

Shepard Fairey: Graffiti Style Names

Lesson plan developed by Hannah Mee Eun Girman

Post-Visit Lesson Plan

Grades: 4-8

Visual Arts

2-3 Lessons



About the Artist:

Frank Shepard Fairey, age 39, was born in Charleston, South Carolina on February 15, 1970. His interest in the visual arts began at an early age when he began putting his drawings on personal items such as skateboards and t-shirts. With art as his chosen path, Fairey continued his efforts and was accepted to the Rhode Island School of Design. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration in 1992.

Fairey's professional career began to launch shortly after his early designs of 'guerilla' art work. He is best known for his 'Andre the Giant' stencil design which was originally created in 1989 and then modified with the words 'Obey Giant'. This image rapidly spread throughout urban America, appearing on street signs, billboards and walls. Fairey has also gained fame from his Barack Obama 'HOPE' poster created for the 2008 presidential campaign.

Fairey's infamy can be attributed to a combination of artistic flair, blatant mockery of government and propaganda, debatable placement of art on public property, and controversial obtaining and copying of original images. Supporters refer to his use of imagery as appropriation art while critics refer to it as plagiarism. Consequently, debate has risen about the legal issues associated with the terms fair use and plagiarism. Regardless of the debate about appropriate use of imagery, Fairey has obtained considerable reputation for his unconventional displays of artwork and aggressive political statements.

Objectives:

- Students will increase knowledge and awareness of the style and work of street art
- Students will increase skill in drawing
- Students will increase knowledge of the elements and principles of design
- Students will design an original tag that is representative of themselves
- Students will advance skills in the principles of design

Materials:

- Black permanent markers
- Colored pencils
- Paper
- Brick wallpaper

Vocabulary:

- Elements and Principles of Design
- Graffiti
- Street Art
- Composition
- Logo

Anticipatory Set:

After showing some examples of Shepard Fairey's work and street art to your students ask the following questions:

- What is a symbol? What sort of symbols do you see in Shepard Fairey's artwork? How important is language to Fairey's work?
- What is street art? What is graffiti? What is the difference between this type of artwork and artwork in a gallery?
- What is the effect of unconventional displays of art work (bumper stickers, graffiti, etc.) as opposed to traditional displays of art work (galleries, museums)?



- Do the street artists need to take into consideration who will be viewing their artwork? Because this is a public form of art, what kind of response do you want from your viewer?
- Examine the dialogue between art, culture, and society. What are the benefits/disadvantages to visual expression in imagery as opposed to written or oral expression?

Procedure

Now that we have closely examined the work of Shepard Fairey and Street Art, we will be creating our own graffiti style designs of our names. It might be useful to show examples of tags (from your community or as images found on-line) in addition to Fairey's work. The teacher will discuss with the students how to begin creating a design and incorporating the elements and principles of design (color, balance, shape, rhythm, etc.). Students will then start creating a design plan for their name on sketch paper. Once they have finalized a sketch, students can produce their design in color. Once all the coloring is completed, students can outline their letters in black permanent marker or continue to use a colored pencil. The students will carefully cut out the finalized designs and the names will be mounted on brick wall paper to represent graffiti.

You might want to follow these steps:

1. Students will draw preliminary sketches for their name design, making sure to include the elements and principles of design.
2. Students will create a final drawing in colored pencil.
3. Students will outline the design in black permanent marker.
4. The teacher will cut out the design and attach it to the brick wall paper.

Wrap Up:

Have the students display their work in the hallway and then engage them in an informal class critique. Did you like creating this type of art work (Street Art)? Now that you have created for yourself artwork in a more unconventional style, has your view of the work of street artists and Shepard Fairey changed?

Assessment:

- Student has created preliminary sketches for a name design.
- Student has incorporated the principles of design.
- Student has completed a finalized drawing in color.
- Student's design is cut out and matted on brick wall paper.
- Student shows mastery of color pencil and scissors use.

Ohio State Standards:

Visual Art: Creative Expression and Communication.

K-4: A. Demonstrate knowledge of visual art materials, tools, techniques and processes by using them expressively and skillfully.

Visual Art: Analyzing and Responding.

K-4: A. Identify and describe the visual features and characteristics in works of art.
 B. Apply comprehension strategies (e.g., personal experience, art knowledge, emotion and perceptual and reasoning skills) to respond to a range of visual artworks.

Visual Art: Valuing the Arts/Aesthetic Reflection.

K-4: A. Apply basic reasoning skills to understand why works of art are made and valued.
 B. Form their own opinions and views about works of art and discuss them with others.

National Standards:

Using Knowledge of structures and functions

K-4.2 Students know the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas.

Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

K-4.3 Students select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning.

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

5-8.1 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas.



Shepard Fairey. Inauguration Print



Shepard Fairey. Love Unites



Raymond Agbegah's graffiti tag 'Milk' with a heartfelt tribute to 'Emma', on a train.
Photograph: British Transport Police/PA



Wildstyle Graffiti tags



<http://www.bozzle.com/ImagesGraff/tags.JPG>