

JULIA JAQUETTE LESSON PLANS

MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson Title: What is Beauty?

Activity: Students will make drawings of what they consider beautiful and write accompanying texts

Grade level: 5-9

Time: 3x45 min. periods

Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, each student will have identified a person, place or thing that he/she considers beautiful, created a drawing or painting of that person, place or thing and reflected on how he/she came to see that image as being beautiful

(Digital Photography Variant): By the end of this lesson, each student will have identified an person, place or object that he/she considers beautiful, will have produced a photograph of that person, place or object and reflected on how he/she came to see that image as being beautiful.

Materials: For each student:

- Several pages of scrap paper for rough drafts
- One piece of good quality drawing or painting paper
- One piece of good quality paper to write on

For the class as a whole:

- Assorted drawing tools (pencil, cray-pas, charcoal, pastels)
- And/or
- Watercolors and brushes
- And/or
- Tempera paints

(Photography Variant):

For each student:

- Cellphone with zoom camera
- Or
- Digital Camera with zoom feature

For the class as a whole:

- Photo printing paper

Vocabulary:

Inspiration: In her exhibition at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Julia Jaquette showed paintings of close up elements of things presented by the advertisements as beautiful, or desirable: long locks of shinning hair and glasses swirling with alcoholic drinks. Yet she knows that the images in the ads are not real and that alcohol is dangerous. She wonders if she only thinks of these things as being beautiful and desirable because she has been taught to think of them that way, or, as described by the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Julia Jaquette's paintings "explore consumerism and the manufactured envy that advertisements often evoke." <https://nmwa.org/blog/2011/07/18/living-out-desire-through-julia-Jaquettes-work/>

In the 1980's an artist named Sophie Calle asked people who were born blind what they thought was beautiful. She had the blind people describe something beautiful. Then she took a photo of the thing the person described and showed the photo along with the person's words and a picture of the blind person.

The blind people had never seen anything. Yet they all could describe something beautiful.

What do you think is beautiful? Why do you think it is beautiful? Have you been taught by advertising, T.V., movies, friends and peers to think of certain things as beautiful or desirable, or have you come to your own conclusions? How can you tell? What makes something beautiful? Why do you want certain things?

For this project, you will choose a person, place or thing that you think is beautiful, or desirable and draw (or paint) a close up of some part of it. On a different page, you will write a description of what you painted and why you think it is beautiful. Your drawing (painting) and writing will be displayed together.

Social Justice questions: *How do images like the ones Julia Jaquette uses for inspiration perpetuate racism, sexism, or other forms of social injustice? What would be beautiful or desirable in a society free from racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice?*

For Further Discussion: Two quotations:

"What's the ugliest part of your body? Some say your nose, some say your nose, but I think its your mind" Frank Zappa

“When a beautiful rose dies, beauty does not die because it is not really in the rose. Beauty is an awareness in the mind. It is a mental and emotional response that we make.” Agnes Martin, from *Beauty Is the Mystery of Life*

Would Julia Jaquette agree or disagree with these statements? Why?

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

What is beauty?

(Photography Variant)

Inspiration: In her exhibition at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Julia Jaquette showed paintings of close up elements of things presented by the advertisements as beautiful, or desirable: long locks of shining hair and glasses swirling with alcoholic drinks. Yet she knows that the images in the ads are not real and that alcohol is dangerous. She wonders if she only thinks of these things as being beautiful and desirable because she has been taught to think of them that way.

In the 1980’s an artist named Sophie Calle asked people who were born blind what they thought was beautiful. She had the blind people describe something beautiful. Then she took a photo of the thing the person described and showed the photo along with the person’s words and a picture of the blind person.

The blind people had never seen anything. Yet they all could describe something beautiful.

What do you think is beautiful? Why do you think it is beautiful? Have you been taught by advertising, T.V., movies, friends and peers to think of certain things as beautiful or desirable, or have you come to your own conclusions? How can you tell? What makes something beautiful? Why do you want certain things?

For this project, you will choose a person, place or thing that you think is beautiful, or desirable and photograph it. On a different page, you will write a description of what you photographed and why you think it is beautiful. Your photograph and writing will be displayed together.

Social Justice questions: *How do images like the ones Julia Jaquette uses for inspiration perpetuate racism, sexism, or other forms of social injustice? What would be beautiful or desirable in a society free from racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice?*

For Further Discussion: Two quotations:

“What’s the ugliest part of your body? Some say your nose, some say your nose, but I think its your mind” Frank Zappa

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Would Julia Jaquette agree or disagree with these statements? Why?

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

What is beauty?

Procedure/Activity:

Period 1

- Review images from Julia Jaquette and Sophie Calle.
 - Discussion Questions:
 - What does Julia Jaquette seem to suggest is beautiful or desirable in her painting?
 - How are these things similar to or different from the things the people in Sophie Calle’s projects name as beautiful?
 - (Social Justice Questions: *How do images like the ones Julia Jaquette uses for inspiration perpetuate racism, sexism, or other forms of social injustice? What would be beautiful or desirable in a society free from racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice?)*
- *Introduce Project*
- Discussion:
 - What do you think is beautiful?
 - Why do you think it is beautiful?
 - Have you been taught by advertising, T.V., movies, friends and peers to think of certain things as beautiful or desirable, or have you come to your own conclusions?
 - How can you tell?
 - What makes something beautiful?
 - Why do you want certain things?
- Brainstorming: What is beautiful?
 - Based on previous discussions, students individually, in small groups, or as a whole group brainstorm answers to the question, What is beautiful?

Period 2

Selecting Images

- Based on brainstorming in lesson 1, students will search the internet, or magazines for images that show what they consider beautiful (images can also be brought in from home)
- Students will then select one part of the image to zoom in on as a close up (akin to Julia Jaquette)

Begin final drawing/Painting

- Students begin to make drawings/paintings of beautiful image

Period 3

- Students complete drawing/paintings completed in period 2.
- On a separate page, students write a description of what they drew/painted and why they think it is beautiful. Drawing (painting) and writing will be displayed together.
- Optional Additional Discussion
 - Two quotations:
 - “What’s the ugliest part of your body? Some say your nose, some say your nose, but I think its your mind” Frank Zappa
 - “When a beautiful rose dies, beauty does not die because it is not really in the rose. Beauty is an awareness in the mind. It is a mental and emotional response that we make.” Agnes Martin, from Beauty Is the Mystery of Life
 - Would Julia Jaquette agree or disagree with these statements? Why?
 - Do you agree or disagree with these statements?
 - What is beauty?

Procedure/Activity (Digital Photography Variation):

Period 1

- Review images from Julia Jaquette and Sophie Calle.
 - Discussion Questions:
 - What does Julia Jaquette seem to suggest is beautiful or desirable in her painting?
 - How are these things similar to or different from the things the people in Sophie Calle’s projects name as beautiful?
 - (Social Justice Questions: *How do images like the ones Julia Jaquette uses for inspiration perpetuate racism, sexism, or other forms of social injustice? What would be beautiful or desirable in a society free from racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice?*)
- Introduce Project
- Discussion:
 - What do you think is beautiful?

- Why do you think it is beautiful?
 - Have you been taught by advertising, T.V., movies, friends and peers to think of certain things as beautiful or desirable, or have you come to your own conclusions?
 - How can you tell?
 - What makes something beautiful?
 - Why do you want certain things?
- Brainstorming: What is beautiful?
 - Based on previous discussions, students individually, in small groups, or as a whole group brainstorm answers to the question, What is beautiful?

Period 2

Shooting Images

- Based on brainstorming in lesson 1, students will use digital cameras or smartphones to shoot at least 12 images of what they think is beautiful
- Using Photoshop or other available image processing software, students will then select one image.
- Students will then crop and enlarge one part of the image (akin to Julia Jaquette).

Period 3

- Students print images generated in period 2
- On a separate page, students write a description of what they photographed and why they think it is beautiful. Photograph and writing will be displayed together.
- Optional Additional Discussion
 - Two quotations:
 - “What’s the ugliest part of your body? Some say your nose, some say your nose, but I think its your mind” Frank Zappa
 - “When a beautiful rose dies, beauty does not die because it is not really in the rose. Beauty is an awareness in the mind. It is a mental and emotional response that we make.” Agnes Martin, from Beauty Is the Mystery of Life
 - Would Julia Jaquette agree or disagree with these statements? Why?
 - Do you agree or disagree with these statements?
 - What is beauty?

Standards:

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts

NJSLSA.R7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLSA.R8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

NJSLSA.R9. Analyze and reflect on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts

1.1.8.D.1: Art is a universal language. Visual communication through art crosses cultural and language barriers throughout time.

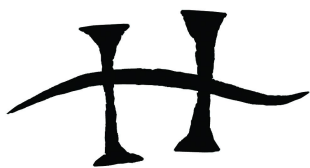
1.2.8.A.2: Tracing the histories of dance, music, theatre, and visual art in world cultures provides insight into the lives of people and their values.

1.2.8.A.3 The arts reflect cultural mores and personal aesthetics throughout the ages.

1.3.8.D.2: Themes in art are often communicated through symbolism, allegory, or irony. There are a wide variety of art mediums, each having appropriate tools and processes for the production of artwork. Fluency in these mediums, and the use of the appropriate tools associated with working in these mediums, are components of art-making.

1.3.8.D.4: Universal themes exist in art across [historical eras](#) and cultures. Art may embrace multiple solutions to a problem.

1.4.8.A.4: Abstract ideas may be expressed in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art using a [genre's](#) stylistic traits



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Images: (To be stored as separate files)

Julia Jaquette



Blond Hair (Long)

2009

Oil on panel

14x11.25in

<http://www.juliaJaquette.net/water-liquor-hair/6oj22c6ulcfibsvt7tujsfznuozjz>



Cognac

2011

Oil on linen

76x93in

<http://www.juliaJaquette.net/water-liquor-hair/enq4jcmq1tmjew1l8hp7k3dcotr5lz>

Sophie Calle



The Blind #22, 1986. Gelatin silver photograph, Ektachrome print, lacquered wood shelf, text in wood frame, 47 1/4 x 51 3/4 x 5 1/2 in. (120 x 131.4 x 14 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Caroline Hunter, by exchange, 1991.

Text reads "White must be the color of purity. I'm told white is beautiful. So I think it's beautiful. But even if it weren't beautiful, it would be the same thing."

<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/146993>



Blind. Text reads, “Fish fascinates me, I can’t say why. They don’t make any noise. They are nothing. I don’t really care about them. It’s their evolution in the water that pleases me, the idea that they are not attached to anything. I sometimes find myself standing for minutes at one time in front of an aquarium. Standing like an imbecile. It’s beautiful, that’s all.”

<http://artlifelovejess.blogspot.com/2011/05/blind-sophie-calle.html>



The Blind No. 16 "This view from my balcony", 1986

Two framed gelatin silver prints and one framed dye coupler print with painted wooden shelf
framed b/w photograph (text), 40 x 80 x 1.7 cm; framed b/w photograph (image), 40 x 30 x 1.9
cm; framed colour print, 56 x 80 x 2.2 cm; shelf, 3.5 x 119.9 x 15 cm

Text reads, "This view from my balcony, in Haute-Savoy, is first class. It really moves me aesthetically. It is where I sit to clear my mind and contemplate. To watch time pass. Beauty is in harmony. My mother stopped me from touching things. She would say: "Don't touch it, it makes you look like a blind person'..."

<https://www.gallery.ca/en/see/collections/artwork.php?mkey=38252>

