

## Contemporary Culture Collages

Intended grade level(s) / age(s): 7-8th grade

**Big Idea / Central concept:** Media culture and material manipulation

**Essential Questions:**

- How does the meaning of images change in different contexts?
- Is the artmaking process still art in and of itself?
- How does visual and media culture impact society today?

**National Arts Standard(s):**

- **VA:Cr2.3.IIIa** Demonstrate in works of art or design how visual and material culture defines, shapes, enhances, inhibits, and/or empowers people's lives.
- **VA:Cn10.1.IIIa** Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art-making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design.

**OH State Arts Standard(s):**

- **8.4CR** Analyze and apply what it means to ethically create and share works of art.
- **HSI.4CO** Compare aesthetic theory and visual culture to inform personal aesthetic development.

**Artists to be Discussed/Shared:**

- **Chas (@urweirdgf)** <https://www.instagram.com/urweirdgf/> – colored pencil artist using “paper dolls” **layered** on top of individually drawn and cut setting pieces to build a **narrative**
- **Barbara Kruger** – contemporary mixed media artist whose work combines short declarative statements with appropriated imagery from popular media and culture.
- **Kawayan de Guia** – mixed media artist whose work focuses on **critiquing** “consumerism, global trade, and the impact of the American occupation of the Philippines” (Ocula, 2024).

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **mass media** - mass communication channels, e.g. the internet, television, broadcasts, radio, newspapers, magazines
- **visual culture** - aspects of culture that are communicated through visual media
- **media culture** - the way that media influences/controls other parts of life, i.e. political views
- **surrealist** - beyond reality; not realistic
- **juxtaposition** - the act of layering/contrasting/comparing/joining together

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will create a collage using appropriated images from magazines and newspapers (with details added with dry media techniques).
- Students will understand the implications of copyright and ethical use of pre-existing media.
- Students will explain the significance of their image/material choices in the context of their topic.

**Art Activity:** Students will use magazines/newspapers/miscellaneous print media and traditional dry media to create collages critiquing or describing a narrative around a centric issue personal to them.

**Materials:** Colored paper, white paper, old pop culture/news magazines, newspapers, printer (optional for those who want specific additional images), markers, colored pencils, oil pastels, paint markers if available.



## Lesson Sequence

### Opening Activity/Discussion/Presentation (15 minutes) [Link to Contemporary Culture Collage slides](#)

Open with some questions: how many of you have ever tried **scrapbooking or journaling**? Have you ever created a collage? What **purpose** did the collage serve?

Lead into the discussion about how collage is a very broad medium of art with many outcomes and uses. Many artists use collage as a way to make a remark about society and culture. They use **appropriated imagery** to do this.

*Go through slides with the artists we are featuring*

#### **What is appropriated imagery? Where does it come from?**

Some examples include advertisements, magazines, propaganda, or even artwork. (use kruger's "divinity of the masterpiece" as an example)

Collage takes the CONTEXT away from the image. it has the ability to turn it into something completely different.

**Is appropriating imagery, well, appropriate?** Keep this question rhetorical and allow for open discussion.

### Material Demonstration/Tutorial (5 minutes)

Each student will start with a base sheet of paper (color doesn't matter)

Provide students with magazines, newspapers, and blank drawing paper. Provide scissors, glue sticks, markers, pencils, etc. **everything** on the table (and at other tables!) is fair game for your artwork.

Show example artwork and allow it to be passed around so students can observe the **layering** process.

### Artistic Production (30 minutes)

Students will search through magazines to find imagery that they can appropriate and incorporate into their collage. They also will create a drawn element in their collage.

### Clean-Up (5 minutes)

Students will put away reusable magazines/newspapers/images, throw away any scraps or trash, and wipe tables to make sure there is no residual glue on the surfaces.

### Reflection/Closure/Critique (5-10 minutes, as time allows)

After writing a brief artist statement/reflection about the significance of material/image choices & context, students will present & discuss their artworks and artist statements at their table groups of 4 or 5. This will last for as long as time allows. Writing the artist statement can also overlap with artistic production.

## Assessment

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Attention	Assessment Method
<p><b>Concept</b></p> <p>Students will create a collage using appropriated images from magazines and newspapers (with details added with dry media techniques) (HSI.4CO).</p>	Artwork contains collage and mixed media applications, which are thoughtfully and intentionally incorporated.	Artwork contains collage and mixed media applications.	Artwork is visibly incomplete (has either <i>just</i> collage or <i>just</i> dry media).	Final artwork will be carefully examined for evidence of use of mixed media applications.
<p><b>Execution &amp; aesthetics</b></p> <p>Students will understand the implications of copyright and ethical use of pre-existing media (8.4CR).</p>	Student changes/manipulates <i>three or more</i> components of the final artwork.	Student only changes/manipulates <i>one or two</i> components of the final artwork.	Student does not attempt to modify materials used in artwork. There is little or no evidence of material manipulation.	Final artwork will be carefully examined for evidence of material manipulation (cutting/juxtaposing /general modification of collage materials; drawn/painted elements).
<p><b>Critique</b></p> <p>Students will explain the significance of their image/material choices in the context of their topic (VA:Cn10.1.IIIa &amp; VA:Cr2.3.IIIa).</p>	Artist statement explains why the student chose certain materials for the piece and explains context and significance. Student participates in critique by volunteering thoughtful comments.	Artist statement explains why the student chose certain materials for the piece <i>without explaining context or significance</i> . Student participates occasionally in critique.	Artist statement is incomplete, and/or student does not participate in critique.	Students will write an artist statement to display alongside their piece for critique. Statements will be collected and evaluated after critique.

## Acknowledgments

Inspired by Ellen's love of collage & media culture, as well as one of Isa's 7th grade art projects & ART111 Newsworthy Phase 4 project.