

MAKE YOUR MARK!

Intended grade level(s) / age(s): 4th grade

Big Idea / Central concept: Students will understand the importance of mark making and how marks may connect to an artist.

Essential Questions:

1. What is the importance of mark making in art?
2. How can you use different materials in order to make different marks?
3. What can you tell about an artist from the marks they're making?

National Arts Standard(s):

- **VA:Cr2.1.4a** - Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.
- **VA:Re.7.2.4a** - Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages



OH State Arts Standard(s):

- **4.2CR** - Select materials and processes to solve artistic problems.
- **4.3PE** - Utilize innovative ways to apply the elements of art and principles of design.

Artists to be Discussed/Shared:

- **Yayoi Kusama** - use of dots as marks in 2D & 3D formats
- **Vincent Van Gogh** - a post-impressionist painter who painted significant scenes from his life, using marks and bold strokes to convey meaning
- **Alai Ganuza** - oil and digital painter who uses color theory and mark making to depict scenes and objects from daily life
- **Lui Ferreyra** - artist who uses colorful geometric patterns and lines to construct portraits with colored pencil (usually on toned paper)
- **Lee.K** - artist known as @leekillust on Instagram who uses primarily ballpoint pen to create textured portraits
- **Nikos Gyftakis** - contemporary Greek artist who uses fluid and intentional marks to convey meaning and imply figure and representation in his work, specifically, in his portraiture

Key Vocabulary:

- **stippling** - repeated dots in an artwork
- **pointillism** - artwork that is made through a lot of stippling
- **mark making** - the way the artist applies pigment onto their canvas/paper/etc.
- **line** - often described as “a moving dot”. Can be straight, curved, overlapping, etc
- **shape** - a defined 2D area (often defined by lines!)
- **form** - a defined 3D area (a shape but with volume)
- **optical mixing** - when two specific colors are placed next to each other (e.g. red and blue), a viewer will see it as a different color (e.g. purple) from far away
- **intentionality** - why a person may choose to do the things they do (e.g. in this case, why the students chose to make specific marks on their paper)
- **implied texture** - texture that you see but isn't actually there (you can't touch it but it looks like it would have a certain feeling)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will create artworks that demonstrate an understanding of mark making.

- Students will apply “line” and “shape” (or “form”) from the Principles of Design to their artwork.
- Students will develop personal mark making techniques that suit the goals of their project idea.

Art Activity: Students will first practice making marks with different materials provided to them. Once they find a few that they like, they will create a two-dimensional piece with these chosen materials to make a drawing of an object in their life that has personal significance, with emphasis on how the marks convey that significance to an audience.

Materials: Paper, paint/ink, a variety of different tools that may be unusual to make marks (sponges, various types of stamps, plastic cutlery, anything with texture that is cheap and disposable).

Lesson Sequence

Opening Activity/Discussion/Presentation (10 minutes)

We will open with a slideshow that draws connections between textures and feelings/emotions, and how those textures can be implied in pieces of art. This leads into a brief overview of the works of our selected example artists: Yayoi Kusama, Alai Ganuza, Lui Ferreyra, Lee.K, and Nikos Gyftakis. We will pose questions about what the specific marks in their work make the students feel to open a discussion about how marks/implied textures in art can affect emotions, and why it is important to be intentional about marks.

Material Demonstration/Tutorial (10 minutes)

Students will complete a worksheet divided into eight sections, in which they will make different marks in each section with the objects they find/choose and the provided ink/paint.

Artistic Production (20 minutes)

During this period of artistic production, students will use a few of their favorite mark making materials and techniques to create a two-dimensional piece of art representing an object in their life that has personal significance. As they work, we will walk around and start non-disruptive discussions with the students, particularly aimed at asking why they are choosing these materials to make each mark and how that translates into a meaningful piece of work. If any of the students are feeling stuck on choosing an object, ask about meaningful birthday presents or childhood toys they had.

Clean-Up (10 minutes)

Students will dispose of the cheap & disposable materials that they may have dipped in paint or ink to create their marks (think- cheap plastic forks or spoons bought in bulk, crumpled paper towels, etc).

Reflection/Closure (10 minutes)

During this time, students will fill out the provided reflection/artist statement paper to explain their intentions behind the marks they chose to make for this particular project. A word bank will be provided at the bottom of the sheet so the students know what terms to include in their reflections.

Total time: 1 hour (60 mins)

Assessment

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Attention	Assessment Method
Students will create artworks that demonstrate an understanding of mark making (4.2CR) & VA:Cr2.1.4a).	The student has a piece that is finished and they are able to accurately explain (to the best of their ability) what these marks mean for them as an artist	The student's piece may be finished and may accurately show intentional marks, but they may not be able to explain the thought behind their mark making	The student may have just put marks down on a paper. There was no intentionality and they are unable to explain why they did what they did.	We will be looking at the student's pieces and they will write an artist statement under their piece where they're able to write about what they did, why they chose the marks they did, and how this may be meaningful to them as an artist.
Students will apply "line" and "shape" (or "form) from the Principles of Design to their artwork (4.3PE).	The student has very very accurately demonstrated an understanding of design principles through their art making and is able to explain how they used these principles.	The student may be able to describe the principles in an accurate way and the student may have created very intentional marks, but there seems to be a disconnect between their knowledge and their mark making.	The student doesn't understand the design principles and that may be shown through their artwork or through the way they talk about their piece and describe the design principles.	A word bank will be included on their reflection/artist statement sheet so they will know to include these words in their writing to demonstrate their understanding.
Students will develop personal mark making techniques that suit the goals of their project idea (VA:Cr2.1.4a & 4.2CR).	The student has come up with very very creative ways to make marks. They found a technique that works for them, they can explain in detail how this technique works for them and what it means for them as an artist.	The student may have tried a bunch of techniques, but may have landed on a safer mark making choice. They are still able to explain their thought process, there just may not be as much creativity as the excellent student.	There wasn't much creativity used in this student's mark making. They may have chosen a very safe choice or just made some easy marks and called it a day. They are unable to explain what this means to them as an artist, they may have just wanted to finish the assignment.	Having the students create artist statements, observing the process of the students as they're working, asking them as they're working why they're choosing the tools they are and what sort of mark it's making for them.

Acknowledgments

Adapted from <https://www.deepspacesparkle.com/how-to-paint-dots/> lesson by Deep Space Sparkle.