do it to the teacher.
- Students will start to work (make sure they do any spray painting or anything that needs to dry for next class) to be continued next class

## Assessment

- Did they participate in group
- Did their group accomplish the decision making process

## Lesson Eleven

Installing their objects in groups part two

### Artist

Tony Craig

### Materials

Objects, spray paint, string wire, and board to attach it to if they wish materials they request if reasonable

### Instructions

- At the beginning of class remind them of the previous day by asking the students about the assignment.
- Students will continue making their instillation
- They are to be finished at least 10 minutes before the end of class
- Then as a class we will look at each instillation and answer these question:
  1. What are they were trying to convey?
  2. What they wanted to convey?
  3. Did the idea get represented?

## Assessment

Did the student stay on task: 0 or 3 points

Did the students in a group finish the task as directed: 0-10 points