

Papier Mâché Sculptures Inspired by Literature

SUBJECT AREA: Advanced Art

GRADE LEVEL: 8th Grade

MATERIALS:

- Cardboard
- Hot Glue/Hot Glue Guns
- Masking Tape
- Mod Podge
- Newspaper
- Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Papier Mâché Paste (Flour and Water/Wheatpaste)
- Photo References
- Sand paper
- Scissors
- Various Papers
- Wire
- Wire Cutters
- X-acto Knives

OBJECTIVES:

Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts (NYS Standard #1):

- Students will discover and learn how to manipulate recycled materials such as paper and cardboard in order to create an accurate, realistic, and proportional sculpture of an animal or object
- Students will create a reference sheet of objects/animals to work from

Knowing and Using Art Materials and Resources (NYS Standard #2):

- Students will learn how to make a three dimensional piece of art
- Students will experiment with and come to understand the medium of papier mâché
- Students will create an armature out of tape, wire, and recycled materials such as newspaper and cardboard
- Students will work from a reference in order to create a proportional and realistic sculpture of their choice
- Students will use the Internet to acquire images and place them in Microsoft Word/Google Doc on a reference sheet, sized and in proportion

Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art (NYS Standard #3):

- Students will view and analyze works of art created in the papier mâché medium
- Students will analyze and examine a piece of literature they have read in order to select either a character or theme they can turn into a visual symbol and sculpture
- Students will respond to and analyze the work they create throughout the creation process and when their piece is complete

Understanding the Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts (NYS Standard #4)

- Students will continue their exploration of the elements and principles of art and design

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What is papier mâché?
- How can recycled materials be made in to a work of art?

- How can students create a realistic and proportional sculpture?
- How can students create a sophisticated and complex work of art with the materials provided?

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

- Students will be creating sculptures based on a theme, symbol, or character from literature (book, short story, poem, etc.)
- Students will translate a character or theme into a symbol or animal
 - For example: *The Outsiders*
 - Themes and Symbols:
 - Gangs
 - Violence = Switchblade, Rattle Snake, Crocodile
 - Rich vs. Poor = \$
 - Characters
 - Ponyboy ≠ Pony
 - Johnny = Lion
- Students will be encouraged to cover their pieces with paper either from the book, poem, short story, or song they chose to make their sculpture based on
- Students will learn vocabulary that relates to the sculpture they are building

TEACHER PREPARATION:

- The teacher will have visuals of completed projects for the students to view
- The teacher will have a completed sample of the project for students to view
- The teacher will arrange for students to have access to the computer lab to create their photo reference sheet
- The teacher will have the supplies and materials ready for the students to use
 - The teacher will make the papier mâché paste by mixing wheat paste
 - The teacher will cut paper strips for students to use

LESSON:

Day 1-2: Introduction, Research, and Finding References

- Students will think about what book, story, poem, etc. appeals to them then they will research characters, themes, and symbols found in that literary work
- Students will then try to match up what they have selected with an object or animal that can visually represent it
- In order for students to create a realistic and proportional sculpture students will use photo references of the animal/object
 - The students will try to find images to work from of that object/animal from different angles (front, side, back, ¾ view) to use as a reference while building their armature
- To begin the lesson the teacher will tell the students the topic of the lesson by showing them images of sculptures made from papier mâché, as well as completed papier mâché works.
- Students will discuss using sculpture building methods and materials, and how they can use recycled materials to create a realistic and sophisticated sculpture.
- Students will also discuss alternative ways to complete their sculpture besides painting.
 - Using various papers (books, tissue paper, newspaper, construction paper, etc.) to give their sculpture a decorative and completed look.

- During this project, students are to create a proportional and realistic sculpture by creating an armature out of recycled materials (newspaper and cardboard).
- Students will have access to the computer room so that they can make a photo reference sheet to work from.
 - Students will make sure that as they resize their images, in the Microsoft Word File/Google Doc, that they keep them in proportion by holding down the shift key and dragging a corner of the image.
 - Students will print their reference sheet in color so that they can use it for the duration of their project.
- Students will have to incorporate elements and characteristics of their chosen reference into an original and unique piece that demonstrates realism and proportional features.
- Once students have a reference sheet to work from students will create a basic sketch of their project.
- The teacher will use the Smart Board to show students how to create simplified versions of their object or animal using shapes.
 - Students will need to plan out how they anticipate using recycled newspaper and cardboard to create their armature.
 - Students will work on breaking their object/animal down into basic shapes so that they can create the armature for their animal.
- For this project it is important that students have a fully thought out and organized plan. Using their reference, students will sketch out their design and organize a plan on how to build it.
 - If students do not complete this step their sculpture will not come out realistic or in proportion.
 - Students will not be allowed to move on to building their sculpture if the teacher has not approved their plan.
- The teacher will check student understanding during each step of the process.

Day 2-5: Creating an Armature

- The teacher will review with the students the criteria for the project.
 - Students are to create a realistic sculpture that is in proportion to the actual animal or object they have chosen
 - Students will need to use recycled materials to create their armature
 - The armature should be as light as possible
 - Students will need to cover their armature in papier mâché
 - Students will complete their project by covering it in a material that represents the theme or character they have chosen to create a decorative, aesthetically pleasing, and sophisticated sculpture
- The teacher will ask students to explain what an armature is, then the teacher will demonstrate to the students how to create an armature out of newspaper and cardboard.
- Using their sketches and photographs as a reference, the students will begin to assemble the recycled materials to create the armature.
- Student will focus on:
 - Creating parts of their sculpture realistically
 - Making sure the various features and details of their objects/animals are in proportion
 - The texture of their object/animal

- The stability of their sculpture (when hung, standing, etc.)
- The teacher will check student understanding during each step of the process.

Day 5-10: Apply Papier Mâché

- The teacher will review with the students the criteria for the project.
 - Before being able to apply papier mâché students work should be:
 - In proportion
 - Have an appropriate texture
 - Look realistic
 - Be secure and solid when standing, hanging, etc.
- Students will be informed of expectations for the next step of the process (applying papier mâché) and then demonstrate on an example.
- During the demonstration the teacher will show students how to:
 - Cover their area in newspaper
 - Ladle out papier mâché paste into a container with a lid
 - Soak the precut paper in paste
 - And apply the pasted paper to their projects
- The teacher will show the students how papier mâché can be used to add fine details as well as strengthen the body of their piece.
- The teacher will discuss with students that each layer of papier mâché must dry before the next is added.
 - Because the paste being used is organic and natural if the material is not allowed to dry between layers mold can form, which will effect the ability for the students work to last long term.
- Also, the teacher will discuss with the students that the first layers of papier mâché are intended to strengthen and harden their sculpture. Later, students will add additional layers of papier mâché to decorate and add sophistication to work.
- Before students begin to papier mâché their armature they should decide how they want to finish their work.
 - When applying the first layers of papier mâché the students will need to know if they are going to use light or transparent papers to finish their work, because then they may or may not want to use newspaper as the first layer
 - The first layers of papier mâché should not show through the final, decorative layers
- The teacher will also review with student's clean up and storing procedures.
- The teacher will check student understanding before allowing the students to resume working on their piece.
- Students will then move on to papier mâché when their armature is completed, and both the teacher and the student have analyzed and critiqued their work.
- The teacher will check student understanding during each step of the process.

Day 10-15: Completing the Sculpture

- Once the students have completed adding the first layers of papier mâché they will begin the decorative process of adding book pages, and then they can add color, dimension, texture, and unity to their piece with paint if they so choose.
- Students will accomplish this by adding additional layers of paper and use Mod Podge. This time the layers will have a decorative element based on the student's own personal aesthetic.

- The teacher will talk with students about how different papers will appear on their work and then students must decide how they want their final piece to look.
- Students will then begin the process of completing their sculptures by adding final layers of decorative papier mâché and or paint.
- In order for a students project to be complete it should:
 - Appear realistic in size, proportion, and characteristics
 - Have an appropriate texture
 - Be secure and solid when standing, hanging, etc.
 - Appear sophisticated and decorative
- Once students have completed those requirements they can fill out a rubric and turn in their work to be graded

EVALUATION:

The student will be graded according to the following criteria (included in a rubric):

- Did the student partake in class discussions?
- Did the student make a fully comprehensive plan and use it to create their sculpture?
- Is the piece aesthetically “pleasing” and reflective of the chosen reference?
- Did the student construct a piece that is realistic, proportional and sophisticated?
- Did the student create a sculpture that stands or hangs, and is lightweight?
- Did the student finish their piece in way that complements the design, and is decorative, neat, and well crafted?
- Overall did the student demonstrate mastery of technique and craftsmanship?

VOCABULARY:

- **Armature:** A framework to give rigid internal support to a sculpture
- **Dimension:** A measure of spatial distance. The dimensions of three-dimensional spaces or objects are given as height by width by depth, and they are conventionally listed in that order.
- **Papier Mâché:** A material, made from paper pulp or shreds of paper mixed with resin, wallpaper paste, or flour and water (2:1 by volume), which can be molded or modeled into various shapes when wet and becomes hard and suitable for painting and varnishing when dry.
 - Other substitutes (less likely to mold or mildew) are white glue and water, liquid starch and water, and methylcellulose paste and water.
 - Papier-mâché is a French word, literally meaning chewed-paper. It is known to have been used for low reliefs in Italy in the fifteenth century, and was occasionally popular in Europe for ornamental furniture, etc.
 - Papier-mâché is almost always formed on an armature. An extraordinary variety of free and inexpensive things can serve. Consider cardboards of any type, cut, folded or curled and taped together with any combination of wood, wire, crumpled paper, Styrofoam, and pieces of scrap plastic packaging.
- **Proportion:** A principle of design, proportion refers to the comparative, proper, or harmonious relationship of one part to another or to the whole with respect to size, quantity, or degree; a ratio
- **Realism:** The realistic and natural representation of people, places, and/or things in a work of art.
- **Recycled Materials:** Materials that have been reused or repurposed

- **Reference:** An image or item used to take information from in order to create a realistic work of art
- **Texture:** An element of art, texture is the surface quality or "feel" of an object, its smoothness, roughness, softness, etc. Textures may be actual or simulated. Actual textures can be felt with the fingers, while simulated textures are suggested by an artist in the painting of different areas of a picture — often in representing drapery, metals, rocks, hair, etc.