

## Art & Activities / Campbell's: Ode to Food



### Overview:

Students produce narrative illustrations and writings in the poetic form of an ode after discussing a quote by Andy Warhol and viewing his art-works portraying Campbell's soup cans. Students explore the concept of liking something so much; one is compelled to create art about that thing.

Grades 1 to 12

Subjects: Art, English, Language Arts, Creative Writing

### Pennsylvania State Standards:

Arts and Humanities:

9.1.8. E Communicate a unifying theme or point of view through the production of works in the arts. 9.2.8 D Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspective.

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening:

1.4.8 A Write short stories, poems and plays.

### Objectives:

- Students will explain and discuss an Ode
- Students will discuss repetition
- Students will articulate and illustrate food preferences
- Students will compare and contrast student work
- Students will assess the effects of repetition in daily life (art, music, food)

## Art & Activities / Campbell's: Ode to Food



Andy Warhol, Campbell's Soup I: Chicken Noodle, 1968  
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Founding  
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### About the Art:

Warhol's Campbell's Soup Can paintings are key works of the 1960s Pop Art movement, a time when many artists made work derived from popular culture. Warhol's soup cans raise the simply popular or everyday to the status of art. Campbell's and its red and white label date from the late nineteenth century, and became more and more familiar in the twentieth, particularly with the increase in mass production and advertising after World War II. Warhol himself said, "Pop art is about liking things," and claimed that he ate Campbell's soup every day for 20 years. For him, it was the quintessential American product: he marveled that the soup always tasted the same, like Coca-Cola, whether consumed by prince or pauper.

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### **Points of View:**

"I used to drink it [Campbell's Soup]. I used to have the same lunch every day, for twenty years, I guess, the same thing over and over again."

Andy Warhol

The Campbell's Soup Can series makes me laugh. In this particular piece I want to know whom the brat was that ripped the label. The simplicity of Warhol's work frustrates me. The Campbell's Soup Can painting conjures up the same emotions as a paper clip or a post-it note: "Why didn't I think of that?" Lifting a soup can up to the level of art doesn't put Warhol in league with Raphael, but it does show some Thomas Edison-style ingenuity. The Campbell's series confirms that if Warhol had but one virtue it was awareness. We are all bombarded by popular culture and Warhol was able to recognize that overwhelming influence. He took a soup can, an image recognized by all, and elevated it to the level of art. I'd call him the All-American artist because he made his medium accessible to people of every class and race. The bright color and provocatively bland subject of the Campbell's series make room for disagreement among the college educated as much as high school dropouts.

Tom Laskow, CAPA High School student, Youth Label Project,  
Youth Invasion, The Andy Warhol Museum, 2004.

Soup as the humble meal celebrated by Daumier; soup as the melting pot in an increasingly homogenized America; soup as transition from homemade to pre-prepared item; soup as "good" or "bad" taste, both on the tongue, and as advertising design. Peeling back the label to reveal a generic shape of the machine age generates food for thought: who tracked its route down the assembly line? Who are the tastemakers who determined the flavors of its contents, defining good and bad in terms of sales potential? What were the mechanisms involved in its delivery? Why would Warhol claim that he ate it every day?

Pamela Allara, professor of art, Brandeis University, Massachusetts, quote from  
Point of View Label Project, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, 1999.

I've always found it tremendous fun to strip the label off a can - an act of violent, seductive denuding. Deprived of its paper vestment, a can is anonymous, cold, and eternal as a Greek temple's column. The lacerations in the label are like St. Sebastian's wounds - sadomasochistically homoerotic. The unpeeling paper also resembles a spool of 16mm film, the strip of curvy celluloid loosening from its reel.

Wayne Koestenbaum, poet and critic, quote from Point of View Label Project,  
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, 1999.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What would you love to eat every day for 20 years?
2. What would be torture for you to eat every day?
3. Does repetition affect your taste for something? Explain your answer.
4. When an artist repeats an image over and over again, what effect does it have on the viewer?
5. Why do you think Andy Warhol made so many Campbell's Soup Can paintings?

## **Art & Activities / Campbell's: Ode to Food**

### **Activity: Ode to Food**

#### **Materials:**

Image of Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup

Colored pencils

Pens

"Ode to Food" template (page 9 of this PDF)

"Ode to Food" example

#### **Activity Procedure:**

1. Students write an ode about their food of choice (favorite, aversion, or other) and make an accompanying drawing of this food. (See examples)
2. Explain what an ode is:  
Ode: noun (Middle French or Late Latin) a lyric poem usually marked by exaltation (elevation, glorification) of feeling and style, varying length of line, and complexity of stanza forms.
3. Pass out materials and supplies. Students may start with the illustration or the ode or work back and forth between the two.

#### **Assessment and Wrap-up:**

Students present their odes to the class and discuss the similarities and differences between the foods the class liked and disliked. First in their journals, then in a class discussion, students reflect on the following questions:

- Did you notice any cultural trends within the class?
- Are the classes' favorite foods advertised in the media? If so, how?
- Does the media affect our likes and dislikes when it comes to food? If so, how?



Andy Warhol  
Big Torn Campbell's Soup Can (Pepper Pot), 1962  
casein and graphite on canvas  
71 5/8 x 52 in. (181.9 x 132.1 cm.)  
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh Founding Collection,  
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Andy Warhol  
Crushed Campbell's Soup Can (Beef Noodle), 1962  
casein and graphite on cotton canvas  
71 7/8 x 52 in. (182.6 x 132.1 cm.)  
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh Founding Collection,  
Contribution The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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*Ode to a Food*



# Ode to a Food



## Watermelon

Love

Watermelon is green  
and pink. It's good and  
sweet and fun to eat.  
I love watermelon  
because it reminds me  
of hot summer days  
and spitting seeds +  
my brother.