

Attachment and Junk Challenge

Primary: (ages 7 – 11)

Visual arts

Students use problem solving and experimentation to find ways of attaching different pieces of paper or cardboard together without the use of tape or glue. They are then challenged to use these strategies to imagine and create a unique and expressive sculpture, before creating reflective artist statements about their work, and giving and receiving feedback on the strengths and limitations of their output and working process

Time allocation About 3 lesson periods

Subject content Create a representational sculpture
Use of unconventional materials and craft techniques

Creativity and critical thinking This unit has a **creativity** and **critical thinking** focus:

- Play with unusual and radical visual arts ideas
- Create visual art that shows expressive qualities
- Consider several perspectives and reflect on expressive choices

Other skills Communication, Collaboration, Persistence/Perseverance

Key words craft; paper; sculpture; artist statement; recycling; gallery

Products and processes to assess

Students produce a number of ideas for attaching materials together and create a representative sculpture as well as a number of artist statements. They appraise one another's work and identify methods to improve it. At the highest levels of achievement, their output is imaginative with a high level of personal features and visible representation. Their work process considers several ways of formulating and answering a problem and shows a clear understanding of the strengths and limitations of the chosen and alternative positions. There is good awareness of areas of personal novelty and risk and why final choices have been made as evidenced in high-quality artist statements and verbal feedback to others.

Teaching and Learning plan

This plan suggests potential steps for implementing the activity. Teachers can introduce as many modifications as they see fit to adapt the activity to their teaching context.

Step	Duration	Teacher and student roles	Subject content	Creativity and critical thinking
1	Lesson period 1	<p>Teacher presents each student with multiple pieces of paper of various sizes. Teacher demonstrates traditional ways of attaching one paper to another paper via glue and tape. Teacher then gives the assignment—find as many ways to attach two or more pieces of paper together, but without the use of glue or tape. The paper can be manipulated in any way.</p> <p>Students get to work with all of the art room at their disposal.</p> <p>(Possible ways of solving the problem: creating a paper chain, staples, hole punching and then tying together with yarn or string, using tabs like a paper doll, cutting slits like Picasso sculpture, etc.)</p>	Developing craft techniques	Generating and playing with ideas when preparing to create a piece of visual art
2		Entire class reconvenes and students share with each other the various techniques they invented and comment on the strengths and limitations of each method. A student creates a list of techniques discussed to keep in a visible location for next activity.	Sharing techniques used	Considering several perspectives and explaining both strengths and limitations of techniques used
3	Lesson period 2	<p>Students (individually or in partners or small groups) are each given a box of miscellaneous junk/trash—newspapers, containers, cardboard, paper remnants. Teacher explains assignment—to make a sculpture that is as unique and representational as possible, using techniques other than glue and tape for attaching the materials to each other.</p> <p>Alternatively, the teacher could decide to give students a choice of what sort of artefact to create (e.g. book, model, toy, robot, etc.) or a theme for the sculpture could be assigned according to the curriculum/time of year or chosen by students (e.g. spring, summer, nature, emotions, home etc.). If time permits, students could give each other feedback and then revise their models in view of their feedback.</p>	<p>Using unusual materials</p> <p>Producing a sculpture</p>	<p>Creating visual art with expressive qualities and that engages subject matter in a personally novel way</p> <p>Making connections between a possible theme and a piece of visual art</p> <p>Considering several perspectives on their work</p>
4	Lesson period 2 and 3	<p>When students finish, they complete artist statements about their work, answering the following prompts:</p> <p>Title: Artist:</p> <p><i>This is something that was difficult to complete in this project:</i> <i>This was an unusual or original way of creating art because:</i></p>	Writing artist statements	<p>Reflecting on steps taken and chosen expressive choices relative to possible alternatives</p> <p>Identifying and questioning conventional rules in a piece of</p>

		<p><i>This is something I'm especially proud of in this project:</i> <i>If I had to do this again, I would do this differently:</i> <i>Something I want the viewer to know about my work is:</i></p>			visual arts (e.g. content, style, technique, colour, composition etc.)
5	Lesson period 3	<p>When all students are done, they display their sculpture, artist statement, and a blank piece of paper around the room. All students travel around the room like an art gallery, using the blank piece of paper to write comments/feedback to each other with the following prompts: <i>I am really impressed how you...</i> <i>Your piece makes me wonder...</i></p>	Giving feedback on other sculptures	on other	<p>Explaining both strengths and limitations of a piece of visual art</p> <p>Reflecting on chosen expressive choices of a visual arts piece</p>

Resources and examples for inspiration

Web and print

- N/a

Other

- Variety of paper for attachment challenge
- Variety of supplies (staplers, yarn, hole punches, scissors, ribbon) for attachment challenge
- Box of junk for each student or small group
- Artist statement worksheets

Opportunities to adapt, extend, and enrich

- This could be linked to a unit on recycling. "The garbage" is an activity from the same OECD CERI project on fostering creativity and critical thinking skills that continues along a similar theme.

Creativity and critical thinking rubric for visual arts

• Mapping of the different steps of the lesson plan against the OECD rubric to identify the creative and/or critical thinking skills the different parts of the lesson aim to develop

	CREATIVITY Coming up with new ideas and solutions	Steps	CRITICAL THINKING Questioning and evaluating ideas and solutions	Steps
INQUIRING	Make connections to other visual arts concepts and media or to conceptual ideas in other disciplines	3	Identify and question assumptions and conventional rules in a piece of visual art (content, style, technique, colour, composition, etc.)	4
IMAGINING	Play with unusual and radical visual arts ideas when preparing or creating a piece of visual art	1	Consider several perspectives on the content, technique or expression of a piece of visual arts	2,3,5
DOING	Create visual art that shows expressive qualities or personally novel ways to engage a subject matter	3	Explain both strengths and limitations of a piece of visual arts justified by aesthetic, logical and possibly other criteria	2,5
REFLECTING	Reflect on steps taken in creating a piece of visual art and on its novelty compared to conventions	4	Reflect on the chosen expressive choices of a visual arts piece relative to possible alternatives	4,5