



University of North Texas
Department of Art Education and Art History

Hispanic Art In Texas

Identity, Race, Gender and Visual Culture:
Investigating the construction of identity.

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Unit Plan: Identity

Rationale

Allowing students to investigate the diversity that is prevalent in the modern world is important in gaining the experiences and knowledge that will serve them in functioning in a pluralistic world. In order for them to see and make personal connections, students need lessons that will facilitate their acquisition of knowledge skills that will enable them to better explore their identity and their world.

The purpose of this unit is to explore issues of multiculturalism in a diverse society and the construction of identity via visual culture. The themes explored within this unit deal with post-colonial identity in Texas. One of the main points of discussion in this unit is that identity is not stagnant and is in constant flux. The unit will explore how identity is constructed for us and by us through visual culture. The integration of identity construction and Latino art in Texas in the classroom as a vehicle for discussing multicultural concerns is important so that stereotypical products and understandings are not made.

Before beginning an investigation into identity, students must understand the way in which identity is formed through a visual and cultural construction. Once this is established, discussion of race, gender, and cultural studies can be introduced. Visually representing the concept of cultural construction introduces an abstract idea to students in a simplified, understandable manner.

Who Are We?

Before the Lesson:

Artistic objects for daily use can be an embodiment of one's identity. Objects can reflect historical, cultural, social, political, and economical aspects of one's life, and speak to where one lives, when one lives, how

OVERVIEW

This lesson will focus on the question of identity and its construction through the visual. Students will explore how identity can be socially constructed through media, culture, and environment. In an exploration of personal identity students will investigate how we internalize identity, how we decide who we are, and what might influence those decisions. This lesson is designed to enable students to combine a variety of media to create meaningful images from a personal context, a self portrait that depicts how they view themselves.

About the artist:

Juan Miguel Ramos (b. 1971) is a contemporary artist from San Antonio, Texas. He was raised in the predominantly Latino city of San Antonio, immersed in Mexican-American culture. Ramos grew up geographically and historically distanced from the rhetoric of the Chicano Movement, largely situated further west in New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

His approach belongs to a generation of artists and intellectuals often called Post-Chicano. These individuals recognize the importance of Chicano concepts and contexts, they choose to define themselves through alternative means.

Ramos's compositions consist of manipulated photographs of people from his own community. His subjects are oftentimes Latinos portrayed before locales of significance for Latinos. He manipulates the subject of the photograph, digitally reducing the details of the figure to a highly legible graphic rendering composed of large colored plains and bold black outlines.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- explore and interpret the work of John Miguel Ramos, describe the imagery and objects to signify new meaning and identity.
- create meaningful images with a variety of media, using personal experience as a context.
- recognize terms introduced to the unit (identity, discourse, self)
- identify discourses at work within their own culture
- assess the ways in which culture creates identity

MATERIALS

Digital Camera	Magazines
Paper	Copies
Poster-board	Scanner
Digital Images	

ACTIVITY

Construct a self portrait using photographs, digital images, magazine images, and photocopies. Have students collect images that reveal a personal connection to school life, culture, lifestyle, gender, or race as it pertains to their identity.

Have students use a photo of themselves, either original, digital or photocopy, in a self portrait collage that depicts what they believe their identity to be. The students will place the photo in a collaged environment that includes imagery depicting those things with which they identify as endemic to their person.

EVALUATION

- Can the students identify some of the stereotypes that involve race, gender, and culture?
- Can the students identify concepts pertaining to race, gender, and culture?
- Do the students have a better understanding of how media, culture and environment shape identity?
- Did the activity enhance or detract from their understanding?

Lesson One: Juan Miguel Ramos

RUBRIC

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
CREATIVITY	Several of the graphics or objects used in the collage reflect an exceptional degree of student creativity in their creation and/or display	One or two of the graphics or objects used in the collage reflect student creativity in their creation and/or display.	One or two graphics or objects were made or customized by the student, but the ideas were typical rather than creative (.e.g, apply the emboss filter to a drawing in Photoshop).	The student did not make or customize any of the items on the collage.
QUALITY	The collage shows considerable attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached to the backing. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains.	The collage shows attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached to the backing. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The collage shows some attention to construction. Most items are neatly trimmed. All items are securely attached to the backing. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The collage was put together sloppily. Items appear to be just "slapped on". Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and/or stray marks are evident.
DESIGN	Graphics are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged well, some in front and some behind. Care has been taken to balance the pictures across the canvas.	Graphics are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged with some items in front and others behind. The canvas, however does not appear balanced.	Graphics have been trimmed to an appropriate size and shape, but the arrangement of items is not very attractive. It appears there was not a lot of planning of the item placement.	Graphics are untrimmed OR of inappropriate size and/or shape. It appears little attention was given to designing the collage.
TIME	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into the planning and design of the collage. It is clear the student worked at home as well as at school.	Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort at home.	Class time was not always used wisely, but student did do some additional work at home.	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.
THEME	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how every item in the collage is related to the assigned theme. For most items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how most items in the collage are related to the assigned theme. For many of the items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a fairly reasonable explanation of how most items in the collage are related to the assigned theme.	The student's explanations are weak and illustrate difficulty understanding how to relate items to the assigned theme.

Mirror Maps #3



Mirror Maps



What Makes Us Who We Are?

Before the Lesson:

This lesson will encourage students to address the essential question of what makes us who we are by exploring some relevant concepts such as place, environment, and relationships and by investigating the art found in their daily lives. They will discuss colonial Hispanic art objects and express their understanding of the question by designing a cell phone cover (or MP3/4 player cover). By doing so, they will be able to make connections between their identity and their lived experience. one lives, and with whom one lives. With this in mind have students think about and discuss the more personal dimensions of their lives such as: hobbies; extracurricular activities; favorite television shows, clothing, and music; desires; hopes; dreams; expectations; and etc. Have the student focus on the daily objects they use and how they help constitute who they are historically and currently.

OVERVIEW

This lesson will encourage students to address the essential question of what makes us who we are by exploring some relevant concepts such as place, environment, and relationships and by investigating the art found in their daily lives. They will discuss colonial Hispanic art objects and express their understanding of the question by designing a cell phone cover (or MP3/4 player cover). By doing so, they will be able to make connections between their identity and their lived experience.

About the art:

The fan is a representative of the fragile relics of the social life of the 1700s that represent, in microcosm, the artistic variety that characterized the period. Fans like these were made of silk, paper, vellum and ivory, and were painted with interior genre scenes that offered an intimate glimpse of domestic life. Some of these scenes depicted royal life, or biblical scenes which were intended to be used while attending church. Like porcelain, tapestry, and snuffboxes, fans offered yet another medium by which the artistic innovations of important painters could be dispersed to a wider public.

The armoire is representative of colonial cabinetry, whose form and ornament is derived from European/Spanish influence, but was most probably made in the Philippines. The armoire's first owner was Don Melchor Portocarrero, viceroy of New Spain from 1686-1688. The lavish decor on the piece is indicative of the opulent life-style common to the aristocracy of New Spain.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- appreciate colonial Hispanic art by understanding the function of daily art objects in communicating one's identity as it relates to certain environmental, historical, and cultural factors.
- gain insight into the general meaning of art in shaping and confirming one's identity regardless of where and when the person lived in human history and society.
- develop his/her aesthetic ideas on how art objects help construct their identity by utilizing design techniques and art materials according to preference and an understanding of environment.

MATERIALS

Cell Phone	Pencil
MP3/4 Player	Scissors
Construction Paper	Glue
Paint	

ACTIVITY

The teacher will introduce the two colonial Hispanic artworks Folding Fan & Cabinet and give an explanation about the historical and social context and cultural implications of the art objects. The students will engage in a discussion concerning art appreciation and criticism based on the artworks focusing on the question of what makes us who we are.

After the discussion the students will design a cell-phone cover or MP3/4 player cover to express what makes you who you are. The students will use a variety of media and will be encouraged to additional media that conveys a personal connection to the idea of identity. The materials they bring must be both appropriate for the project and appropriate to the school environment.

After the students have completed their project they will present their cell-phone or MP3/4 covers and engage in discussion about what makes you who you are, explaining why they chose certain design principles.

EVALUATION

- Can the students make connections between their identity and how their lived experiences might have influenced its development?
- Can the students identify concepts pertaining to race, gender, and culture?
- Do the students have a better understanding of early Texas art?
- Did the activity enhance or detract from their understanding?

Lesson Two: Fan and Armoire

RUBRIC

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
CREATIVITY	The student actively participates in class discussion and answers questions; makes continuous contribution to promoting others' understanding of the lesson by giving thoughtful ideas	One or two of the objects used in the cell phone/MP3 cover reflect student creativity in their creation and/or display.	One or two of the objects used in the cell phone/MP3 cover were made or customized by the student, but the ideas were typical rather than creative.	The student did not make or customize any of the items on the cell phone/MP3 cover.
QUALITY	The cell phone/MP3 cover shows considerable attention to construction. All items are carefully and securely attached to the cover. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains.	The cell phone/MP3 cover shows attention to construction. All items are carefully and securely attached to the cover. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The cell phone/MP3 cover shows some attention to construction. All items are securely attached to the backing. There are a few noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The cell phone/MP3 cover was put together sloppily. Items appear to be just "slapped on". Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Contains many smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and stray marks.
DESIGN	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged well, some in front and some behind. Care has been taken to balance the objects around the cell phone/MP3 cover.	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged with some items in front and others behind. The cell phone/MP3 cover, however does not appear balanced.	Objects have been trimmed to an appropriate size and shape, but the arrangement of items is not very attractive. It appears there was not a lot of planning of the item placement.	Objects are untrimmed OR of inappropriate size and/or shape. It appears little attention was given to designing the cell phone/MP3 cover.
TIME	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into the planning and design of the cell phone/MP3 cover. It is clear the student worked at home as well as at school.	Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort at home.	Class time was not always used wisely, but student did do some additional work at home.	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.
THEME	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how every item in the cell phone/MP3 cover is related to the assigned theme. For most items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how most items in the cell phone/MP3 cover are related to the assigned theme. For many of the items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a fairly reasonable explanation of how most items in the cell phone/MP3 cover are related to the assigned theme.	The student's explanations are weak and illustrate difficulty understanding how to relate items to the assigned theme.

Fan



Armoire



What Do We Want To Be?

Before the Lesson:

Have students discuss who they would most like to aspire to be like in the future, or what profession they see themselves attaining. Do they plan to go to college, or do they plan to go to vocational school? Expand beyond the realm of immediate possibilities, for examples, if they could be a super-hero who would they be, and would they have extraordinary abilities? Many students have lives that extend into virtual space. Have the students discuss the person they most want to portray in the virtual realm. Do they have an avatar?

OVERVIEW

This lesson will enable students to combine a variety of media to create three-dimensional representations of them, using imagery and symbolism that is both personal and meaningful. The lesson will focus on the transitory nature of identity and how much control an individual has over it. Students will also be able to engage in discourse that analyzes the differences and similarities between real identity and constructed identity. With the development of online environments such as Facebook, MySpace, Second Life, World of Warcraft and The Sims, students will be able to gain a better understanding of avatars, their creation, and how they impact identity.

About the artist:

John Hernandez (b. 1952) was born in San Antonio , Texas . He received his MFA from 1980 from North Texas State University under the tutelage of Vernon Fisher. His work can clearly be categorized as American Pop Art. Critics often compare his paintings to James Rosenquist and/or Roy Lichtenstein. Hi-C Avenger is a good example of his unique style. This example oscillates between 2-D and 3-D, between figural and abstract. Although the piece is physically three-dimensional, the construction consists of similar superimposed flat panels.

A great deal of the frantic energy in Hi-Avenger comes from the eye-popping colors used throughout the composition-vision-searing hues from the world of advertising, comic strips, and other pop sources. Hernandez stated that the painting was inspired by the 1969 film Easy Rider. There is an overall sense of chaos, as there was in Dennis Hopper's film-especially its disastrous ending in which the heroic Captain America is killed by the random whim of a local and his prejudice.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- analyze the differences between real identity and constructed identity.
- discuss identity as non-permanent and fluid
- understand the differences between identity that is imposed versus identity that chosen
- use images from every-day life in order to construct their own identity

MATERIALS

Insulation Foam	Acrylic and/or Tempera Paint
Wondercutters	Markers
Glue	Oil Pastels
Construction Paper	Brushes

ACTIVITY

After discussing John Hernandez's Hi-C Avenger, students will be given the opportunity to create an avatar that is a three dimensional representation of their identity. Using foam and Wondercutters, students will cut five shapes and forms that are representative of:

- 1) their inner self;
- 2) their outer self;
- 3) the person they would like to be;
- 4) the person they think others see them as; and
- 5) their secret identity.

For example, if a student wishes to be like Superman, or identifies in some way with an aspect embodied by this fictional character, they could cut shapes that symbolized this superhero. It could be an 'S' shape, or a cape or any other number of shapes that would be indicative of Superman for them. The shapes do not have to make sense to anyone else but the student. Students will also be able to add color to the shapes using paint, marker, and/or construction paper.

EVALUATION

Were the students able to understand the idea of an avatar?

Did students gain a deeper understanding of how identity can be constructed?

Can the student give reasonable explanations concerning the impermanence of identity?

Lesson Three: John Hernandez

RUBRIC

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
CREATIVITY	Totally original design, no element is an exact copy of designs seen in source material or examples.	Most of the elements are unique, but 1 element may be copied from source material.	Some aspects are unique, but several elements are copied from source materials or other students.	The sculpture is a copy seen in source material or one made by another student (80% or more of elements are copied).
QUALITY	The sculpture shows considerable attention to construction. The design and construction look well planned. All items are carefully and securely attached. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains.	The sculpture shows attention to construction. The design and construction look planned. All items are carefully and securely attached. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The sculpture shows attention to construction. The design and construction were planned. The item has several flaws (unwanted bumps, broken pieces, marks, tears), that detract from the overall look.	The sculpture was put together sloppily. It appears that little design or planning was done. Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Contains many smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and stray marks.
DESIGN	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged well, some in front and some behind. Care has been taken to balance the objects around.	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged with some items in front and others behind. The sculpture, however does not appear balanced.	Objects have been trimmed to an appropriate size and shape, but the arrangement of items is not very attractive. It appears there was not a lot of planning of the item placement.	Objects are untrimmed OR of inappropriate size and/or shape. It appears little attention was given to designing the sculpture.
TIME	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into the planning and design of the sculpture. It is clear the student worked at home as well as at school.	Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort at home.	Class time was not always used wisely, but student did do some additional work at home.	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.
THEME	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how every item in the sculpture is related to the assigned theme. For most items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how most items in the sculpture are related to the assigned theme. For many of the items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a fairly reasonable explanation of how most items in the sculpture are related to the assigned theme.	The student's explanations are weak and illustrate difficulty understanding how to relate items to the assigned theme.

Hi-C Avenger



How Do We Construct Our Identity?

Before the Lesson:

Ask students to think about situations in which they have felt as though they were outsiders or not part of a particular clique. Then ask what they would do to fit in, if they desired to, or what they would do to further ostracize themselves. Have students think and discuss how they act in one group, for example at school, versus how they think and act in another, with friends out of school, or family.

OVERVIEW

This lesson will encourage students to address the essential question of how we construct our identity by exploring some relevant concepts such as home, environment, gender, and relationship. They will do so by looking at a contemporary Hispanic art object and creating an identity diary to visualize their understanding of the question.

About the artist:

Adrian Esparza (b. 1970) grew up on El Paso, Texas. He was raised in a family of talented artists/artisans, including a grandmother that made and taught ceramics, a guitar-building uncle, and a mother skilled in sewing clothing. Esparza was exposed to the nuances of artistic production from an early age directly and indirectly, through observation and through his grandmother's lessons.

Esparza studied art at the University of Texas at El Paso and at the California Institute of Arts in Los Angeles. As a student, he succeeded in elevating material practices often relegated to the realm of craft in a unique way. Traditionally, there has been a clear, albeit arbitrary, distinction between art and craft, between the so-called high arts and the minor arts.

Esparza's work blurs the boundaries of artistic hierarchies, after his own fashion. He incorporates textiles and ceramics in his gallery exhibitions, presenting minor arts in a high art context.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- develop in-depth knowledge develop knowledge on how one's home life, the social environment where one lives, and the groups one belongs to influence identity.
- practice and reinforce his/her artmaking skills and knowledge by using diverse materials and techniques to create an identity diary.
- demonstrate and promote his/her writing skills and creativity by making the identity diary through an organized combination of visual images and words.

MATERIALS

Paint	Photos (Family, Friends, etc.)
Various Styles of Paper	Scissors
Scrapbook Materials	Photocopies
Fabric	Glue

ACTIVITY

After the introduction of Here and There, including the background of the artist and the social/cultural implications of the artwork, the students will engage in a discussion concerning the question, how do we construct our identity?

Afterwards, the students will design an identity diary using different materials and techniques and by utilizing their experiences of belonging to different groups.

This "identity diary" will be a record of their daily life on three different days (free choice; doesn't need to be consecutive days; but needs to be connected with regards to underlying meaning). Assess points for designing the diary: event(s), conversation(s), people, environment, impressions of their daily lives, lived experiences, emotional/judgmental/analytical reactions to events in their daily lives.

Refer to: http://world.std.com/~brd/Portfolio_identity_box.htm

EVALUATION

Were the students able to understand how their experiences serve to construct their identity?

Did students gain a deeper understanding of how identity can be constructed based on home, environment, gender and relationships?

Can the student give relate ideas of identity and social/cultural implications to the artwork Here and There by Adrian Esparza?

Lesson Three: Adrian Esparza

RUBRIC

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
CREATIVITY	Totally original design, no element is an exact copy of designs seen in source material or examples.	Most of the elements are unique, but 1 element may be copied from source material.	Some aspects are unique, but several elements are copied from source materials or other students.	The sculpture is a copy seen in source material or one made by another student (80% or more of elements are copied).
QUALITY	The diary shows considerable attention to construction. The design and construction look well planned. All items are carefully and securely attached. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains.	The diary shows attention to construction. The design and construction look planned. All items are carefully and securely attached. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present.	The diary shows attention to construction. The design and construction were planned. The item has several flaws (unwanted bumps, broken pieces, marks, tears), that detract from the overall look.	The diary was put together sloppily. It appears that little design or planning was done. Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Contains many smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and stray marks.
DESIGN	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged well. Care has been taken to balance the objects all around. Materials used add much to the final project.	Objects are trimmed to an appropriate size and interesting shape and are arranged with some care. The design, however does not appear balanced. Materials used add to the final project.	Objects have been trimmed to an appropriate size and shape, but the design is not very attractive. It appears there was not a lot of planning of the item placement. Materials used add little to the final project.	Objects are untrimmed OR of inappropriate size and/or shape. It appears little attention was given to design. Materials used do not add anything meaningful to the final project; they detract from the piece.
TIME	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into the planning and design of the diary. It is clear the student worked at home as well as at school.	Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort at home.	Class time was not always used wisely, but student did do some additional work at home.	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.
THEME	The diary conveys clear and intelligent meaning in the use of material/objects by explaining how they convey identity. Ideas are clearly connected and flow together with the material, images and objects used.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how most items in the diary are related to the assigned theme. For many of the items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student gives a fairly reasonable explanation of how most items in the diary are related to the assigned theme.	The student's explanations are weak and illustrate difficulty understanding how to relate items to the assigned theme.

Here and There



Additional Resources

Books:

Alexander, H. (2006). The fan museum. London, England: Third Millennium Information Ltd.

Hanson, E. P. (1950). The new world guides to the Latin American republics. New York, NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce.

Quirarte, J. (2002). The art and architecture of the Texas missions. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Stavans, I. & Augenbraum, H. (2005). Encyclopedia Latina: History, culture, and society in the United States. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Toussaint, M. (1986). Colonial art in Texas. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Websites:

<http://dallasmuseumofart.org>

For Lesson Two

<http://www.myblingring.com/images/designs/usa%20flag%20shiny.jpg>

http://www.wherethewindsblow.com/images/mah_jongg_where_the_winds_blow_phoncover_lg.jpg

<http://kyesi.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/10/cellcase1.jpg>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/verapol/192419944/>

www.iconphotographics.com/prices.html

For Lesson Four

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/Files/Melissa-dolls.htm>