

Paper Dolls

Intended grade level(s) / age(s): 6th, 7th, and 8th grade (middle school)

Big Idea / Central concept: Identity

Essential Questions:

1. What do you consider to be central to your identity?
2. Why are certain places important to you?
3. How do you interact with your surrounding environment?

National Arts Standard(s):

- **VA:Cr3.1.6a** Reflect on whether personal artwork conveys the intended meaning and revise accordingly.

OH State Arts Standard(s):

- **6.3CO** Link observations, life experiences and imagination for personal and creative expression.
- **6.3PE** Purposefully incorporate the elements of art and principles of design to construct works of art.



Artists to be Discussed/Shared:

- [Chas Hyman \(@urweirdgf\)](#) - the main inspiration for this lesson; creates paper doll self portraits with props in various settings
- [Lizz Ortiz](#) - creates diverse paper dolls that represent a range of unique identities
- [Camila Salinas \(@camilaas.art\)](#) - painter whose surreal self portraits speak to her identity
- [Lares Torcates \(@laresian\)](#) - mixed media artist whose identity is evident throughout their works
- [Derrick Adams](#) - uses wigs and his “distinct geometric style evocative of “Benin heads, Kwele masks, Kota reliquary figures,” and other West African masks and sculptures” in his self portraits

Key Vocabulary:

- **Doll** - A small model of a human figure
- **Collage** - “Collage describes both the technique and the resulting work of art in which pieces of paper, photographs, fabric and other ephemera are arranged and stuck down onto a supporting surface” (from Tate Modern)
- **Identity** - The qualities that make you unique, including (but not limited to) personality, beliefs, and experiences
- **Juxtaposition** - The act of layering/contrasting/comparing/joining together
- **Composition** - “The arrangement of elements within a work of art” (from Tate Modern)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will link observations, life experiences and imagination in a loose collage consisting of a doll of themselves juxtaposed on a background. (6.3CO)
- Students will purposefully incorporate the elements of art and principles of design to construct their paper doll artwork. (6.3PE)
- Students will reflect on whether their personal artwork conveys their intended meaning through a class-wide discussion. (VA:Cr3.1.6a)

Art Activity: This is a mixed media collage activity in which students will create literal representations of themselves as paper dolls and juxtapose (“move”) these onto a metaphorical representation of how they see an environment (home, school, or another community) that is significant to their lives. The pieces will be laminated and have added magnets for durability (and to put on the fridge!).

Materials: Colored pencils, oil pastels, markers, scissors, x-acto knives, cutting mats, 11x14 mixed media paper, magnets, laminator, planning sheets for opening discussion

[Lesson 1: Paper Dolls slideshow](#)

[Lesson 1: Paper Dolls planning sheet](#)

Lesson Sequence

[First 10 minutes spent greeting students and families in lobby/auditorium]

Opening Activity/Discussion/Presentation (10-15 minutes)

I will introduce myself briefly, then call on students one by one to briefly introduce themselves. Then, I'll tell them a bit more about myself to start a discussion about identity, prompting my students to think about what traits they consider to be central to their identities, what places are significant to them, and how they interact with said places.

- They will take notes on a guided planning sheet to organize their thoughts.

Then, the more formal lesson presentation will include...

- An introduction of our example artists (Chas Hyman & Lizz Ortiz for dolls, Derrick Adams, Camila Salinas, & Lares Torcates for further inspiration on depicting aspects of identity)
- A review of our vocabulary words (doll, collage, identity, juxtaposition, and composition)
- An overview of today's paper dolls activity

Material Demonstration/Tutorial (5 minutes)

Since students will be working with (often familiar) dry media, the main demonstration will consist of steps to success (creating the doll, creating the background, then safely cutting out the doll with a craft knife on a cutting mat).

- I will follow this up with a brief explanation about how the dolls and background will be laminated and have magnets added before the final show, and then they can take their work home and display it on the fridge.

Artistic Production (45-50 minutes)

As students work on their dolls and backgrounds, I will be circulating around the room, periodically sitting down to check in with individual tables to see how they are doing (and if they need any additional help). Since the project has two integral parts - the doll and the background - it will be crucial for me to make sure that by the halfway point of artistic production, that students have transitioned over to working on their backgrounds.

Clean-Up (5 minutes)

Before students begin creating, I will let them know how long they have to work on their pieces and the time that clean-up will begin so that time management and transitioning to cleaning up is less jarring. With two minutes until clean up officially begins, I'll remind students to wrap up their final marks. Clean-up should be relatively easy, as we are working with dry media. I'll ask students to return their materials to their respective bins (or piles, for the cutting mats), and to put any paper scraps in the recycling bin.

Reflection/Closure (10-15 minutes)

Instead of a formal critique, I students will put their finished works at their seats, then do a gallery walk to see their peers' artwork. Then, we will talk about everyone's work as a group and reflect on whether the characteristics the students listed on their planning sheets at the start of class ended up being incorporated into their artwork (and why, why not, what surprised them as they created, etc.) and what these choices communicate about their art and their identities.

Assessment

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Attention	Assessment Method
Students will link observations, life experiences and imagination in a loose collage consisting of a doll of themselves juxtaposed on a background. (6.3CO)	Student <u>utilizes all sections of guided planning sheet</u> to organize thoughts and ideas.	Student <u>utilizes at least one section of guided planning sheet</u> to organize thoughts and ideas.	Student <u>does not engage with guided planning sheet</u> to organize thoughts and ideas.	Visual observation of use of guided planning sheets.
Students will purposefully incorporate the elements of art and principles of design to construct their paper doll artwork. (6.3PE)	Artwork demonstrates <u>strong evidence</u> of intentionality in composition and <u>strong evidence</u> of attention to artisanship.	Artwork demonstrates <u>some evidence</u> of intentionality in composition and <u>some evidence</u> of attention to artisanship.	Artwork demonstrates <u>no evidence</u> of intentionality in composition and <u>no evidence</u> of attention to artisanship.	Visual assessment of completed works of art.
Students will reflect on whether their personal artwork conveys their intended meaning through a class-wide discussion. (VA:Cr3.1.6a)	Student meaningfully engages in discussion with classmates <u>at least twice</u> in reflective group discussion about artwork.	Student participates in discussion <u>at least once</u> in reflective group discussion about artwork.	Student <u>does not participate at all</u> in reflective group discussion about artwork.	Written tracking of participation in gallery walk and class discussion during group reflection.

Acknowledgments

This lesson draws its main inspiration from the work of artist Chas Hyman (@urweirdgf).