

Art & Activities / Everyday Objects and Transformation



Overview

Just as Andy Warhol transformed everyday objects into works of art, students transform their own commonplace objects into ready-mades. Through wrapping and covering, students modify their objects while maintaining its recognizable form. This lesson introduces students to aesthetic and critical response through a unique "4C" approach to evaluating art.

Grades: 6-12th grade

Suggested Time Frame: 2-3 class periods

(This project works best as an overnight assignment so that students can be responsible for finding materials to match their ideas)

Pennsylvania State Standards:

Arts and Humanities Standards

- 9.4.12A. Evaluate an individual's philosophical statement on a work in the arts and its relationship to one's own life based on knowledge and experience.
- 9.4.12D. Analyze and interpret a philosophical position identified in works in the arts and humanities.

Objectives:

- Students will wrap an object with a unique covering in such a way that the original object's form is still obvious
- Students will develop an art object, from a readymade object, through its relationship or dialogue with a particular wrapping/covering
- Students will evaluate wrapped art objects based on their context, concept, creativity and craftsmanship
- Students will be able to critique an artwork by investigating and questioning its "4Cs"

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Andy Warhol, You're In, 1967

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About the Art:

For Warhol, popular mass-produced food items represented the best and brightest of American consumerist society. What could be better than a product, be it Campbell's Soup or Coca-Cola, which was distributed in vast quantities worldwide, the quality of which was consistently excellent and the price eminently affordable? Although he had made paintings of Coke bottles two years before, the artist now turned to a sculptural intervention using actual soda pop bottles (originally conceived by the renowned designer Raymond Loewy), which he coated with silver paint. Three years later, Warhol went a step further by capping 100 silver bottles and filling them with a perfume which he rakishly labeled "You're In"/"Eau d'Andy." Not surprisingly, the Coca-Cola Company responded with a cease and desist letter.

Andy Warhol Quote:

What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you can know that the President drinks Cokes, Liz Taylor drinks Cokes, and just think, you can drink Coke, too. A Coke is a Coke and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it.

Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol from A to B and Back Again*

Discussion Questions:

1. What effect does Warhol's silver paint have on the coke bottle? What does it imply to drink from a silver cup versus one made of glass?
2. What associations do you make with the color silver?
3. If Warhol had painted these bottles white, would they have a different impact on the viewer?
4. By painting these bottles silver Andy Warhol transformed them into a work of art. How does something change from just an object to an artwork? Who is involved in this artistic process?

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Materials:

This project works best as an overnight assignment so that students can be responsible for finding materials to match their ideas. If you conduct it in a studio, you may need:

Found objects (bottles, toys, books, stuffed animals, shoes, silverware)

Various materials (magazines, newspapers, wire, plastic, bandages, hardware, candy, fabric)

Adhesives (glue, hot glue, clear tape, duct tape, paper maché)

Tools (pliers, wire snips)

Handout: 4 Cs for Evaluating Art (page 4 of this PDF)



Activity Procedure:

1. Use the discussion questions above to introduce Andy Warhol's silver Coke bottles, *You're In*.
2. Compare and contrast Andy Warhol's *You're In* with contemporary artist Glenn Kaino's work *Graft (Ostrich)*.
3. Have students select an everyday object from home or have a selection on hand in the classroom. Suggestions include: plastic figures, tools, bottles, toys, and packaging. It is easiest to work with items that are larger than 2 inches cubed, but smaller than a shoe box.
4. Instruct students to wrap their object with a covering that creates a dialogue with the object—in a manner that allows the original object's form to remain evident.
5. When completed, lay all completed objects out in front of the students.
6. Give students Handout: The 4Cs for Evaluating Art. Explain and discuss the definitions: Context, Concept, Creativity, and Craftsmanship. (You may want to state that context and concept are closely related, but note that the context for the students will serve as the guidelines for the assignment.)
7. Have students individually choose three objects to evaluate using the 4Cs.
8. Discuss the selections and evaluations.

Wrap-up:

Aesthetics questions for discussion:

1. What types of objects were the most compelling? Why?
2. Did the objects with the strongest concepts seem the most interesting?
3. Did you find objects that seemed weak in concept became more interesting after hearing the artist's ideas? Or did the artist's concept for any of your chosen objects weaken your view of them?
4. What role did creativity play in your selections?
5. Did all of the objects require great craftsmanship to convey their message?
6. What would an object with no craftsmanship need to be considered a worthy art object?
7. What role do your own personal tastes play in what you find strong or weak?

Optional:

Critically respond to Andy Warhol *You're In* and Glenn Kaino's *Graft (Ostrich)* using the 4Cs evaluation system.

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Handout 1: The 4Cs for Evaluating Art

The 4Cs for Evaluating Art

Created by Megan Bonistalli, Seneca Valley High School, Art Department

Context: the set of facts or circumstances that surround a situation or event. Example: “a historical context.” The context could be the parameters of the assignment.

Concept: the message, communicating what something is about.

Creativity: the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative and idiosyncratic way, which is characterized by a high degree of innovation and originality, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

Craftsmanship: the application of skill and dexterity in creating a work of art.

Directions:

Choose three of the objects on display.

Rate them with a scale of 1 = weakest to 5 = strongest, on Context, Concept, Creativity, and Craftsmanship. Explain briefly your rating of each object.

1. Object: _____ **Wrapped in:** _____

Context: 1 2 3 4 5

Concept: 1 2 3 4 5

Creativity: 1 2 3 4 5

Craftsmanship: 1 2 3 4 5

2. Object: _____ **Wrapped in:** _____

Context: 1 2 3 4 5

Concept: 1 2 3 4 5

Creativity: 1 2 3 4 5

Craftsmanship: 1 2 3 4 5

3. Object: _____ **Wrapped in:** _____

Context: 1 2 3 4 5

Concept: 1 2 3 4 5

Creativity: 1 2 3 4 5

Craftsmanship: 1 2 3 4 5

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Art and Activities / Every Day Objects and Transformation / Assessment Rubric

Evaluation Values and Grading Scale Curve

6 – Excellent

1 point of built in extra credit!
achieves beyond expectations
strives to take risks and experiment
reaches an exceptional skill level through diligent work and focus
high level of creativity and independent thought

5 – Proficient

completes work with strong command of process and materials
maintains an industrious work ethic
consideration of instruction , constructive criticism, and personal evaluation/reevaluation is strongly apparent in work
shows creativity and independent thought

4 – Satisfactory

completes work to specified guidelines
some consideration of instruction, constructive criticism, , and personal evaluation/reevaluation is apparent in work
maintains a consistent work ethic

3 – Weak

falls short of some requirements
little consideration of instruction, constructive criticism, and personal evaluation/reevaluation
little creativity and independent thought

2 – Poor

work is below ability level
lacks consideration of instruction, constructive criticism, and personal evaluation/reevaluation
lacks creativity and independent thought