

Lesson Plan: Think 360 Arts Institute 2015

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Topic: Toys and Society

Aims, Goals, or Objectives: Students will know and understand the role of toys in a particular decade and how they reflect society's values at each decade.

Grade Levels: 6th -12th

Standards:

Visual Arts:

Standard 4: Relate and Connect to Transfer
4.1 (High School)
4.2 (6th-8th grades)

Reading, Writing, Communicating:

Standard 1: Oral expression and listening
Standard 3: Writing and Composition
Standard 4: Research and Reasoning

Introduction:

Option #1: Read aloud excerpt from Velveteen Rabbit, in which the rabbit hears from the old horse what it's like to become "real," and talk about importance of toys to a child.

Option #2: Watch excerpts of Toy Story, specifically the personification of the various toys in the bedroom and their interaction with the child.

Option #3: Bring in a toy or photo of self with a favorite toy or write a brief description of favorite toy. Post these personal connections on a board space.

Allow any/all of these to lead into a discussion of toys and their role (importance) in our development as children. When/how do they become unimportant or irrelevant in a child's life? Do some always remain relevant, and merely adapt with the times?

Themes:

Connections:

- Emotional: memories of own toys, sharing/explaining toys
- Sensory: interaction with toys, artistic elements of final product construction

- Intellectual: recognizing society's influence on toys development
- Social: class discussion and interactions around toys

Risk-Taking: Sharing personal toys and memories, collaborating on final production of toys

Imagination: Creation of toy or writing of story or advertisement for a toy

Sensory Experiences: Examination of toys; creation of own toy; experiencing the History Colorado Museum's exhibit "Toys" (if available)

Perceptivity: Looking more deeply at the students' toys and engaging with them – What do they require of you? How are they made? How are they societal-influenced?

Active Engagement: Sharing in class, engaging with toys in the classroom or within the "Toys" exhibit, creating own final product

Time Line: Unit of study incorporating various lessons requiring three weeks, one week for each specific lesson component

Materials:

- Media examples of toys of an era - ex: History Colorado Museum "Toys" exhibit (if available), Toy Story, TED talks (toys, design, childhood play), advertisements for toys of past/present eras
- Print resources – ex: Velveteen Rabbit (Marjorie Williams), The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane (Kate DiCamillo), other books portraying toys, print ads (ex: old Sears catalogs)
- Visual representations – ex: photographs, internet images

Activities:

Lesson 1 (Multiple days): Historical perspective of toys in childhood (Looking back at the 50s, 60s, 70s as a point of reference)

Examples of possible study:

- Examining old advertisements for the message and product conveyed
- Examining products (toys) or visual representations
- Attending and interacting with History Colorado Museum exhibit "Toys"
- Reflecting on pioneer toys created from simplest of materials available and extending those observations to the toys particular to other eras

Objective: Compare and contrast the toys of the decades studied, reflecting on their progression in sophistication, complexity, and societal influences. Examine these for

elements of active engagement, connections, imagination required in play, sensory stimulation. *How do these toys reflect the issues of the day for society? What could be inferred about the child playing with these toys or about the time period? How were they gender specific?*

Lesson 2 (Multiple days): Art component of these toys in each decade as a reflection of society at that point

Examples of possible study:

- Original “Mr Potato Head” was merely a set of features placed on an actual potato – What does this say about the materials of the time?
- Barbie’s development in shape over time – How did she ‘keep up with the times’?
- Patterns and colors used in toys
- Materials used in toy construction (from wood to metal and plastic)
- Appearance of dolls and how they evolved over time
- Child’s role in manipulation of the toy and level of active engagement in play
- Appearance of technology in toys and in what form(s)

Objective: Make observations about evolution of toys and role of childhood play, extrapolate assumptions about society of era, infer societal influences in design and construction of toys.

Lesson 3 (Multiple days): Integrating the perspective of society through an artistic medium reflecting today’s toys

Examples of possible study:

- Developing perceptivity:
 - Go home and look at own toys and bring one in to share
 - Examine current toy ads, noting what they say and how they look
- Reflection and discussion: *What is being said and promoted through this toy? What can you infer about our society – about the issues and people of today – from this toy? What materials and technology are available to create these toys? What medium is used to sell or push these toys to kids?*

Objectives: Incorporating knowledge from lesson one’s historical perspective and lesson two’s artistic component, demonstrate how toys of today reflect each of these areas, and extend these observations and conclusions to their own final unit project.

Teacher will hand out project requirements and rubric and define the final assessment project.

Adaptations:

Examples may include

- Small groups (both student-driven and teacher-driven)
- Leveled reading materials
- Project choice

- Oral component of assessment for students with language difficulties
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Provide graphic organizers

Evaluation: Define toys of this decade and how they reflect society's values, and apply understanding to own toy construction or representation

Summative formal assessment examples may include:

- Theater skit reflecting an advertisement, or a monologue personifying a toy
- Design and construct own toy or visual art representation
- Create an advertisement for toy using mixed media
- Short story featuring a toy as a protagonist, interacting with present societal influences
- Letter to Santa Claus or parent, providing argument for acquiring toy

Rubric used to assess understanding of historical perspective, art modality used in final representation or literary components of final written work

Additional evaluation sources (formal, informal) may include:

- Pre/post assessment
- Small groups assessment using written rubrics
- Writing responses to prompts
- Journals
- Interviews
- Portfolios