

Introduction:

As educators and adults we strive to have our youth be independent, determined, analytical, and proud of their individuality. We also want to protect them, and in doing so our youth is fed a sanitized culture. They lose the ability to be mavericks, instead becoming mindless humans who perambulate around the earth with opinions formed by mass media. It is vital that our youth be encouraged to think critically, evaluate their beliefs, and skillfully communicate their relevant ideas while in the confines of censorship.

Censorship is the practice which suppresses free speech and raises the question of whether something is art or an obscenity. While sociologists have investigated how cultural objects are interpreted according to the surrounding culture, there have been limited studies which reveal what makes one's opinion stronger than another, resulting in intolerance and dismissal. The correlation between censorship, art, and the fortification of personal values highlights two questions: What makes an art work obscene, and who are the censors protecting (Beisel, 1993).

Curriculum Unit:

This very important topic of censorship is relevant for high school students, as they are likely to have experienced this practice at home or in school. Parents, guardians, and

school faculty tend to inspect and censor what the students watch, listen to, browse, read, and text without regard for the students personal feelings or opinions. While some censorship may be necessary, it is important that students receive the opportunity to explore and analyze the world around them. As Darts (2004) said, we must "empower students to perceive and meaningfully engage in the ideological and cultural struggles embedded within the everyday visual experience" (p. 313). If we, as educators, ignore the popular culture which surround our students then we are refusing to accept the reality in which we all live. Our post-modern society is infiltrated with new medias, expanded technology, public art, and fresh ideas. It is here where we can find valuable opportunities to teach about issues which unavoidably surround us daily (Alvermann, Mood, & Hagood, 1999).

The topic of censorship, who censors, and what is censored can lead to deep and intellectual debates. Consequently, I have designed this curriculum to be largely discussion based. The first five days of the unit have been dedicated to an examination of pop culture censorship examples. This time spent discussing censorship is intended to lead students to their own ideas while creating their own visual art images. The questions are expected to be controversial and inspire even more

questions, rather than leading to a class agreement (Duncum, 2003). It is important that they learn tolerance for all opinions.

During the exchanging of beliefs, students will view public works of art that relay vital messages by using subtlety and at times humor. I will strive for students to understand that they have the right to freely express themselves and their opinions; however, there isn't a need to make crass images which may spawn hatred and misunderstanding. Instead, it is possible to create works of art which promote ideals and values with the use of metaphors and puns. Students will also begin to analyze and describe the relationship among subject matter, symbols, and themes used to communicate intended meaning in their artworks and the works of others. The students will be able to interpret the designs, techniques, style, and mediums that various public artists used.

Another topic to be discussed with students is how to deal with censorship. Despite a push for equality our nation still struggles to find peace. Any work of art that seems ambiguous will ultimately be found offensive by at least one person. Even without direct censorship, the same laws which allow students to have free speech also entitle individuals to stop or speak out against art that they find displeasing (Berg, 2008). As a result

it is important to teach students not to avoid people, but to deal maturely with their reaction. Each visual work that they create requires a reason and they must take responsibility for their art. This will be emphasized by requiring the students to submit a written explanation and reasoning with their visual messages.

Production:

In this unit students will be creating two works of art. The first will be a collaborative piece done with at least three students per piece. I want to encourage peer discussions and an exchanging of ideas. Psychologically students will be able to expand their knowledge, experience, and creative thought process by working together. Substantially they will expand their artistic design skills and gain new technique capabilities. The end result will be graffiti inspired works which represent students personal beliefs symbolically.

Secondly, the students will work on an individual piece which speaks out against the ways they feel unfairly censored. The work will be created using digital programs to collage images and add their own personal designs. They will utilize literacy skills to make informed decisions using digital tools and resources in the creation of media art. During the process

of creation students will evaluate media art using self-led and peer-led instruction and assessment of materials.

Conclusion:

Tapley (2002) courageously stated, "It is important as an educator not to just 'silence' a student or completely self-censor yourself in fear of getting into sticky situations. A strong educator educates beyond the classroom."(p. 52) I believe that this unit does just that - it educates beyond the classroom. After these lessons students will be encouraged to use their right of free speech, and express themselves in a way that is widely accepted. There is no real way to satisfy everyone, so instead let's support dialogue between teachers, students, parents, guardians, and the general public.

By discussing theories, collaboratively sharing ideas, strategizing art themes, and creating works with layers of meaning, students begin to develop acceptance, free-thinking, and analytical skills that have uses in the world beyond the classroom (Watson, 2012). When the boundaries of censorship have been removed then students can truly start their life as independent individuals, capable of intelligently exploring themselves and their culture. Let's remove the sanitation of mass media's ideals and help promote our students to be brave mavericks, ready to face society.

References

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- Duncum, P. (2003). Visual culture in the classroom. *Art Education*, 56(2), 25-32
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- Watson, J. (2012). We turned your world upside down: Contemporary art practice in the high school classroom and spaces beyond. *Art Education*, 61(1), 33-39.

Curriculum Unit Theme: Censorship

Teacher: Ms. Alison Delaney

Grade Level: 9-12

State Visual Art Goals: VAH1-1.1, VAH1-1.2, VAH1-1.3, VAH1-1.4, VAH1-1.5, VAH1-2.1, VAH1-2.3, VAH1-3.2, VAH1-3.3, VAH1-5.1, VAH1-5.2

State Media Arts Goals: MAHS4-1.1, MAHS4-1.2, MAHS4-1.3, MAHS4-1.4, MAHS4-2.1, MAHS4-2.2, MAHS4-2.4, MAHS4-2.5, MAHS4-3.1, MAHS4-3.4, MAHS4-3.6, MAHS4-6.1, MAHS4-6.2

State Language Arts Goals: E1-1.3

General goals for the curriculum (describe in 2-5 sentences):

In this unit I want the students to have the opportunity to explore censorship and define the areas of their life where censorship may already be an issue or could become an issue. This unit will encourage students to see beyond the sanitized culture they are surrounded by and respond to it through visual art. After recognizing, describing and analyzing examples of censorship the students will use subject matter, symbols, ideas, and media that communicate personal meaning.

Lesson Title (name each lesson to reflect a general unit theme)	Visual Exemplars (list specific images and artists, TV shows, and/or books that you plan to use for each lesson)	Motivation / Dialogue (list basic issues and questions to be explored during classroom dialogue and any other motivational strategies that you plan to use for each lesson)	Media / Process (list artistic processes that your students will engage in during each lesson)	Concepts and/or Design Principles to be learned during each lesson	Closure/ Assessment (list an assessment strategy used for each lesson)
Lesson 1 Day 1 Introduction- Censorship	1. Power Point presentation- •Image- •Banksy Works: •Worker spraying graffiti •Worker spraying cave paintings •Man painting grey over child's flower paintings 2. Article- SOPA/PIPA act	1. Issue- •Define Censorship 2. Group discussion/survey- •What is censored? •Who is censored? •Why is there censorship? •Who are censors trying to protect? •What topics are censored most frequently? •Who censors? •Are there recent events of censorship in media?	1. Students will sit in groups and record their thoughts and responses to discussion questions. 2. Students will discuss their responses as a class. 3. Students will critique the Banksy works shown	1. Students will be able to define and provide examples of censorship 2. Students will understand the concept of censorship and who is responsible for censorship. 3. Students will understand why censorship surrounds them.	Assessment will be largely based on class participation. 1. Did student participate in small group discussion? 2. Did student contribute to class discussion?
Lesson 2 Day 2 Personal Censorship	1. Power Point presentation- •Images- •Sofia Moldonado 42nd street mural •Youtube Clip: Protestors NYC 2010 (42nd street Mural) •Child art from Gaza-censored art show •Youtube Clip: A Child's View From Gaza	1. Issue- •Discuss censorship's role in students lives. 2. Group discussion- •Has censorship affected you? •How have you been censored? •Have you been censored at home, school, on the internet, on your phone, etc.? •Do you feel protected by censorship? •What other feelings/ideas do you have towards censorship? •How can you express those ideas?	1. Students will sit in groups and record their thoughts and responses to discussion questions. 2. Students will discuss their responses as a class. 3. Students will analyze whether or not censorship was necessary in provided examples 4. Students will write a 1 page response about the ways censorship effects them personally.	1. Students will understand the importance of subject matter in art work. 2. Students will understand how censorship is affecting them personally. 3. Students will analyze and understand the reasons behind censoring public art.	1. Did student participate in small group discussion? 2. Did student contribute to class discussion? 3. Did student put time and effort into 1 page response?

<p>Lesson 3 Day 3-4 Public Art Debate</p>	<p>1. Watch documentary-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exit Through the Gift Shop</i> 	<p>1. Discussion-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think are the messages that the artists are trying relay to their audience? • Were their messages clear? • Were their messages symbolic? • Is their method effective? • Do you agree/disagree with this form of public art? Why? 	<p>1. Students will recognize and analyze the similarities and differences between media, techniques, and processes in multiple public art forms.</p> <p>2. Analyze and describe the relationship among subject matter, symbols, and themes in communicating intended meaning in their artworks and the works of others.</p> <p>3. Analyze the intention of the artist in a specific artwork and justify their interpretation.</p>	<p>1. Students will describe, interpret, and evaluate the methods used in public art making and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design • technique • symbolism • style • medium used 	<p>1. Did student participate in small group discussion?</p> <p>2. Did student contribute to class discussion?</p> <p>3. Students will be instructed to research public artists and bring in examples of styles they feel drawn to.</p>
<p>Lesson 4 Day 5 Public Message</p>	<p>1. Teacher will project images and share posters which feature graffiti art from the following artists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swoon • Shepard Fairey • Banksy • Space Invader 	<p>1. Issue-Effectiveness</p> <p>Group discussion-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was their message effective? • What message do you want to make a statement about? • What are ways you can symbolically relay your message under the confines of censorship? <p>2. Students will share and discuss examples of public artists and styles they find interesting.</p>	<p>1. Students will form groups and begin to create a diagram of messages that they feel are important.</p> <p>2. Students will determine which message means the most and begin forming ideas of how to relay that message symbolically.</p> <p>3. Students will include sketches with their ideas.</p>	<p>1. Students will describe, interpret, and evaluate the symbols and subject matter they will use.</p> <p>2. Interpret devices of figurative language including extended metaphor and pun which can be transformed into visual symbols.</p>	<p>1. Did student participate in small group discussion?</p> <p>2. Did student contribute to class discussion?</p> <p>3. Did student submit and clearly define which message they feel they need to represent?</p>

<p><i>Lesson 5</i> <i>Day 6</i> Public Art- Preliminary Production</p>	<p>1. Teacher will project final ideas that each group has decided to use.</p> <p>2. Students will be permitted to use the internet's images of graffiti to assist in their design plan.</p> <p>3. Power Point presentation on how to create the graffiti through use of stencils or rice paper.</p>	<p>Group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Each group of students will explain their idea/message •There will be a class discussion after each introduction so students can collaborate and share their critiques or ideas for symbolic interpretation. 	<p>1. Groups of students will each receive panels of faux brick.</p> <p>2. Students will begin to lay out and sketch their design.</p>	<p>1. Students will discuss the different styles of graffiti and determine which style they feel is most effective.</p> <p>2. Students will communicate ideas through the effective use of a variety of media, techniques, and processes in multiple art forms.</p>	<p>1. Did student contribute to class discussion?</p> <p>2. Did student participate in sharing ideas?</p> <p>3. Did students effectively sketch an idea and decide on art method?</p>
<p><i>Lesson 6</i> <i>Day 7-9</i> Public Art- Production</p>	<p>1. Teacher will project images of public works by artists the students choose.</p>	<p>1. Issue- Discuss current event of censorship in popular culture. Possibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Censorship of their favorite musician •Censorship of TV or movie •Censorship of award show •Censorship of news story •etc. <p>2. Encourage creative problem solving.</p>	<p>1. Groups of students will gather and work on their collaborative piece.</p> <p>2. Students will be encouraged to stop and look at their piece from a distance to help any design flaws.</p> <p>3. Students will walk around the room daily to see what fellow students are creating and use constructive criticism.</p>	<p>1. Students will use medium and techniques that are found in two dimensional public works of art.</p> <p>2. Students will select and effectively use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning in their artwork.</p>	<p>1. When the projects are finalized the class will gather and have a critique.</p> <p>2. Did students-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectively relay a message through symbols •create a unified work •properly use classroom tools and medium

<p>Lesson 7 Day 10 Introduction- Media Collage</p>	<p>1. Power Point presentation- •Various images found which speak out against unnecessary censorship</p> <p>2. Projected feed from teacher's computer who will explain the basic use of photoshop to create a collaged image.</p>	<p>1. Issue- Discuss censorship's role in students lives. Group discussion- Do you feel oppressed by censorship?: What idea or form of censorship do you feel you need to individually address? If you agree with censorship, why do you feel that way?-How can you visually explain your message?</p>	<p>1. Students will use the internet to view art works which speak to them individually. 2. Students will use those images as an inspiration to create their own works. 3. Students will begin to sketch their idea plan. 4. Students will begin to compile images which they can use in their collage.</p>	<p>1. Students will identify the specific skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary for creating media artwork. 2. Students will use a variety of media technologies, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas. 3. Demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the accepted procedures regarding the responsible care of media arts equipment and materials.</p>	<p>1. Did student contribute to class discussion? 2. Did student find relevant works of art to draw inspiration? 3. Did student respect and properly use media equipment?</p>
<p>Lesson 8 Day 11-13 Media Collage</p>	<p>1. Power Point presentation- Each day the teacher will present new found images which use modern technology to relay an important message to audience.</p>	<p>1. Discuss any technological difficulties. 2. Assist in encouraging problem solving by creative means. 3. Give students time to share their works and share ideas.</p>	<p>1. Students will use the internet and personal images to collage their media work 2. Students will use symbols/puns/metaphors to inspire their work. 3. Students will create a collage which relays a powerful message through creative processes.</p>	<p>1. Students will utilize information literacy skills to make informed decisions using digital tools and resources in the creation of media art. 2. Students will evaluate media art using self-led and peer-led instruction and assessment materials. 3. Students will apply elements of artistic design specific to individual media.</p>	<p>1. Class will have a critique and share their works. 2. Did the students- •Effectively use media •Relay a powerful message •Find creative means for compiling their collage without directly copying any artist</p>

Lesson 4/ Day 5
Title: Public Message

Grade: 9-12

Teacher: Ms. Alison Delaney

Length: One 60 minute period

State visual art goals: VAH1-1.1, VAH-1.2, VAH1-1.3, VAH1-1.4, VAH1-1.5, VAH1-2.1, VAH1-2.3, VAH1-3.2, VAH1-3.3, VAH1-5.1, VAH1-5.2

State media arts goals: MAHS4-1.1, MAHS4-1.2, MAHS4-1.3, MAHS4-1.4, MAHS4-2.1, MAHS4-2.2, MAHS4-2.4, MAHS4-2.5, MAHS4-3.1, MAHS4-3.4, MAHS4-3.6, MAHS4-6.1, MAHS4-6.2

State language arts goals: E1-1.3

Objectives:

1. Students will form groups and begin to create a diagram of messages that they feel are important.
2. Students will determine which message means the most and begin forming ideas of how to relay that message symbolically.
3. Students will include sketches with their ideas.
4. Students will describe, interpret, and evaluate the symbols and subject matter they will use.
5. Interpret devices of figurative language including extended metaphor and pun which can be transformed into visual symbols.

Concepts and vocabulary:

1. Metaphor:
 - A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable.
 - A thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, esp. something abstract.
2. Pun: A joke exploiting the different possible meanings of a word or the fact that there are words that sound alike but have different meanings.
3. Symbolism: The use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities.

Teacher materials:

1. Screen and digital projector
2. Poster examples of public/graffiti artists
3. Computer:
 - a. Power Point presentation
 - b. Images by: Swoon, Shepard Fairey, Banksy, Space Invader

Student materials:

1. Pencils
2. Lined paper
3. Sketch Pad

Procedures (detailed step-by-step description including dialogue):

Introduction (10 minutes)

1. When students enter the room, the teacher will have the Power Point presentation loaded and ready.
2. Power Point presentation and dialogue:
 - a. Image of Swoon- This artist was born in the US 1978. She is a street artist who uses the technique of wheat paste prints and life size paper cut outs.
 - b. Image of Swoon's art- She creates life size images of people using wood block prints and posts them to abandoned buildings. She often chooses the building if she enjoys the texture of the outer wall.
 - c. Image of Shepard Fairey- Born and raised in Charleston, SC in 1970. Many of you may know him due to his popular clothing line "Obey." (Show image of clothing.)
 - d. Image of Andre the Giant Obey- Shepard Fairey began by making stickers of Andre the giant which featured the word "Obey." It started as a comical joke between friends but has earned him fame and an avenue to creating illustrations and clothing.
 - e. Image of Barack Obama (Hope)- This is another popular work created by Shepard Fairey that many of you have most likely seen. He has undergone lawsuits for this photo due to using a copyrighted image of Obama.
 - f. Image of Space Invader's work- Space Invader has remained unseen and nameless but his practice is to paste mosaics made from discarded Rubik's cubes. His mosaics depict characters from a 1970's arcade game *Space Invaders*.
 - g. Image of Banksy- Banksy has managed to stay completely anonymous and has alluded all of his followers. Because of this his age and real name are unknown.
 - h. Link to Banksy's website (click through images for students)- As you can see Banksy has a way of speaking out but not necessarily offending anyone, other than those who dislike graffiti. Banksy is very humorous and symbolic about his messages to the viewers.

Discussion (20 minutes)

1. After the Power Point presentation students will discuss the issue of effectiveness in the art they have just previewed.
 - a. Was their message effective?
 - b. What message do you want to make a statement about?
 - c. What are ways you can symbolically relay your message under the confines of censorship?
2. In the lesson before students were instructed to research public artists and bring in examples of that artists works. They will be prepared to explain why they chose that particular artist.

Activity (25 minutes)

1. Students will form small groups and begin to create a diagram of messages that they feel are important.
2. Students will determine which message means the most and begin forming ideas of how to relay that message symbolically.
3. Students will include sketches with their ideas.

Assessment/Closure:

1. Did student participate in small group discussion?
2. Did student contribute to class discussion?
3. Did student submit and clearly define which message they feel they need to represent?

