

## Expressing What Matters: Then and Now

Susanna Yazzie (art teacher), Diane Anderson-Nickel (music teacher), Jason St. Louis (computer teacher) collaborated with Mary Erickson (Arizona State University) to design integrated lessons centered on short online videos about the effects of the devastating 1966 flood in Florence, Italy on the arts in that city. The lessons were implemented in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes Hamilton Elementary School in the Murphy District in Phoenix, Arizona in the spring of 2007. The students at Hamilton are 96% Hispanic, half of whom are second language learners. Hamilton virtually sits under accident-prone curve of a major urban freeway. Most of its students live in public housing projects and neighborhood trailer parks.

**Theme in Life:** People have faced tragedies throughout time across the globe.

**Theme in Art:** The arts give us a way to communicate with others about what we think really matters.

### Key Questions:

How is/was this art/music understood by the average person of its time?

What do you want to you communicate with your artwork?

How are artworks (and musical instruments) protected from harm?

## **Why Art Matters: Then and Now**

### **Part One (Art)**

(Yazzie used photography and coordinated closely with a technology teacher. If you lack the equipment or colleague, consider adapting this lesson to drawing or collage.)

#### **ART OBJECTIVE/S:**

- 1) Students shoot digital images that capture important people, places, and things in their lives.
- 2) Students sequence images and text to effectively present their feelings about important people, places, and things in their lives. (Coordinated with Technology Class)

#### **AZ ART PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

RELATE: Concept #1 (PO 202) Discuss how artworks are used to communicate stories, ideas, and emotions.

RELATE: Concept #4 (PO 201) Students Interpret meanings d/or purposes of an artwork using subject matter, symbols, and/or themes.

#### **OTHER NON-ART PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

##### **AZ WRITING POS:**

WRITING PROCESS: Concept #1 PO 1. Generate ideas through a variety of activities (e.g., prior knowledge, discussion with others, printed material or other sources).

WRITING PROCESS: Concept #5: PO 1. Prepare writing in a format (e.g., oral presentation, manuscript, multimedia) appropriate to audience and purpose.

WRITING PROCESS: Concept #5: PO 3. Use graphics (e.g., drawings, charts, graphs), when applicable, to enhance the final product.

#### **RESOURCES**

- "Flood Devastates Florence," "Water Rising," "Angels of the Mud," Cimabue Crucifix: The Most Important Victim," "Santa Croce: A Story of Restoration." And "Brother Mario," videos at <http://www.asu.edu/arizonaglobalarts/>
- Reproductions from the history of photography, such Sally Mann, Nicholas Nixon, Tiny Barney, and Henri Cartier Bresson
- Teacher Portfolio of her own photographs that are meaningful to her
- Digital cameras, batteries

#### **ACTIVITIES**

DAY ONE: Introduce the 1966 Arno flood, which inundated Florence, Italy, devastating its art and architecture. (Yazzie was able to recount her mother's stories of growing up in nearby Pisa and her response to the tragedy.)

Show photographs and/or other memorabilia of meaningful people, places and things from your life, for example, old family photographs, scrapbooks, photo albums, newspaper clippings, etc.. Explain why they are meaningful to you and point out which are now lost.

DAY TWO: Provide brief anticipatory set reminding them of the Florentine Flood and introducing Santa Croce Church, one of the major casualties of the inundation.

Screen videos listed in sequence under resources above. Remind students of highlights of each video between screenings.

DAY THREE: Display reproductions of photographs and ask students to discuss why these photographs were important enough for the artists to make. (Yazzie checked out lots of photography books from the library and spent most of a class letting students peruse and discuss them.)

DAY FOUR: Distribute pencils and paper and ask students to write answers to five questions to help students generate ideas for their own photography: 1) Who do you live with? 2) Write down all the places you have lived? 3) Who did you feel when you moved? 4) The closest person to you who has died? 5) People, places, or things that are important to you right now?

Continue to discuss loss by showing photographs of New Orleans a year after Katrina. (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/juliedermansky/sets/72157594362393848/>). Explain that recovery from tragedies takes time, for example conservators are still working on restoring artworks from the Florentine Flood 40 years later.

DAY FIVE: Demonstrate digital camera techniques and distribute cameras at the end of the school day. (Time permitting show Post Katrina New Orleans Churches Website, (<http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/~sjstremb/AMatterofFaith.html>). Ask students (in teams or individually) to use cameras to photograph people, places, and things that are important to you.

DAY SIX, SEVEN, & EIGHT: Load students' images on classroom computer, one folder per student. Display students' images to the class and conduct an informal critique of their choices.

### **ASSESSMENT**

As teacher, point out technical problems during informal critiques.

You and fellow students offer observations and suggestions for improvement in the choice and sequence of images.

COMPLETE "MAKING ART THE MATTERS: PART TWO" IN FOLLOW-UP TECHNOLOGY CLASS

(If coordination with a computer teach is not possible, consider making books or collages.)

## **Making Art That Matters: Multi-Media Part Two (Technology)**

(co-taught by Art Teacher and Technology Teacher in class, during lunch, and after school.)

### **TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVE:**

Students design and create a Power Point presentation that combines images and text.

### **AZ TECHNOLOGY POS**

FUNDAMENTAL OPERATIONS AND CONCEPTS: PO 1. Use basic vocabulary related to technology (e.g., FireWire, USB, parallel, serial, scanning, digitizing, OCR)

FUNDAMENTAL OPERATIONS AND CONCEPTS: PO 3. Demonstrate functional operation of technology devices (e.g., presentation devices, digital cameras, scanners, document cameras, scientific probes)

TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS: PO 2. Design a word processing document with graphical elements (e.g., clip art, digital photographs, symbols, using text wrap, cropping, sizing, drawing tools).

TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTIVITY TOOLS: PO 1. Design and create a multimedia presentation or Web page using multiple digital sources (e.g., from camera, video, scanner, CD-ROM, Internet)

### **RESOURCES**

Student computers

Teacher Smart Board

Power Point Software

### **ACTIVITIES**

Demonstrate skills required to build a Power Point presentation incorporating students' own images and meaningful text.

Screen student presentations before each work session and lead informal critiques.

Time permitting, use GoogleEarth to show satellite images of Florence and locate Santa Croce and the Arno River.

## Church Music: Then & Now (Music)

### MUSIC OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Students compare acoustics of early church music and contemporary church music.
- 2) Students identify ways that music is affected by the culture in which it is produced.

### AZ MUSIC POS:

Relate: Concept #1: PO 1. Identifying/describing ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines are related to music (e.g., science, math, history).

Relate: Concept #1: PO 2. Explaining the nature of sound as vibration.

Relate: Concept #1: PO 2. Describing the effect an instrument's physical properties will have upon its sound.

Relate: Concept #1: PO 4. Exploring and analyzing the relationship of music to language arts, visual arts, literature

Relate: Concept #1:

Relate: Concept #2: PO 2. Describing the cultural context and or influence of music on daily life, culture, politics, etc.

Relate: Concept #3: PO 1 Reflecting on and discussing the roles and impact music plays in their lives and

Evaluate: Concept #1: PO 2. Identifying instruments, Western and non-western, by family (e.g., woodwind, percussion, brass, strings, membranophones, idiophones).

### TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVE:

- 1) Students use an Internet browser to locate online information. (Peter Fountain and Fats Domino in New Orleans after Katrina)

### SCIENCE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Students conduct an experiment showing the effects of water on instruments of various materials using a teacher-made journal sheet.
- 2) Students conduct an experiment of acoustical properties of musical instruments using a teacher-made journal.
- 3) Students examine and analyze effects of catastrophic weather (floods,) on buildings and musical instruments.

### RESOURCES

- "Brother Mario," "Water Rising," and "L'Alluvione Devasta Firenze" videos at
- <http://www.asu.edu/arizonaglobalarts/>  
Recording and text of the *Kyrie* from Palestrina's *Missa Brevis*  
*Silver Burdett's Music Connection, 2000, Grade 8*
- Tubs of water
- Old or unusable musical instruments are materials from which instruments are made
- Variety of musical instruments

### ACTIVITIES

WEEK ONE: Students learn about traditions they celebrate in their culture and how other cultures celebrate traditions, such as a wedding. Students learned about the importance of the church by viewing the Brother Mario video and take a closer look at music instrumentation then and now. Students examine the life of St. Francis of Assisi and compare his purpose of living in harmony with the earth to present day environmental concerns. Students also compare the flooding the Arno River to the flooding of New Orleans in Katrina. They conduct an experiment and keep a journal on how polluted water can affect various materials from which musical instruments are made.

WEEK TWO: Continue journaling with polluted water experiment and begin a study of acoustics: the science of sound. Five acoustical principles are presented then students conduct an experiment in which they analyze and categorize instruments according to these acoustical properties. During the project, students are encouraged to use the Internet to research both acoustics and the effects of Katrina on various musicians (Pete Fountain and Fats Domino and church music facilities) in New Orleans.