

For All to See: How Public Art Teaches

Oakhurst Elementary School, Fort Worth, Texas
North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts
Transforming Education through the Arts Challenge

Revised Spring 2001

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For All to See: How Public Art Teaches

Public art can express civic values, enhance the environment, transform a landscape, heighten our awareness, or question our assumptions. Placed in a public site, this art is therefore for everyone, a form of collective community expression - from the once celebrated but now unrecognized general on a horse to the abstract sculpture that may baffle the passer-by on first glance.

Penny Balkin Bach

Enduring Idea

Purpose and meaning can be expressed in public art - art that is intended for everyone.

Key Concepts

Public art is art designed specifically for the general populace to instruct or inform. The meanings and functions of such artworks vary widely, based on the societal and aesthetic values of the communities, institutions, and individuals that commission or create them.

Essential Questions

- What are the purposes of public art?
- How does public art instruct or inform viewers?
- In what ways does a mural reflect history and culture?

Unit Overview and Rationale

Public art is as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as postmodern murals on contemporary structures. Typically when we think of public art, we consider such things as location, purpose, media, artist, and size. Specifically, murals are included in public art because they meet many of these criteria. Murals tend to evoke images of large paintings on walls and ceilings, but they can be much more far-reaching forms of public art. Murals span the timelines of history, traverse cultural boundaries, and have been created from a variety of media on many kinds of surfaces. Although the intent of murals is as diverse as the artists who make them, for the purpose of this unit of study, we limit our exploration to murals that instruct.

Some of the earliest murals probably are the cave paintings at Lascaux (<http://www.culture.fr/culture/arnat/lascaux/en/>) in Southern France. During the twentieth century, artists such as Diego Rivera and Thomas Hart Benton used the art form as a type of social and political commentary, thereby educating the viewing public about these ideas. Today Richard Haas (<http://www.richardhaas.com/>) paints historic and trompe l'oeil facades on buildings, prompting the public viewer to contemplate historic events and architectural heritage. This unit of study will investigate the teaching that public art can provide through the four foundational disciplines of art.

Students will learn why and how murals are created. These concepts will be applied to other public murals to determine the range of instructional applications that public art can provide. *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* (<http://www.fortwortharchitecture.com/jett.htm>) by American artist, Richard Haas, will be the main focal point of the unit of study. After exploring the work of Haas and other muralists, students will then use their understanding about how and why public art instructs to ultimately design, plan, and create a mural within their school.

Unit Objectives

- Students will communicate an understanding of the purposes of public art, supporting their beliefs with reasoned responses by studying examples of different murals.
- Students will investigate specific examples of murals and demonstrate an understanding of how these works of public art instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with compelling reasons.
- Students will express an understanding of how artists have chosen to depict important viewpoints of different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals.
- Students will draw upon the universal experience of public art to express meaning through art participation in the design and creation of a mural.

Lesson Overviews

Lesson One

During interactive discussions about murals, students will discover important vocabulary and raise questions. They will apply critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to acquire and organize new information from print and electronic technology and role-play to demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public art.

Lesson Two

Following a review on the purpose of public art and discussion of examples of public art from other cultures, students will analyze messages of public art and each write an interpretative poem to reflect the meaning of a mural that they select. The results will be read aloud and saved for display at the end of the unit.

Lesson Three

Students act as investigative reporters to research, discover, and reflect in writing and artwork on background information about *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* mural and *Vaquero*, a public sculpture by artist Luiz Jimenez for an issue of *The Frontier Times*.

Lesson Four

After research and discussion of previous lessons and brainstorming of potential subjects, students design and paint a mural with an important public art message for their school and community.

NOTE: This unit is designed to support interdisciplinary connections. The teacher team should be familiar with all lessons. Lessons One and Three are ideally suited to be taught by the classroom teacher and Lessons Two and Four to be taught by the Art Specialist.

**Evaluation and Alignment
Unit Assessment**

| Objectives The student will: | Mastery | Satisfactory | Novice |
|---|--|---|---|
| communicate the purposes of public art, supporting their beliefs with reasoned responses by studying examples of different murals. (Aesthetics) | communicate a variety of reasoned responses to support their beliefs for the purposes of public art by studying examples of different murals. | communicate some reasoned responses to support their beliefs for the purposes of public art by studying examples of different murals. | communicate a limited number of responses to support their beliefs for the purposes of public art by studying examples of different murals. |
| investigate specific examples of murals and demonstrate an understanding of how these works of public art instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with compelling reasons. (Art Criticism) | investigate specific mural examples to demonstrate an understanding of how public art instructs and informs viewers, supporting their interpretations with compelling reasons. | investigate specific examples of murals and demonstrate an understanding of how these works of public art instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with some detail. | investigate specific examples of murals and demonstrate an understanding of how these works of public art instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with minimal support. |
| explore and define how artists have chosen to depict important views in different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals. (Art History) | explore and define in an extensive way how artists have chosen to depict important views in different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals. | explore and define in an average way how artists have chosen to depict important views in different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals. | explore and define in a limited way how artists have chosen to depict important views in different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals. |
| draw upon the universal experience of public art to express meaning through art making and participate in the design and creation of a mural. (Art Production) | draw upon the universal experience of public art to express original and thoughtful ideas of meaning through art making and participate in the design and creation of a mural. | draw upon the universal experience of public art to express some evidence of meaning through art making and participate in the design and creation of a mural. | draw upon the universal experience of public art to express little evidence of meaning through art making and participate in the design and creation of a mural. |

National Visual Arts Standards

Students will:

- NVAS-1 understand and apply media, techniques, and processes.
- NVAS-2 use knowledge of structures and functions.
- NVAS-3 choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.
- NVAS-4 understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
- NVAS-5 reflect upon and assess the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.
- NVAS-6 make connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

State Standards: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), Art, 4th Grade

The student is expected to:

- ART 4.1a communicate ideas about self, family, school, and community, using sensory knowledge and life experiences; and
- ART 4.1b choose appropriate vocabulary to discuss the use of art elements such as color, texture, form, line, space, and value and art principles such as emphasis, pattern, rhythm, balance, proportion, and unity.
- ART 4.2a integrate a variety of ideas about self, life events, family, and community in original artworks;
- ART 4.2b design original artworks; and
- ART 4.3c invent ways to produce artworks and to explore photographic imagery, using a variety of art media and materials.
- ART 4.3a identify simple main ideas expressed in art;
- ART 4.3b compare and contrast selected artworks from a variety of cultural settings; and
- ART 4.3c identify the roles of art in American society.
- ART 4.4a describe intent and form conclusions about personal artworks; and
- ART 4.5b interpret ideas and moods in original artworks, portfolios, and exhibitions by peers and others.

Language Arts, 4th Grade

- LA 4.13c use multiple sources, including electronic texts, experts and print sources to locate information relevant to research questions.
- LA 4.13e summarize and organize information from multiple sources by taking notes or outlining ideas.
- LA 4.15a write to express, discover, record, develop, reflect on ideas, and to problem solve.
- LA 4.20b respond in constructive ways to others' writing.
- LA 4.21f frame questions to direct research and evaluate his/her research to raise new questions for further investigation.
- LA 4.24a interpret and evaluate the various ways visual image makers such as graphic artists, illustrators, and news photographers represent meanings.

Social Studies, 4th Grade

- SS 4.4b understands the political, economic, and social changes in Texas during the last half of the 19th century; explains the growth and development of the cattle and oil industries.
- SS 4.22 apply critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources, including electronic technology.
- SS 4.22a locate and use primary and secondary sources such as interviews, biographies, print and visual material to acquire information about the United States and Texas.

Math, 4th Grade

- M 4.8 identifies and describes lines, shapes, and solids using formal geometric language.

Selected Artworks

Take Five Art Prints: Murals for this unit of study include:

- *California* by Maxine Albro, located in San Francisco, California (1993).
- *Community Bridge* by William Cochran, located in Frederick, Maryland (1995).
- *Genesis: The Gift of Life*, by Miguel Covarrubias, located in Dallas, Texas (1955).
- *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive*, by Richard Haas, located in Ft. Worth, Texas (1988).
- *Ocean Life*, by Wyland, located in Dallas, Texas (1999).
- *Vaquero* by Luiz Jimenez, one of five prints in the set *Mexican American Art*.
- *Art of the American West*, a set of twelve small prints (optional).

Related Resources

Books

- Books: Braun-Reintz, J. & Shicoff, R. (2000). *The Mural Book: A Practical Guide for Educators*.
- Capek, M. (1996). *Murals: Cave, Cathedral, to Street*.

Videos

- Video: *Painting the Town: The Illusionistic Murals of Richard Haas*.
- *How to Paint a Mural: Step by Step* (J. Greene).

NOTE: All artwork reproductions, books, and video listed above are available from Crystal Productions at www.crystalproductions.com, 800-255-8629.

Optional Resources

- Book: Kalman, B. (1999). *Life on the Trail* available from the Sid Richardson Museum, Ft. Worth. 817-332-6554.
- Additional Video: *The Chisholm Trail* available from On the Chisholm Trail Association Heritage Center Museum Gift Shop. 280-252-6692.

Web Sites

- *The Community Bridge*, <http://bridge.skyline.net/>.
- *California* by Maxine Albro, , <http://tiger.towson.edu/users/kpeter1/critique.html>.

- *Genesis: The Gift of Life*, <http://www.cavallinistudios.com/mosaics.htm>
- Richard Haas, <http://www.richardhaas.com/>
- *Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive*, <http://www.richardhaas.com/zmuralfr.html> (before and after photos)
- Wyland, <http://www.wyland.com/>
- *Vaquero* by Luiz Jimenez, <http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Maps/vaquero.html>
- Amon Carter Museum, <http://www.cartermuseum.org/>
- Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art, <http://www.sidrmuseum.org/>

Glossary

CHISHOLM TRAIL (*chiz em*)- A former Native American trading trail that was extended in the post-Civil war period from South Texas through Oklahoma and ended in Abilene, Kansas for the transport of cattle to northern markets.

FAÇADE - In architecture, the outer covering or most noticeable face of a building; facade usually implies an artificial or deceptive covering and helps to define a building's architectural style.

FRESCO- A painting created directly on moist plaster.

MURAL - Murals are a form of public art; most murals are two-dimensional, typically large paintings on walls but can be made of art media such as photography, tempera, oil, or acrylic paints, and techniques such as fresco. Murals range in size and purpose. Purposes for murals include instruction, decoration, historic preservation, and social/political commentary. Murals may be either permanent or temporary and displayed in either a public or private space. They have been produced by a variety of cultures throughout history.

POUNCE MACHINE - A device to punch regularly spaced holes onto a design so the design can be accurately transferred to another surface.

PUBLIC ART - Public art is as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as postmodernism. Typically when we think of public art, we consider such things as location, intent, media, artists, and size. Public art is placed strategically, both at inside and outside locations, for view by a large number of people. Generally, a message of importance is implied by the artist or patron. The media, whether three-dimensional sculpture, or two-dimensional painting, fresco, or mosaic is often durable to assure that it will last. Public art tends to be large scale and noticeably visible from a distance.

TROMPE L'OEIL (*tromp loy*)- French term that literally translates as “to trick the eye.”

Lesson One: What is the Purpose of Public Art?

Lesson Overview

During interactive discussions about murals, students will discover important vocabulary and raise questions. They will apply critical-thinking skills to acquire and organize new information from print and electronic technology, and role-play to demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public art.

Lesson Objectives

Students will communicate an understanding of the purposes of public art, supporting their beliefs with reasoned responses by studying examples of different murals.

National and State Standards

NVAS - 2

TEKS: ART 4.1b, ART 4.3c , ART 4.5b

LA 4.13c, LA 4.15a, LA 4.20b, LA 4.21f

SS 4.22

ESL TEKS are the same

Materials and Resources

Take Five Art Prints

- *California* by Maxine Albro, located in San Francisco, California (1993)
- *Ocean Life* by Wyland, located in Dallas, Texas (1999).

Books

- *Murals: Cave, Cathedral, to Street.*
- *The Mural Book: A Practical Guide for Educators.*

Other

- Large paper and bright markers

Preparation

Read background information and see teacher guide for *Take Five Art Prints* for additional information. Select recommended prints. Prepare attached transparency and copies of information about the art/artists. Have books available for review or copy relevant page/pages for students.

Web Sites

- *California* by Maxine Albro, <http://tiger.towson.edu/users/kpeter1/critique.html>.
- Maxine Albro Interview, <http://www.archivesofamericanart.si.edu/oralhist/albro64.htm>.
- Wyland, <http://www.wyland.com/>.

Background Information for Teacher

The Artwork: *California* by Maxine Albro

<http://tiger.towson.edu/users/kpeter1/critique.html>

Maxine Albro learned the art of fresco painting when she was a young student in Paris, working under Diego Rivera's assistant, Paul O'Higgins. *California* is one of 25 murals located within the Coit Tower (built 1933) in San Francisco to illustrate the theme "Life in California". Albro chose the topic of agriculture because it included "flower-growing and farms and...vineyards, and all sorts of things like that that I enjoyed doing."

Albro was one of many artists who received funding for government programs, such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression. Salaries were low - typically about \$120.00 a month, but artists were grateful to have work that allowed them a public venue. These works exist as a significant reflection of American history and culture.

The colors in *California* emphasize a sunny afternoon at harvest time. The outlined figures in the foreground help bring objects closer to the viewer while the background forms are hazy. Value adds a three-dimensional aspect to images, but is used sparsely, reminding the viewer that the mural is on a flat wall. There is a message of optimism as the team of men and women work together in a harmonious fashion to complete their tasks, providing food - an essential item for the country in a time of need.

The Artwork: *Ocean Life* by Wyland

<http://www.wyland.com/>

Wyland - the artist prefers to use only his last name - is a pioneer environmental artist dedicated to the promotion and protection of the oceans and marine life. His goal is to educate the public about "the irreplaceable oceans and the creatures both above and below who rely on them every moment of every day for existence." Inspired by French environmentalist Jacques Cousteau and the efforts of Greenpeace, Wyland first researched, drew, and painted aquatic animals in life-size. Thus, murals and outdoor public buildings were ideal locations for the subject and message of his work.

Ocean Life, is number 82 in a series of 100 murals in the *Whaling Wall* series that Wyland plans to paint by the year 2011. *Ocean Life* covers two walls of the Texas Utilities Building in downtown Dallas and was painted by a crew in just two weeks. The wall series is intended to raise public awareness and support for the oceans and their relationship to the ecosystem of the earth. Humpback whales are easy targets for hunters; in the 1960s their entire population was estimated at no more than 3,000.

Source: *Take Five Art Prints, Murals Teacher Guide*, by Pam Stephens and Nancy Walkup, Crystal Productions, 2000.

Motivation

Display the *Ocean Life* print and ask students why they think the artwork was painted on the “face” of the building vs. inside? Define that the **facade** is the outer covering or most noticeable face of a building. Ask students how this mural “tricks the eye”? Pronounce and discuss Trompe l’oeil (**tromp loy**)- French term that literally translates “to trick the eye.” Then, show the transparency definitions (also includes **mural** and **public art**); then have students work crossword puzzle handout; check answers and record definitions in personal word glossaries and/or on word wall. Explain that they will explore purposes of public art to discover and communicate why murals are important in American society. Their participation in discussion, development of questions during activities, results from technological research, and completion of the extension activity will affect their assessment. They are to support their ideas with reasoned responses.

Instruction

Part I

Display the print *California*. Pose this problem to students - What questions are important to ask if they were in charge to decide where this artwork should be located in order for it to inform the public? (For example: What size is it? What is it about? Who will see the artwork? Why is it important? What kind of public building would be appropriate? Would it best be placed inside or outside? How will placement affect meaning?) Post their questions and discuss responses and background information about the mural.

Continue with the *Ocean Life* print. Ask students to pair with a friend and imagine their car is in the parking lot that stretches in front of *Ocean Life*. It is a mid-summer day in Dallas, Texas with a temperature of 100 degrees. They study the mural as they walk to the car, get in and start the a/c. How do they describe the image they see? (size, color, shapes, subject and details); how do they contrast their position with the artwork? (Nature vs. manmade setting; extreme difference in environmental conditions).

Next, imagine they are driving to hear the artists speak on why public art is important. Have student pairs develop and select an important question to ask the artists. Record the questions for the entire class. Eliminate duplicate questions.

Instruction: Part II

Students select and write on handout one or more of the posted questions they will research. Based on their research, they will construct probable and reasonable answers by reviewing the following websites: <http://www.wylandfoundation.org> and <http://www.si.edu/organiza/offices/archart/oralhist/albro64.htm>. Also, photocopy the background information on the art/artists for students to read and have recommended books available for review. Students write a response to the selected questions in first person point-of-view as though they were one of the artists.

Summary and Closure

Form small groups; one student from the pair is in the ‘audience’ and reads the selected question; the other role-plays as the artist to read aloud the constructed response. Allow for comments and further questions. For closure, the class brainstorms an answer to the following questions: What is the purpose of Public Art? (It instructs and informs the public about issues with a visual message).

Why are murals important in American society? (They reflect historical/political/environmental events of great importance).

Write responses on a large paper in bright marker for classroom/hallway display. Explain that results from Lessons One - Four will be displayed in the library or cafeteria for reflection by students, staff, and parents; the completed mural will be photographed by the local press and students will be interviewed to share their project with the entire community.

Assessment: See unit rubric.

Extensions

- Compare and contrast *California* and *Ocean Waves* with works by the great Mexican muralists - Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Jose Clemente Orozco.
- Explore contemporary Latino murals at *Mexican American Murals: Making a Place in the World*, <http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Murals/index.html>.

PUBLIC ART - Public art is as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as postmodernism. Typically when we think of public art, we consider such things as location, intent, media, artists, and size. Public art is placed strategically, both at inside and outside locations, for view by a large number of people, tends to be presented on a large scale and is noticeably visible from a distance. Generally, a message of importance is implied. The media, whether three-dimensional sculpture, or two-dimensional painting, fresco, or mosaic is often durable to assure that public art will last.

MURAL - Murals are a form of public art; most murals are two-dimensional, large wall paintings, that often employ art media such as tempera, oil, or acrylic paints, and techniques such as fresco. Murals range in size and purpose. Purposes for murals include decoration, historic preservation, and social/political commentary. Murals may be either permanent or temporary and displayed in either a public or private space. They have been produced by a variety of cultures throughout history.

FACADE - the most noticeable face of a building.

TROMPE L'OEIL (*tromp loy*)- French term that translates to mean “to trick the eye.”

FRESCO - a type of mural; painting applied to wet plaster.

Crossword Puzzle

Fill in appropriate letters to correspond with definitions of key vocabulary words.

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1 as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as postmodernism

2 to trick the eye

3 the outer covering or most noticeable face of a building.

4 have been produced by a variety of cultures throughout history

5 a painting created on wet plaster

Answer Key/ Crossword Puzzle

Fill in appropriate letters to correspond with definitions of key vocabulary words.

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1 as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as postmodernism

2 to trick the eye

3 the outer covering or most noticeable face of a building.

4 have been produced by a variety of cultures throughout history

5 a painting created on wet plaster

Student Handout

What is the purpose of public art?

QUESTIONS to ask the ARTIST:

NOTES from RESEARCH:

What the ARTIST would say to answer the QUESTIONS:

Lesson Two: How Public Art Instructs and Informs

Lesson Overview

Following a review on the purpose of public art and discussion of examples of public art from other cultures, students will analyze messages of public art and write an interpretative to reflect the meaning of a mural that they select. The results will be read aloud.

Lesson Objectives

Students will investigate specific examples of murals and demonstrate an understanding of how these works of public art instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with compelling reasons.

National and State Standards

NVAS-3, NVAS-5

TEKS: ART 4.1b, ART 4.3b, LA 4.15a, LA 4.20b, LA 4.24a

ESL TEKS are the same

Materials and Resources

Take Five Art Prints

- *California* by Maxine Albro, located in San Francisco, California (1993).
- *Community Bridge* by William Cochran, located in Frederick, Maryland (1995).
- *Ocean Life* by Wyland, located in Dallas, Texas (1999).
- *Genesis: The Gift of Life* by Miguel Covarrubias, located in Dallas, Texas (1955).
- *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* by R. Haas, located in Ft. Worth, Texas (1988).

Books

- *Murals: Cave, Cathedral, to Street.*
- *The Mural Book: A Practical Guide for Educators.*

Web Sites

- *The Community Bridge*, <http://bridge.skyline.net/>.
- Richard Haas, <http://www.fortwortharchitecture.com/jett.htm>.
- Wyland, <http://www.wyland.com>.
- *California* by Maxine Albro, , <http://tiger.towson.edu/users/kpeter1/critique.html>.
- *Genesis: The Gift of Life*, <http://www.cavallinistudios.com/mosaics.htm>.

Preparation and Background Information for Teacher

Read background information in teacher guide for *Take Five Art Prints* and in recommended books. Select recommended prints. Prepare transparencies and student handout.

Motivation

Ask students to review Lesson One by showing the prints studied. Review the major questions on transparency 1: What is the purpose of public art? Why are murals important in American society? What are examples of public art/murals in other cultures/countries? Discuss the significance of

public art; show objective question for Lesson Two: What message does the mural tell the viewer? (Viewers interpret symbols or objects in the visual image).

Instruction

Part I

Use transparency 2 and demonstrate the interpretative poem activity with a familiar mural from Lesson One and any other mural from the Extension activity to answer the following question - What message does the mural tell? Explain that answering and discussing these questions will assist in interpretation of meaning or understanding the message of the artwork. Then, read aloud the blanks that were filled-in as a poem. Have group respond to and discuss the final question.

Part II

Pass out the student handout. Assign students to work with a partner and select any mural from their extension study or use the additional mural prints from *Take Five Art Prints*. Write an interpretative poem. Make a b/w photocopy of the reduced version picture from the backside of the selected prints to display with the poems and display the full size prints in the library or cafeteria.

Summary and Closure

Students review and edit their work. Read aloud and respond to one another. Display with the chart made in Lesson One.

Assessment: See unit rubric.

What is the purpose of public art?

Why are murals important in American society?

What are examples of public art in other cultures and why are they important?

Interpretative Poem

What message does the mural tell?

What is the mural title?

Describe who and/or what is in the mural.

What other important details do you notice?

What is happening?

What message do you think the mural tells the viewer?

Why is this an important message?

What is something new that you learned from observing this mural?

What is a question you can ask about the message of the mural?

Student Handout/Lesson Two: Write an interpretative poem.

What message does the mural tell?

What is the mural title?

Describe who and/or what is in the mural.

What other important details do you notice?

What is happening?

What message do you think the mural tells the viewer?

Why is this an important message?

What is something new that you learned from observing this mural?

What is a question you can ask about the message of the mural?

Lesson Three: Important Views of Different Times and Cultures

Lesson Overview

After creating a timeline and discussing cultural influences in public art, students act as investigative reporters to research, discover, and reflect in writing and artwork on background information about *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* mural for an issue of *The Frontier Times*.

Lesson Objectives

Students will express an understanding of how artists have chosen to depict important viewpoints of different times and cultures by analyzing selected murals.

National and State Standards

NVAS-4, NVAS-6

TEKS: ART 4.1a, ART 4.3a, ART 4.5b

LA 4.13c, LA 4.13e, LA 4.15a, LA 4.20b, LA 4.21f, LA 4.24a

SS 4.4b, SS 4.5, SS 4.22a

ESL TEKS are the same

Materials and Resources

Take Five Art Prints (all available from Crystal Productions)

- *California* by Maxine Albro, located in San Francisco, California (1993).
- *Community Bridge* by William Cochran, located in Frederick, Maryland (1995).
- *Ocean Life* by Wyland, located in Dallas, Tx (1999).
- *Genesis: The Gift of Life* by Miguel Covarrubias, located in Dallas, Tx (1955).
- *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* by R. Haas, located in Ft. Worth, Tx (1988).
- *Vaquero* by Luiz Jimenez, one of five prints in the set *Mexican American Art*.
- *Art of the American West*, a set of twelve small prints (optional).

Books

- *Murals: Cave, Cathedral, to Street* by M. Capek.
- *Life on the Trail* by Bobbie Kalman.

Videos

- *Painting the Town: The Illusionistic Murals of Richard Haas*
- *The Chisholm Trail*

Web Sites

- *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* by Richard Haas,
<http://www.fortwortharchitecture.com/jett.htm> and
<http://www.richardhaas.com/zmuralfr.html> (before and after photos).
- *Vaquero* by Luiz Jimenez,
<http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Maps/vaquero.html>.

Preparation and Background Information for Teacher

Read background information below and see teacher guides for *Take Five Art Prints: Murals* and *Vaquero* for additional information. Select recommended prints and videos. Copy *The Frontier Times* handout as needed for students to cut/paste articles in newspaper format. Also, see lesson on *The Cowboy* in appendices section.

***The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* by Richard Haas**

<http://www.fortwortharchitecture.com/jett.htm>
<http://www.richardhaas.com/zmuralfr.html> (before and after photos)

“The design for this mural,” states Richard Haas, “evolved as I studied the history of Fort Worth and it became clear that the cattle business, cattle drives, and the trail that moved north to Kansas was key to the city history.”

The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive covers the south side of the building at 400 Main Street in Fort Worth, Texas. Finished in 1988, the realistic mural depicts a herd of longhorn cattle being driven to market. This mural attracts many tourists to an area of the city known as Sundance Square and is frequently used as a landmark by both visitors and Fort Worth natives. The painted cattle drive is not the only artwork on the building. Haas has also added tromp l’oeil windows, awnings, and other architectural details. The illusion causes the viewer to stop and contemplate what objects are painted onto the brick surface and what objects are actually three-dimensional architectural elements.

The Chisholm Trail (*Chiz-em*) for which Haas’ mural takes its title was a onetime trail that extended from San Antonio, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas. Abilene was the site of a cattle depot where cattle could be shipped by rail to the northern markets. No railroads existed in Texas at the time, making the Chisholm Trail the only means for transporting cattle to market. Named for Jesse Chisholm, a native of Tennessee who owned a trading post in Kansas, the Trail was cut after the Civil War by Chisholm when he took a heavy load of buffalo hides from Oklahoma to his store. Cattlemen took advantage of Chisholm’s cleared path and used it for about 20 years to take herds of cattle to the Kansas marketplace. The Trail was abandoned in the 1880s when railroads became more common and the free range became bounded by barbed wire fences.

Source: *Take Five Art Prints: Murals* by Pam Stephens and Nancy Walkup, Crystal Productions, 2000.

***Vaquero* by Luiz Jimenez**

<http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Maps/vaquero.html>

Much of what we consider integral to the American West had its origins in Mexico. With *Vaquero*, Luis Jiménez reaffirms the significance of Mexican contributions to this aspect of American history by stripping away popular stereotypes and creating monumental testimony to the Mexican vaquero, one of the original frontier cowboys.

Because of his identification with community values, Jiménez has created public sculpture that seeks to eliminate elitism and command attention from all segments of society. By elevating common deeds to the heroic, he attempts to change the way society views itself. *Vaquero* captures the excitement of bronco busting in a style reminiscent of Frederic Remington and questions widely held historical beliefs. In addition to historically reevaluating the cowboy legends, the glassy finish of *Vaquero* allows it to be examined within yet another context -- that of commercial advertising as found along modern city streets.

Jiménez creates public sculpture using a vibrant, contemporary medium -- fiberglass -- cast around steel armatures and airbrushed. Before creating these larger-than-life pieces, Jiménez develops and reworks his ideas in detailed drawings, cutouts, and small-scale models. After casting and joining a series of molds, Jiménez painstakingly airbrushes layers of color on the fiberglass surface, creating a glossy, bright plastic finish that enhances the realism of his sculptural forms. Because fiberglass with an epoxy coating withstands the extremes of winter and summer weather, it is an ideal medium for an artist creating multiple editions of a singular work for different parts of the country.

Luis Jiménez grew up in El Paso, Texas, within a strong crafts tradition; one grandfather had been a glassblower in Mexico, another was a carpenter who immigrated from Mexico after 1910. Jiménez's father, a widely known and inventive neon-sign maker, apprenticed his son in his own studio. Jiménez studied art and architecture at the University of Texas, receiving his bachelor of fine arts degree in 1964. After a brief sojourn in Mexico, he began teaching art in an El Paso junior high school. After moving to New York in 1966, Jiménez began producing painted fiberglass figurative works. During the course of a five-year stay, his activities also included recruiting children for Head Start and supervising youth board activities for neighborhood centers. Now living in Hondo (a small town in New Mexico), Jiménez continues to make heroic public art inspired by the lives of everyday people.

Source: ArtsEdNet, <http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Maps/vaquero.html>.

Motivation

Have students first place the various prints of the murals in a chronological "time line" *by the date* when the works were created. Then, rearrange the order to reflect a "time line" *by the subject* they depict. Discuss: Are the subjects of some works, such as *Genesis* or *Ocean Life*, "timeless"? Why or why not? Why do some artists depict information from the past instead of the present? Post the main question: How have artists chosen to depict important viewpoints of different times and cultures?

Instruction: Part I

Display the prints, *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* and *Vaquero*. Assign students into two teams; explain that each team will act as investigative reporters who will explore and define the following questions as articles for a newspaper:

Team 1: *Vaquero*

- Who is the artist and what is his background?
- Who commissioned this artwork and why?

- How would you describe it?
- What is the message of the artwork?
- Compare and contrast this public sculpture to *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive* and answer: What is the purpose of public art as expressed in this sculpture? How is a public sculpture different or similar to a public mural?

Team 2: *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive*

- What is important about the American cowboy and cattle drive?
- When and where did the Chisholm Trail exist?
- What poems, articles, books, songs, and other information relate stories about life on the Chisholm Trail?
- Why is this mural important to modern-day community of Fort Worth?
- How is it important to the state of Texas and to the nation?

Have each team develop related questions that they need to ask for their investigation; they will report their findings as newspaper articles for a feature called *The Frontier Times*. Arrange for local professionals to come and speak with students about relevant subjects (such as murals, life in the West, or journalism). Review the videos as a group one time.

Instruction: Part II

After questions are reviewed and refined, provide teams with resources to see and review the videos, *Painting the Town: The Illusionistic Murals of Richard Haas* and *The Chisholm Trail*; also share poems and other information on cowboys and the West (see readings). Students should explore additional information in the library and through Internet searches (if access is available). They will compile their notes and findings as articles for a newspaper report for *The Frontier Times*.

Summary and Closure

Reports will be reviewed and edited, typed, cut/pasted into a newspaper format. Students in the local Ft. Worth area can take a field trip to the site and take photographs for illustrations in the newspaper or research and/or draw appropriate illustrations to supplement their writing. Upon completion, make copies for each class member and have a “reading the news” hour; students on different teams should then mingle and ask questions of each other to reflect on their work. *The Frontier Times* will also be displayed with products from prior lessons. Copies can be made and distributed school wide for students and their families. In addition, address a copy to the local area newspaper and related museums.

Assessment: See unit rubric.

Extensions

- Add other artworks to the unit such as Frederic Remington’s *Dash for the Timber* or works by Charles Russell. Sources include the Amon Carter Museum (<http://www.cartermuseum.org/>) and the Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art (<http://www.sidrmuseum.org/>), both in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Frontier Times
Investigative Reporters on the Trail

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TRANSPOSITION OF MCKINZIE TRAIL

by H.H. Halsell

Stretching onward toward the northern star, Over prairie, hill and vale;
Far beyond the Wichita Mountains, Winds the old Chisholm Trail.

What thoughts and lingering memories, Does that lengthening trail suggest;
Thoughts of cowboys gone forever To the dusty way of death.

Where are now the pointers, and the drag-ends, And the chuck wagon of care;
Those grim men of haggard mien, And the echoes whisper where?

Oh what tails of joys and sorrows, Could the old Chisholm Trail relate;
Tales of lost and wrecked ambitions, Tales of hope and love and hate.

Tales of hunger, thirst and dangers, Tales of wild Commanche braves;
Tales of daring deeds and danger, Tales of lonely prairie graves.

Where is now that one familiar Chisholm Trail, Winding northward sure and slow;
Gone forever-destroyed by progress, Gone to realms of long ago.

Never more will bold trail bosses, With their brave and dauntless bands;
Guide the restless longhorns, Through the Texas border lands.

Yes, the cowboy's trails are over, And the dim trail gone at last;
But his name will be transmitted, From the borders of the past.

OLD TRAILS

by Vera E. Eusler

"I know the wagon roads of old. Of Chisholm Trail and Santa Fe...
In dreams I vision caravans; And campfires by the way

I hear the tales the old men tell' Of deeds and valor done...
I view the cities and the fields; That bravery has won."

"I do not love the city streets, With bright lights blazing near...
My father's camped beside these trails, And all my heart is here."

Source: *Memories of Old Chisholm Trail* by H.H. Halsell, Lubbock, Texas, 1939.

Cowboys, Cowgirls, and Home on the Range

When many people think about cowboys, they imagine characters played by John Wayne or Clint Eastwood. Cowboys have traditionally been portrayed as rebellious, “cool,” mysterious strangers who manage to kill, cheat, steal, gamble and come out looking like the “good guy.” Unlike those shown in movies or television shows, real cowboys were often black, Hispanic, or even female, and led a rough life, usually responsible for large herds of cattle. They often traveled hundreds of miles back and forth from southern states, such as Texas, to northern states like Montana and Wyoming to sell cattle and/or trade goods. Their duties along the trail rides were numerous and tiring, and even life back at home, where women did most of the work, was physically demanding.

On the trails from the south to the northwest, cowboys usually brought 2,500 head of cattle. It took at least a dozen cowboys to take the cattle along the trail, and each cowboy had a specific job. The lead riders would ride on each side of the “lead steers” and determine the direction and pace of the herd. Swing riders rode in the middle section and kept the main body of the herd together. Tail riders followed at the back, keeping the slower cows and young calves moving, preventing the animals from straying to the side. All of the cowboys had to wear tall boots to keep dust off of their feet, hats to keep the rain out of their faces or the sun out of their eyes, chaps to protect their legs from tall, sharp weeds, and bandanas on their faces or necks to prevent severe sunburn. When the cowboys would rest for the evening, they would each take turns on night watch. During the two-hour night shifts, the cowboys would often sing to keep the cattle asleep.

Back home, the women kept the ranch functioning. A ranch woman would wake before the sun, start a fire for coffee, search the land for the calves, round them up, and milk the cows. After spending a great deal of time making a large breakfast for herself and the ranch hands, a ranch woman fed the animals and sent the calves and cows back out to pasture. She would then wash dishes, churn butter, and help in the fields. If the woman had a small child, she would have to leave the baby in a crib at the edge of the field and tend to it while working. After preparing a dinner equally as large as breakfast, the men of the ranch took a nap, but women continued to work. The evening for a ranch woman was filled with activities like baking, candle-making, soap-making, sewing, mending, and many other chores.

Cowboys, cowgirls, and ranch workers had many duties and little time for the killing, cheating, stealing, and gambling seen in cowboy movies. They depended on each other to make money by selling cattle and to keep the ranches in working order. They struggled over many obstacles to establish roots in America and, perhaps without even knowing it, they made it possible for modern Americans to live the way they do.

Lesson Four: Design and Create a Mural

Lesson Overview

After research and discussion of previous lessons and brainstorming of potential subjects, students design and paint a mural with an important public art message for their school and community.

Lesson Objectives

- Students will demonstrate how murals and other public artworks instruct and inform viewers, supporting their interpretations with compelling evidence.
- Students will draw upon the universal experience of public art to express meaning through art participation in the design and creation of a mural.

National and State Standards

NVAS-1, NVAS-2, NVAS-3, NVAS-6

TEKS: ART 4.1, ART 4.2a, ART 4.2b, ART 4.3c, ART 4.4a, ART 4.5b

MATH 4.8

Materials and Resources

Reproductions

- *Take Five Art Prints: Murals*

Videos

- *How to Paint a Mural: Step by Step* (J. Greene).
- *Painting the Town: The Illusionistic Murals of Richard Haas.*

Book

- *The Mural Book: A Practical Guide for Teachers*, Janet Braun-Reinitx and Rochelle Shicoff.

Web Sites

- Permanent Murals: Advice from an Experienced High School Teacher,
<http://www.artsednet.getty.edu/ArtsEdNet/Resources/Murals/Theme/advice.html>.

Preparation and Background Information for Teacher

Review videos and instructions on preparations for making a mural. Photocopy brainstorm planning page for students.

Hints for Setting Themes for Murals

Caution is advised when determining themes for murals. Frequently, topics masquerade as themes and can prove the downfall of otherwise well planned lessons. Here are some guidelines when thinking about themes:

Themes have a tendency to be stated in phrases that contain an action verb. Often a theme will indicate some sort of change. Themes are broad ideas that connect narrower topics together.

These are some examples of themes:

- Passing through Time
- Building from the Past, Constructing for the Future
- Finding Your Way
- Forces of Nature

A Logical Connection to Mathematics

Measurement

The visual arts and mathematics readily overlap. Many of the skills needed to create successful murals are also skills needed for mathematics. Measurement and using the grid system are but two of many mathematics' topics that are taught through mural-making activities.

Grids

When creating large drawings or paintings, it is sometimes difficult for artists to maintain the correct shapes or perspective without working from sketches, completed drawings, photographs, or other "visual notes." Most artists rely upon the grid system to assist them with accurately creating large works of art.

The grid system is a simple process. Usually an artist will draw in a small format the image that will eventually be made much larger. After the first drawing is complete and the artist has worked out any visual problems, a grid made up of small squares is laid on top of the drawing. This grid can either be drawn directly onto the image or can be made on a separate transparent page that is overlaid onto the image.

Next, a second and larger grid is made. The second grid has exactly the same number of squares as the first smaller one. The larger grid is made either on a larger paper or canvas or sometimes onto the surface where the actual mural will be created. The artist can then isolate parts of the drawing by looking only at the lines, shapes, colors, and textures within each individual square of the smaller picture. It is now easier for the artist to transfer the small drawing accurately to the larger surface because the image is being drawn one section at a time rather than as a whole.

Students can use the same process for enlarging images. Not only does this process provide students an opportunity for careful observation, it helps to develop skills of measurement and ruler use.

Making a Grid

- (1) Provide students with rulers, pencils, and drawing paper.
- (2) Point out the individual marks on a ruler and the units of measure that each mark on the ruler represents (for example, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, and one inch).
- (3) Ask students to place their rulers on the top horizontal edge of the paper so that the ruler's edge is aligned with the paper.
- (4) Carefully make a tip mark with the pencil at each 1-inch unit of measure.
Note: A tip mark should be only a small dot that is easily erasable.
- (5) Repeat this same process for the bottom horizontal edge.

- (6) When the top and bottom horizontal rows of tip marks have been made, check for accuracy in measurement. When the ruler is placed vertically on the page between two tip marks for the same unit of measure (for example, one inch), a straight line should be formed.
- (7) Lightly draw a line between the corresponding top and bottom tip marks.
- (8) If these vertical lines are straight, repeat the measure and tip mark procedure for the vertical sides. When the vertical tip marks are connected, a grid of squares should be formed on the entire page. After students have created an accurate one-inch grid, ask them to create a half-inch grid.

Hint: If students need help with the ruler, have them work in teams with one student holding the ruler and the other drawing lines.

After students have learned to use a ruler to create accurate grids of a variety of sizes then use the new skill to enlarge an image. Smaller grids can be drawn directly onto an image or made on any transparent material. Overhead transparency material provides a reusable grid, but only permanent markers can be used on the surface. Tracing paper can be used if students are careful to draw very lightly.

Source: *Take Five Art Prints, Murals Teacher Guide*, by Pam Stephens and Nancy Walkup, Crystal Productions, 2000.

Motivation

Divide students into five groups and assign each group one of the *Take Five* mural prints. Ask students: What materials and methods did the artist use? What steps were taken by the artist to bring the public art/mural from idea to finished artwork?

Share responses and create a master list in sequential order. Example:

- (1) brainstorm ideas and decide on main message,
- (2) select possible sites and determine measurements of finished artwork,
- (3) decide if it will be permanent or temporary,
- (4) gain permission for use of any location,
- (5) develop background research of the main message or meaning,
- (6) draw initial designs,
- (7) debate and refine proposal,
- (8) make adjustments to design,
- (9) gain approval for funding and design,
- (10) arrange for professional advice and/or assistants,
- (11) purchase supplies and materials needed,
- (12) plan schedule for completion,
- (13) enlarge chosen design and transfer it to the wall or other surface,
- (14) paint, assemble, or sculpt the mural, and
- (15) unveil the finished work with a dedication ceremony.

Display list of sequential steps.

Instruction

Have students watch video *How to Paint a Mural* and *Painting the Town* and discuss their initial ideas with those stated by the artist. Pass out brainstorm planning page for each group to share ideas. Review responses and vote on a proposed main message for the mural. Students should study and select possible sites, then gain permission for use of any location from proper authorities - either by writing a letter or asking the teacher to be the representative of the class.

Have students develop background research of their selected main message to determine what visual images should be included in the design. Ask each student to draw a sketch for a proposed design.

Ask students to work in groups to select their top choice designs and share them with the class. Narrow the choice to the top three, then choose one together. Debate and refine the original proposal or main idea and discuss any adjustments that are to be made. Determine completed measurements. Photocopy the selected design so each student has a copy. Have them make a grid on the page and transfer the image to enlarge it. Next, list and itemize supplies, and gain approval for funding and design.

Arrange for professional advice and/or speakers and assistants with the project. Purchase materials and plan schedule for completion.

Summary and Closure

Unveil the mural with a display that includes sketches, drawings, and photographs of the entire process. Share the display with the entire school and community with local press coverage. At the opening, ask students to share reflections on the learning they gained from the unit.

Assessment: See unit rubric.

Extension

- Display art reproductions along with student work with the gallery card provided below.
- Publish *The Frontier Times* in both English and Spanish (using side-by-side columns).

What is the mural title?

Describe Who/What is in the mural.

What other important details will you include?

What is happening?

What message will the mural tell the viewer?

Why is this an important message?

FOR ALL TO SEE: HOW PUBLIC ART TEACHES

Public art is as old as prehistoric cave paintings and as new as post-modern murals on contemporary structures. Typically when we think of public art, we consider such things as location, purpose, media, artist, and size. Specifically, murals are included in public art because they meet many of these criteria. Murals tend to evoke images of large paintings on walls and ceilings, but they can be much more far-reaching forms of public art.

Murals span the timelines of history, traverse cultural boundaries, and have been created from a variety of media on many kinds of surfaces. Although the intent of murals is as diverse as the artists who make them, for the purpose of this unit of study we limited our exploration to murals that instruct.

During this unit we explored murals from different times and cultures and then focused on one found in Fort Worth in Sundance Square, *The Chisholm Trail Cattle Drive*. We used what we learned to write a newspaper called *The Frontier Times* and designed and executed a mural for our school. We hope you enjoy our work!