ANDREA BOWERS: SIMPLY POWERFUL
NEGATIVE SPACE AND CINQUAIN POETRY

GRADE LEVEL: 7TH - 12TH GRADE
Please be advised – some of the work on display in our Level 2 galleries contains mature themes including language and violent situations.

VOCABULARY
Cinquain
Didactic Cinquain
Short form poetry
Syllable
Negative space

MATERIALS
White paper or cardstock (8 x 11 preferred)
Black Paper or cardstock (4 x 5.5 preferred)
White colored pencil or crayon
Exacto knife/scissors
Glue stick
Cinquain template
White Pencil
Image of Andrea Bower’s work, Womxn Workers of the World Unite! (May Day March 2015, Los Angeles, California)

BEFOREHAND
• Tour the Andrea Bowers exhibition at the CAC
• Collect materials
DISCUSSION

• Write the following quotes on the board and invite the students to comment:
  “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” – Leonardo da Vinci
  “Less is more.” – Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

• Explore the idea that simplicity can be a powerful tool both in written expression as well as the visual arts.

• Introduce the visual concept of negative space.
  • Discuss how the use of negative space draws attention to an image
  • Does the empty space hint at a story that is unfinished?
  • How does the use of negative space encourages viewers to take a participatory role?
  • Share examples of the use of negative space in advertising (Fiat, Coca-cola, Phillips, NBC)
  • Look at Fiat’s advertisement campaign addressing the dangers of texting and driving. Do you feel the use of negative space is powerful in this ad? Why or why not?

• Introduce Andrea Bowers’ use of single, isolated illustrations of female protesters such as Womxn Workers of the World Unite! (May Day March 2015, Los Angeles, California) in her work. Do you feel her use of negative space makes the image more powerful? Why or why not?

• Introduce Cinquain poetry (“sin-cane”):
  • Cinquain poetry is simple in form and is similar to the Japanese poetic form, Haiku.
  • A cinquain poem is descriptive in nature and centers on a place, person or thing.
  • Cinquain poetry does not need to rhyme.
  • Cinquain poetry has five lines and follows several different patterns and forms.
  • It follows a 1, 2, 3, 4, 1 word pattern
  • Each line requires specific parts of speech or phrasing.
  • Each line works to describe or define the noun or title in line one.
  • This is an example of the formula for a Diadatic Cinquain:
    • Line 1-1 word: A noun (the poem's title)
    • Line 2- 2 words: Adjectives describing the noun in line one
    • Line 3- 3 words: verbs ending with “-ing” referencing the noun in line one
    • Line 4- 4 words: A phrase or short sentence about the noun in line one.
    • Line 5, 1 word: a noun that renames the noun in line one. This can be a specific or more general term for the noun in the title.

• Share examples of cinquain poetry such as:
  river
  dark, swift
  moving, running, rushing
  a road to adventure
  waterway

• Do you feel this poetic form is powerful in its simplicity? Why or why not?

• Discuss the importance of word choice when writing short form poetry.
**PROCEDURE**

**Negative Space Project:**
Students will create a shadow image of a single item using negative space—Trees, branches, flowers and other natural objects work well for this activity. *See images for examples.*

- Using a white pencil or crayon draw the outline of an image on the black card stock.
- The image should begin and end on the same side of the black paper.
- The image should only touch the side of the card stock where it begins and ends.
- Using an exacto knife for older students and scissors for younger students carefully cut out the outline of the design. Explain that both the cut out piece and the remnant will be used in the completion of the project.
- Flip both the cut image and the remnant over to hide pencil marks.
- Carefully position the remnant on one side of the the white card stock. Be sure that the the cut out side is facing the unused half of the card stock.
- Check that the positioning is correct and glue the remnant in place.
- Carefully place the cut image into the remnant-like a puzzle piece (DO NOT GLUE).
- Flip the image onto the white space opposite the remnant.
- Check to insure the cut out piece is positioned correctly and glue in place.

**Cinquain Poetry:**
Have the students write cinquain poetry to be displayed on their negative space design project. They can reflect on the image they’ve created or write poetry about a topic they value or a cause they support.

- Brainstorm descriptive words.
- Use the template to write your Diadatic Cinquain Poem.
- Double check the word count and part of speech requirement for each line to be sure it adheres to the formula.
- Display your design and poem together and share it with the class.
PROCEDURE (EXAMPLES)

Negative Space Project

1.  

2.  

3.  

4.  

5.  

Cinquain Poetry

Cinquain Template: Diadatic Formula

1 Word: Noun

2 Words: Adjectives

3 Words: Verbs ending in “-ing”

4 Words: Phrase or sentence

1 Word: Noun renaming the noun in the title

RESOURCES

http://www.creativebloq.com/minimalist-posters-drive-home-dangers-texting-while-driving-7133592
www.designer-daily.com/the-power-of-negative-space-in-advertising-58141
www.poemofquotes.com/articles/cinquainpoetry.php