

NEWPORT ART MUSEUM

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Artivism: Art + Activism

May Stevens: *Big Daddy Paper Doll*

Grades 9-12

ELA, Arts, History, Civics

LEARNING TARGET

Through analyzing the life, work, and activism of artist May Stevens, students will learn how artists use symbols to represent complex ideas and express political views.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students will

- Learn how to analyze color, context, and symbols within a work of art
- Learn about the Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement and Women's Movement
- Understand how and why an artist would use their creative voice to discuss social issues

PRE-VISIT

- Read about Jim Crow Laws
- Review the Women's Movement
- Learn what led to the Vietnam war, and why many opposed it
- Discuss the role of art during times of upheaval and unrest
- Look at work of artists responding to the Vietnam War

Artists Responding to Vietnam War Resources

[A Baptism of Fire: Jesse Treviño Paints 'Mi Vida'](#)

[John Lennon and Yoko Ono Bed-Ins for Peace](#)

[Artist Martha Rosler and the Vietnam War](#)

POST-VISIT

- Protest Poster. Choose a real or imaginary social, political or cultural issue or cause that you wish to support or reject. Create an image-based protest poster (not only words) using visuals as metaphors for your position. This can be done digitally, collaged with cut and pasted pictures, or drawn by hand. Share with the class and discuss as a group.
- Responsive Writing. What do you think May Stevens means when she says, "why is it so hard for art-minded people to understand art as a natural vehicle for political passion, not an adulterant but an irritant, a stimulant, a rich and common source of energy?"

- Responsive Writing. In what ways does May Stevens art work represent a different point of view and challenge a narrative? What are some opposing views one might have who supported the Vietnam War?
- Argument Essay. Argue for or against this statement in writing or live debate: It is important for the greater good of society that artists use their work to draw attention to or challenge social, political or cultural issues, even if you disagree with their opinions.
- Connecting the Past to the Present. What current social justice issues persist that artists are speaking up about? Find an example of artists creating work that respond to an issue happening in the present day then create your own work that discusses a current social issue.

CCSS ALIGNMENT

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- ELA-LITERACY.Language.6.5 - 11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Text Types and Purposes

- ELA-LITERACY.Writing: 6.3-11-12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Comprehension and Collaboration

- ELA-LITERACY. Speaking & Listening.6.1, 7.1, 8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- ELA-LITERACY. Speaking & Listening.6.2, 7.2: Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
- ELA-LITERACY. Speaking & Listening.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- ELA-LITERACY. Speaking & Listening.9-10.1, 11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- ELA-LITERACY.RHISTORY.6-8.7, 9-10.7: Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

- ELA-LITERACY.RHISTORY.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING SKILLS ALIGNMENT

Communication

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multilingual and multicultural)

Creativity and Innovation

- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems

RI GRADE SPAN EXPECTATIONS (GSES) FOR SOCIAL STUDIES: Grades 9-12

HP 1: History is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature.

- HP 1-2: Interpret history as a series of connected events with multiple cause-effect relationships

HP 2: History is a chronicle of human activities, diverse people, and the societies they form.

- HP 2-1: Connect the past with the present

HP 3: The study of history helps us understand the present and shape the future.

- HP 3–1: Students demonstrate an understanding of how the past frames the present.
- HP 3 -2: Make personal connections in an historical context (e.g., source-to-source, source-to-self, source-to-world).

C&G 3: In a democratic society, all people have certain rights and responsibilities.

- C&G 3–2: Students demonstrate an understanding of how individuals and groups exercise (or are denied) their rights and responsibilities.

C&G 4: People engage in political processes in a variety of ways.

- C&G 4–1: Students demonstrate an understanding of political systems and political processes
- C&G 4–2: Students demonstrate an understanding of their participation in political processes.
- C&G 4–3: Students demonstrate an understanding of their participation in a civil society.

C&G 5: As members of an interconnected world community, the choices we make impact others locally, nationally, and globally.

- C&G 5-3: Students demonstrate an understanding of how the choices we make impact and are impacted by an interconnected world.

NATIONAL CORE ART STANDARDS

Presenting (visual arts): Interpreting and sharing artistic work.

- Anchor Standard #6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Responding: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.

- Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

- Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Anchor Standard #11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

SOURCES

Common Core State Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>

21st Century Standards: <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>

RIDE DEPT of Education Standards:

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/CivicsSocialStudies.aspx>

National Core Art Standards: <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>