

Making Art Our Own: Facilitation Plan for the Blanton

Facilitators: Rebekah Urban, Meredith Fisler, Ellie Webster, and Kenneth Wei

Essential Question: How does one's identity affect one's interpretation of art, and vice versa?

Write question

out this second

Essential "take-aways": Art is meaningful. Art is useful.

Age Group: Middle Schoolers, 90 in total. Groups of 15 when separated, but in full 30 middle schoolers per an hour of full facilitation. Two full runs (2 hours) on first day, and potentially a second day of another 30 for an hour, creating the full 90 kids involved in this project.

Necessary Materials: 90 smalls slips of paper (and a few extra) perhaps sticky notes, a bowl, 15 pencils

Goal for the participants: We would like the participants to leave this visit to the Blanton feeling confident

in their ability to interpret art, apply it to themselves, and take those individual ideas out into the world to either ponder or apply. We would like them to think about identity, owning their artistic interpretation, and unconventional art. We would like to break these piece down into variable: material, composition intention, and interpretation. By doing this, we hope that these pieces aren't as intimidating to the kids so they feel they can be a part of art. That art can be unconventional. Their identities can be unconventional. Lastly, we would like them to realize that there is no right answer, and they can be the meaning makers despite age and previous experience with modern art or sculpture.

Time of full run of facilitation: 1 hour

LAST PAGE: *Notes on making process swift, quicker, and more efficient in the end such as cutting certain sections, discussions, or questions. *Time chart at the end of the document as well with full plan outline.

A. [Approx. 5 mins.] The 30 kids will arrive and be greeted in the lobby of the Blanton. At that point Rebekah will number the kids off alternating between 1 and 2. The kids will split into either Group 1 or Group 2. Group 1 of 15 students will follow Rebekah and Ken upstairs to the Madam C.J. Walker, and, following behind them, Meredith and Ellie will guide the 15 Group 2 students to the Untitled (Coal Dust) piece.

B. [Approx. 20 minutes including the travel time in the switch at the end.] At this point, Group 1 and

Group 2 will be engaging in two different facilitations at the same time.

Include what information you're sharing; the students should

• *Group 1 at Madam C.J. Walker:*

also have time to DAR the piece

- - [5 minutes] We start with a little history recap with who C.J. Walker was, and a quote. [8 minutes] Exploding atom activity to inspire critical thought, self interpretation, and to indirectly engage the

students to explore perspective with this unconventionally

made piece. The piece will be the “center of the atom”, therefore we will invite the students to move closer or further from the piece based on their feelings toward a series of statements we will announce. We will invite them to use their placement as a scale with in-between areas as well, but the consistency is that the closer to the piece they move, the more they identify/agree with it, and the further they move from the

Think about how you

piece the less they agree/identify with the statement.

can that write don't statements begin with

- We will most likely choose five of these potential statements:

1. I have a perspective. “I” so the students

2. I am an artist. don't feel put on the

3. I feel heard. spot

4. I've felt silenced. 5. I am represented. 6. I have a story to tell. 7. Someone I know has inspired me. 8. I have inspired someone. 9. I feel connected to a renowned figure. 10. I have a means of self expression. 11. I have questions about this piece. 12. I have an opinion about this piece. 13. My perspective has been changed.

- [7 minutes] The previous exploding atom activity was the “think” section of our plan of “think, pair, share” for this piece. At this point, we will ask the students:

“Which statement made the most impact or made you think the most?” And “Which part of this creation by Sonya Clark is more important to the message or

impact? The object it's made of or the image portrayed?” They will gather in groups of threes, have a minute to discuss, and if anyone heard anything interesting they want to share or has an idea they'd like to share they'll be invited to so as we are wrapping up this time. The last thing said will be a question they're invited to think about as they are changing locations and moving toward Meredith and Ellie's station. That question will be: “So as you leave the Blanton today, take a moment to think about what you're passionate about, what you represent as a person, and perhaps someone you admire related to that. What kind of object would be a creative and unconventional way to build an image to commemorate that person and the ideas they represent and you connect with? [This is an optional thing to say or include for the sake of time, and to not just speak at them while they're connecting gate dots themselves.]

• Group 2 at Untitled (Coal Dust): (20 mins)

- [5 minutes] This activity will start off with ‘What do you see’. The students will be Think about a DAR sequence here and include the information you're

invited to name the aspects of the piece that they notice visually. Then they will be invited to silently think of some themes or ideas that they think might be related to this piece if they have any. This section is quick, and leads to a little history and information from Meredith and Ellie about Ligon himself, and the creation of Untitled (i.e. the underlying photo, the name of text printed underneath the coal, the coal dust, going to be

the time period). They will also be asked “ How often, if ever, do you see

pieces of art sharing

made like this?"

- [10 minutes] This room is smaller therefore a written activity is more suited, whereas the room for Madam C.J. Walker is larger and therefore more fit for body movement engagement. Next, the students gather in groups of three (five groups). We will ask Meredith to remove the large bench seat in the center of that room. (She did offer to do

so for the days we are facilitating). Each group of students will be given a small slip of Is this an art

paper and asked to write down a phrase or a few words they think this piece is trying making activity? If so, what medium are they working with?

to say or represent. Each slip is folded by the facilitator and placed in a bucket. The bucket is then shaken and passed around so each group. At this point, in the epicenter of the three groups, a facilitator will place another bucket of random object (none of which could cause any sort of permanent or semipermanent mark, spill, scratch, or stick). Each group must choose one or two objects to go with the message on their What is the goal of the art

- paper.

Each group of three will come up with a little pitch for their potential mixed medium making?

piece that sends the message or represents the purpose on their sticky note and utilizes the found objects they chose. This is a great hands on activity, and after the five groups pitch their theoretical pieces. There will be a cleaning up period of about a minute (sticky notes in the trash that's passed around, and objects back in the box.)

- [5 minutes] The last five minutes working with Untitled will be talking about

unconventional art making a difference, owning your interpretation, and perspective. They will be asked a series of discussion-seeking questions and may engage if they feel moved to do so. Some options of these questions that we brainstormed so far include:

Make sure these 1. questions open (don't ended have are a one

2. 3. Which part of your theoretical piece of art was more important? The

object(s) or what was written on the paper? How did pitching your own multi-media piece of art make you feel? Did you theoretical piece of art feel important? What do you think people would think when they saw it? word answer)

4. What did you think about Untitled before this activity? What do you think of and think about how they connect 5. to the your art piece

goals for

6. it now?

What do you think about unconventional art, and artists that use that method? What lesson from this experience did you find impactful enough to take with you out of this setting?

C. The Switch:

• [Time has been accounted for within the time of the activities] Group 1 and Group 2 will switch pieces. Group 1 will follow Rebekah to Meredith's station at Untitled, and Group 2 will follow Ellie to Ken's station at Madam C.J. Walker. Since the pieces are so close to each other and the students do not have any items to move, we predict this will be fairly quick and also be a moment for them to quietly chatter and shake out any antsy feelings that might distract them.

- At this point, SECTION B will be repeated. [20 minutes]

D. The Conclusion: What is the goal of this

- [5 minutes of travel time to regroup downstairs] The students travel to the lobby accompanied by the facilitators.

activity? I'm

- [15 minutes] After the students are regrouped in the lobby of the Blanton, two pieces of butcher paper will be placed on either side of the section of the room we are occupying wondering (several feet apart from each other). One will be titled Madam C.J. Walker (combs) and the if you want

other will be titled Untitled (coal dust). Both pieces of butcher paper will be divided in half to do a shorter closing and

where one half will be labeled "Why I liked it best" and the other half will be labeled "My thoughts". The facilitators will ask the students to stand by the paper representing the piece of art they enjoyed the best. This will take about five minutes. At that time, they will be handed

then perhaps add an opening

pencils (maybe markers, depending on what Meredith from the Blanton says about supervised “it Made Me

ink in the lobby) to write down why they liked it, and, on the second half, how they connected Think” is a

to it, what it made them think about, how it might be useful, and basically their extended

quick reflective closing— you

thoughts.

- After a couple minutes when the facilitators see the papers are being filled enough, they will announce that the students stand, switch to the other paper, and think about the similarities of the pieces based upon their observations physically, thematically, and the interpretations. can find it on the DBI

- Lastly, the posters will be photographed for documentation, and either taken with the teacher for post-activity discussion if they want or held onto by facilitators. Before heading out, the Network facilitator will ask the kids to think about one thing they learned, and done thing that they’ll leave thinking about, so two words. Volunteers to share will be invited to do so, but if no one volunteers they’ll be invited to share that will their peers after leaving the Blanton Museum to head back to school.

- An example of the posters:

Timing:

- 5 minutes for greeting and grouping in the lobby.
- 2 minutes for walking upstairs to the pieces and getting settled.
- UPDATE: (7 minutes in.)
- 15 minutes for the facilitating activities for each piece (2 groups simultaneously on different pieces).
- 5 minutes for travel time when switching groups to the other piece to experience a different activity.
- 15 minutes for the groups to experience the other piece and it’s associated activities and discussion.
- UPDATE: (In total, the time is at 42 minutes.)
- 5 minutes for travel time walking back downstairs to regroup all 30 kids (Group 1 and 2 together).
- 10 minutes for the paper activity choosing their favorite pieces.
- 3 minutes to ask the kids to think of something they learned, and something they’re gonna leave thinking about.
- UPDATE: (60 minutes total now.)

*NOTES FOR IMPROVEMENT: *Some things will need to be paired down. For example, our instruction time, the amount of questions, and we will need to focus more on activity than attempting to discuss after every single thing. In hindsight, we need to leave most, if not all, reflection and discussion for the end to leave time for swift activity in the middle with the pieces.*

Why I liked it:

My “take aways” My conclusions

Why I liked it:

My "take aways" My conclusions "It made me think-"

"It made me think-"

Madam C.J. Walker

Untitled (coal dust)