

Objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meaning.
- Explore the relationship of text and image.

Overview

Inspired by the Text Sculptures from contemporary artist, Doug Aitken, students will experiment with the relationship of text and images. Using the concept of juxtaposition, students will explore new and different meanings of words and images.

Introduction

Have students write down a variety of words on slips of paper and put them in a hat/container. Invite students to come to the front of the class and randomly draw a slip of paper from one container and then an art postcard from another. Based on the relationship of the word and the artwork in the postcard, the students will create a story about the artwork.

Introduce students to the concept of juxtaposition. Present artworks that portray juxtaposition such as Meret Oppenheim's "Object" from 1936 or the work of street artist Banksy. Then present the juxtaposition of words and images in the Text Sculptures by Doug Aitken. Discuss as a class and/or in small groups the meaning of each artwork based on the word and images used by Doug Aitken.

For example, in Doug Aitken's Text Sculpture *Home*, the word HOME is composed of an image showing an astronaut on the moon. This juxtaposition creates a conflict in that the moon is not really our home personally or as a human race. However, it brings into question the possibility of habitation on the moon or other planets such as Mars. It also creates a juxtaposition of scale in that we view our home planet as a vast place in which to live, while in comparison to the size of the galaxy and universe, we are infinitesimally small. These artworks are amazing prompts for students to engage in meaningful learning about bigger ideas and issues around the world.

Learning Activity

Invite students to select a postcard from the Springville Museum of Art educational postcard set. Have students write down a list of word that juxtapose with the image and thus expands the meaning of the artwork. Encourage students to



Brian Kershisnik, *Flight Practice with Instructor*, 2000

Materials

- Springville Museum of Art's educational postcard set
- Tracing paper or Copy paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape
- Heavier paper, cut to postcard size

Images from the Museum

- Brian Kershisnik, *Flight Practice with Instructor*, 2000
- SMA Postcard set of 50 images

Utah Core Standards

Language Arts Standards

Language Standard 5

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).

Reading: Literature Standard 4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Reading: Informational Text Standard 7

Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

Visual Arts

Standard 3.V.R.1: Contemplate about the processes an artist uses to create a work of art, and determine messages communicated by an image.

Standard 3.V.CR.2: Create a personally satisfying artwork using a variety of artistic processes and materials.

Standard 3.V.CR.5: Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance emerging meaning.

choose words that don't necessarily describe or directly relate to the artwork. The students could even pull some of the words out of the hat from the introductory activity to help them generate ideas. From the list of words, students will choose the word that inspires an interesting story or meaning.

There are a variety of ways for students to combine their word and image from the postcard:

First, words and letters can be either handwritten or cut out from a paper with printed letters.

The final artwork can be done in a couple of ways:

- 1). Students can glue their word directly onto the postcard.
- 2). Students can tape their word onto the postcard and cut their word out of the postcard. The letters/words can then be glued onto a piece of heavier paper the size of a postcard. (Tracing paper may be good for this process with the handwritten words and letters as it would allow students to see the image through the paper.)

Assessment

Invite students to come to the front of the class and present their artwork. Have them explain how the meaning of the artwork changed with addition of the word that they selected.

Essential Questions

- What is Juxtaposition?
- What new meanings are made by combining two things?
- How does the meaning of words change based on context?

Vocabulary Words

Juxtaposition- bringing together radically disparate elements to create new meanings.

Text Art- Art made using words sometimes alone or with images.



Doug Aitken, *Home and Star*

