Grade 7 Unit 1 - Surrealist Drawing

Unit Focus

In this unit, students step into the dreamlike world of Surrealism, where the boundaries of reality are challenged through art. By studying the works of masters who used symbolism, juxtaposition, and altered scale to explore the unconscious mind, students will learn to translate abstract thoughts into visual narratives. This project is anchored in the Profile of a Graduate (POG) competencies of Design and Self-Awareness, challenging students to not only master technical skills but to deeply consider the personal meaning behind their creative choices. Surrealism is an exercise in intentional design. Students must act as architects of their own reality, planning how to incorporate techniques like juxtaposition and levitation to serve their artistic vision. By moving from a rough sketch to a final drawing, they learn to utilize the design process to solve complex visual problems. As students select symbols and themes to represent their unconscious thoughts they are asked to reflect on their own perspectives and inspiration. This process encourages students to recognize their unique artistic voice and evaluate their strengths and areas for growth as they navigate the complexities of their final drawing.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

National Core Arts Standards
Visual Arts: 7

- Demonstrate persistence in developing skills with various materials, methods, and approaches in creating works of art or design. (VA:Cr2.1.7.a)
- Apply visual organizational strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas. (VA:Cr2.3.7.a)
- Analyze multiple ways that images influence specific audiences. (VA:Re7.2.7.a)

Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Design: Engaging in a process to refine a product for an intended audience and purpose. (POG.2.2)
- Self-Awareness: Examining current performance critically to identify steps/ strategies to persist. (POG.4.1)

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
T1 Develop and refine techniques and skills through purposeful practice and application to become more fluent
T2 Capture the feeling or emotional response which an artistic piece elicits

Meaning

Understanding(s)

Students will understand that...
U1 Artists' creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent.
U2 Artists make thoughtful choices about their use of skills, technique, and style to in hopes of creating a specific response for an audience.
U3 Evaluation of an artistic work is based on analysis and interpretation of established criteria that is helpful to the artist or deepens understanding of the work.

Essential Question(s)

Students will keep considering...
Q1 How do artists use bizarre imagery to explore the unconscious mind to express an idea?
Q2 What inspires me? Where do I get my ideas from?
Q3 How do I show mood or feeling in this work of art? How did the audience/viewers respond? Did what I was trying to express work?

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge

Students will know...
K1 Influence of Artists: Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte
K2 Style: Surrealism and its key characteristics (symbolism, scale change, levitation, juxtaposition)
K3 Elements of Art: positive and negative space, emphasis, color

Skill(s)

Students will be skilled at...
S1 Explaining how an artist uses symbolism to convey a message
S2 Drawing realistic images and using them in an unrealistic manner (dreamlike, fantasy)
S3 Using drawing techniques and multiple materials (e.g., drawing pencils, pastels, charcoal) to capture a mood/ message through a specific theme.