How the New NCCAS Standards Were Applied to a Foundational Level Art Course

NAEF Grant Recipients:
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**LESSON DESIGN TEMPLATE**

Create: Investigate / Plan / Make
1. Students will investigate and reflect on Romare Bearden's use of collage and photomontage as they research past art forms to create new ones.
2. Students will write about their ideas and prior to creating.

Present: Analyze
1. Students will collaboratively prepare artworks for display in a public venue.
2. Students will develop an exhibition narrative to explain the project work to viewers.

Reflect:

Investigate and reflect on how Romare Bearden illustrated his memories of community through the development of a photomontage.

Students will mindmap the word, "memory" to transform ideas for their photomontage.

Students will work in the collage process to create a photomontage from cut-up images reassembled to create a new portrait with the theme, "memory.

Students will listen to jazz music by Stanford Marathis while creating their photomontage.

Response:

Prepare the artwork for display and collaborate on an exhibition narrative of the art show to explain the project to the viewers. Visual images of student work in action are welcome!

\[Image of student artwork here\]

Respond: Analyze
1. Students will use the vocabulary of art to analyze the artwork of Romare Bearden and discuss how subject matter, visual elements, formal composition, media, and content convey meaning in a work of art.

Assessment Notes

Once the artwork is completed, students will answer the following self-reflection questions in their sketchbook:

1. **Expression:** What are you trying to say in your work? What do you want the viewer to see? What did you do to help you get your message across?
2. **Design:** Are you happy with your Compositional Arrangement? What would you change? How did you incorporate the Design Elements and Principles required for this project? Based on what you learned, what would you do differently?
3. **What part of your project has the strongest technical skills and what part of your project has the weakest technical skills (this is your control over the medium and tools used for the project).**
4. **Self-Analysis:** What advice would you give the next student completing this assignment?

**Statement of the Art Experience**

Class: 8th Grade Foundations of Art

Grade: 8th

Procedure Notes

In this lesson, students will investigate and learn about the North Carolina native artist Romare Bearden and his unique method of creating art, called photomontage. The students will study proportion and scale in a work of art and examine how Bearden used symbols to help him visually communicate his ideas. At the end of this module, students will create a photomontage in the style of Romare Bearden's work with the assignment to illustrate an important memory. As a class, the students will collectively create a photomontage to visually describe their school community.
Statement of the problem or need

The new NCCAS standards have caused anxiety and nervousness among art educators over the upcoming application of these standards into current curriculum. The applicants for this grant were reviewers of the initial release of the NCCAS standards. As they explored these new standards, they were interested in how the standards would be applied. It is unknown whether these standards will be easily adopted or whether they will be difficult and time-consuming for art educators to adopt. This project will involve the revision of a sample unit of curriculum in a foundational art course. This module will be designed to be taught through an online learning management system either in a traditional or blended online setting.
Students working on a group photomontage assignments as part of the revised lesson plan
After reading about and viewing artwork by North Carolina native artist, Romare Bearden, and discovering his unique method of creating art, called Photomontage, you'll write a second paper critiquing Romare Bearden's art using the concepts presented in the FPT presentations. Then, you'll make a decision whether or not you think Bearden's work is successful. Based on your decision, you'll create your own photomontage in the style of Romare Bearden's work with the assigned subject of Your Family Portrait.

You'll be exposed to jazz music. Did you know that Romare Bearden created a work of art called, Paris Blues, based on the movie, Paris Blues which is about jazz musicians in Paris? Based on Romare Bearden's work, Branford Marsalis created an album of songs called Romare Bearden Revealed with the artwork of Bearden on the cover. See http://www.branfordmarsalis.com/branford/pbuild/linkbuilder.cfm?selection=doc.223 for more information. I think it is important to note that Romare Bearden is an excellent artist to study as an example of how artists and the arts can influence each other. Artists do not create work in a vacuum! Most of the time, each artist is influenced by an idea based on his or her personal journey in the arts and from life itself. It all can be boiled back down to those five purposes for creating art that we learned about in Module Four.

**Egg Bonus! For 10 points, e-mail or text me the five purposes for creating art that you learned in Module Five!**

Finally, in the imagine it! folder, there is a second video on the artists of the Harlem Renaissance. Bearden grew up surrounded by artists, writers, and philosophers of the Harlem Renaissance and it is important to note what the Harlem Renaissance was, how and why it was created, and the purpose that it holds in the history of art. For extra-credit in module five, you can visit the permanent Romare Bearden collection at the Mint Museum in Charlotte, listen to the sound clips on the Harlem Renaissance and write about your favorite work of art in the collection and what you think Bearden was trying to
Bearden was interested in telling a story through his art work. Symbols like the train helped to communicate his ideas in a visual way. He wanted the viewer to see his memories and share in his experiences living in the South and beyond. Look closely at the photomontage, *Watching the Good Trains Go By*. Do you see how some of the people seem too large for the picture? This is called scale (how big or small something is in relation to a standard point of reference) in a work of art. Bearden intentionally created his figures to appear larger than life in an effort to communicate the importance that these figures had in his memory and in his life. By doing this, he manipulated the scale of the figures to create emphasis.

Romare Bearden. *Watching the Good Trains Go By*. Collage of various papers with ink on cardboard. 1964. 13 3/4 x 16 7/8 inches
The following standards were chosen and applied to the existing teaching module:

**Artistic Process** - Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

**Anchor standard** - Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

-- Enduring Understanding - Through artmaking, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences

-- Essential Question - How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through artmaking?

**VA:Cn10.1.7a** - Individually or collaboratively create visual documentation of places and times in which people gather to make and experience art or design in the community.

**NOTE** - students collaboratively create visual documentation based on broad societal themes: changes in society mores, changes in civil rights, migration to the north, political changes

**Anchor standard** - Connecting: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

-- Enduring Understanding - People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.

-- Essential Question - How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?

**VA:Cn11.1.7a** - Analyze how response to art is influenced by understanding the time and place in which it was created, the available resources, and cultural uses.
**Artistic Process:** Responding: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning

**Anchor Standard** - Applying criteria to evaluate artistic work
--Enduring Understanding - People create art based on various criteria
--Essential question - How does one determine criteria to evaluate a work of art?

VA:Re9.1.8a - Create a convincing and logical argument to support an evaluation of art.

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**Artistic Process:** Creating: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

**Anchor Standard** - Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
--Enduring Understanding - Artist and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals.
--Essential Question - How does knowing the contexts, histories, and traditions of art forms help us to create works of art and design?

VA:Cr1.2.8a - Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art and design.

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**Artistic Process:** Creating: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

**Anchor Standard:** Organize and Develop Ideas and work.
--Enduring Understanding - Artist and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches
--Essential Question - How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective?

VA:Cr2.1.8a - Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of art-making or designing.
Artistic Process: Presenting: Interpreting and sharing artistic artwork
Anchor Standard: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation
-- Enduring Understanding - Artists, curators, and others consider a variety of factors and methods including evolving technologies when preparing and refining artwork for display and or when deciding if and how to preserve and protect it.
--Essential Question - What methods and processes are considered when preparing artwork for presentation or preservation?
VA:Pr5.1.8a - Collaboratively prepare and present selected theme-based artwork for display and formulate exhibition narratives for the viewer.
Student Examples Before

Student Sample #1
Student Sample #2
Student Sample #1
Once the module work was revised to the satisfaction of the developers and writers, the course was taught to a small class of 8th grade students. The instructor immediately noted that in contrast to the original module, students had fewer questions and were able to self-direct through the material with ease. The instructor reviewed the pacing of the module and the expected assignment work on a daily basis. During class time, the students were able to get right to work in their sketchbooks. They completed mindmapping drawings of the word, “memory,” a mind-map of the art criticism assignment (in lieu of a formal analysis), a group photomontage project based on the theme of “Ashley Hall,” and individual photomontage assignments.

Through conversation, class critiques, informal assessments, and a brief survey, the students gave direct feedback to the instructor about the module work. Students noted that “it was easy to understand what the instructor wanted,” and “it was fun completing the mindmaps.” Additionally, several students stated that their work was much better after analyzing Romare Bearden’s work prior to creating their individual projects. It was noted that the overall student feedback was positive and students readily understood the content presented as well as the desired expected outcomes. Further, the individual student work showed a greater increase in student understanding as evidenced in the submitted student samples.
The course developers are pleased with the improved student understanding as demonstrated in class discussions and culminating student work. It is acknowledged that at this time, it would be worthwhile to teach the unit again with a greater focus on formative and summative assessments in the development of a sample Model Cornerstone Assessment to accompany the course content developed.

As defined in the grant process, the grant writers were interested in how the standards would be applied to existing course content. It was determined through the process that the existing unit of study did indeed already align with the new NCCAS standards. However, through a study of the standards, it was determined that the enduring understanding and essential questions helped to guide the writing process while the performance standards specified student outcomes. Thus, the course module was not radically altered nor was the final student project. Rather, the course content was streamlined with a greater focus on directed student learning and desired student outcomes.

The writers and developers noted that it would be easy to choose a few lessons a year to refine and redevelop using the NCCAS standards as a benchmark. Therefore, it was determined that the new NCCAS standards will readily serve to improve art education practices. Both the writers and developers are eager to begin the new school year with the NCCAS standards poster and slowly tweak and remodel lessons. Further, the intended use of the standards is exactly as it has been described in the 2014 NAEA Virtual Conference and in webinars around the standards – to take what we already have developed and use the standards to dig deeper to create meaningful and authentic experiences in the visual arts.