

Overview

By Mary Erickson, Ph.D.

Going Green is a three-lesson unit plan designed for use with *Green Revolution*, an exhibition at the Gallery at Tempe Center for the Arts. This exhibition is a version of *Green Revolution* based on an exhibition originally created by the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry and its Black Creativity Council and is made available by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. The Tempe exhibition is a collaborative project that combines the arts and sciences while teaching community members about “going green” in Arizona.

[Green Revolution Exhibition Preview PowerPoint](#)

Themes

- Theme in Life: We all make decisions based on deeply-held values. For example, many people value “green” practices to help preserve the earth’s natural environment.
- Theme in Art: Across cultures and times, artists and others have made artworks and other special objects that express or declare their values.

Key Questions

Lessons approach these themes through two key questions.



1. What materials can be used to construct fabric or decorate with fibers?



2. How do artists use cool colors symbolically?

Community Connections

Most communities in the Valley of the Sun are increasingly committed to developing policies and practices to conserve resources and protect the natural environment. Some cities have set aside nature preserves. Most encourage and facilitate recycling. Several cities are cooperating to extend the light rail to serve more communities. High-Occupancy-Vehicle (HOV) lanes reward people who carpool. The federal government and regional electrical companies have given financial incentives to homeowners and businesses to exploit Arizona’s abundant sunlight to generate electricity. Some people grow their own vegetables and buy food products produced locally to reduce shipping distances. Desert dwellers have a history of concern for conserving and using water wisely, which is expanding to a global concern for preserving the natural resources of the whole planet.

Lessons

[Pre Visit Lesson: The Web of Life \(pdf\)](#)

[TCA Visit: Exploring Transformations at the Tempe Center for the Arts \(pdf\)](#)

[Post Visit Lesson: Eco Flags \(pdf\)](#)

Resources

The Web of Life PowerPoint

“Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials”

Symbols in Cloth and Color PowerPoint

Eco Flags PowerPoint

Supplies

Paper and pencils

Markers

Scissors

Recycled cotton cloth (large pieces and 2” torn strips)

Fabric markers

Tapestry needles and embroidery floss

Credits

Laurie Lunquist

Dan Dallins

Sherrie Zeitlin

Architekton

Bill Timmerma

Jerry and Mary Ann DeBusk

Grace Erickson

Kris Swisher

Linda Crain

Rhoda Imhoff

Lena Hubin

Estimated Time

Previsit Lesson = 30-50 minutes

TCA Visit Lesson = Field Trip

Post Visit Lesson = 180-270 minutes

Lesson One

Objectives

1. Students are able to give examples of people accomplishing more as a group than they can as individuals.
2. Students are able to give examples of ways that they or others in their families or communities are “going green.”

Arizona Visual Arts Standard

RELATE: Artworlds: PO 105, 205 & 305: Make connections between art and other curricular areas.

Preparation

Preview *The Web of Life PowerPoint* and look through the *Green Revolution* exhibition preview.

Resources

[The Web of Life PowerPoint](#)

[Green Revolution PowerPoint](#)

OPTIONAL: sample objects that express ideas such as political posters, religious jewelry, school pennants, ribbons for causes and flags.

Activities

Unit Preview: Introduce the theme in life: “We all make decisions based on deeply-held values. For example, many people value ‘green’ practices to help preserve the natural environment.” Mention some current issues related to the natural environment, such as climate change, species extinction and sustainable sources of energy.

Introduce the theme in art: “Across cultures and through time, artists and others have made objects to express and declare their values.” Mention objects like posters that support political candidates, religious jewelry that declare beliefs, school pennants that express loyalty, yellow ribbons that welcome troops back from war and flags that express patriotism, showing examples, as available.

Introduce the key questions in the unit with which students will be working:

1. What materials can be used to construct fabric or decorate with fibers?
2. How do artists use cool colors symbolically?

Introduction: Introduce “going green” values by showing and discussing the Web of Life PowerPoint.

Access Prior Knowledge: Ask students to describe ways they, their families or others in the community are “going green.” Discuss 1) recycling efforts at home, in school and in the community; 2) ways people they know are saving energy, like using compact fluorescent light bulbs, drying clothes on a line instead of in a dryer, using public transportation; 3) generating their own energy by installing solar panels or wind turbines; or 4) growing their own garden or enriching the soil by composting.

Ask students to think of some activities that one person cannot do as easily as a group of people, such as play some games or sports, build a bridge, launch a satellite or make a movie.

Vocabulary

community

recycle

carbon footprint

compost

Extension Activities

Investigate the science curriculum or consult with a science teacher for possible interdisciplinary collaboration.

Assessment Checklist

_____ 1. Students are able to give examples of people accomplishing more as a group than they can as individuals (in discussion during or following presentation of Web of Life PowerPoint).

_____ 2. Students are able to give examples of ways that they or others in their family or community are “going green” (in discussion during or following presentation of Web of Life PowerPoint).

EXPLORING TRANSFORMATION AT THE TCA



Lesson Two

Objective

1. Students are able to explain how an artist's choice of materials can add meaning to his or her art.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

EVALUATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques PO 101: Describe the visual effects created by an artist's use of tools, materials and techniques.

EVALUATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques PO 201: Explain how an artist's use of tools, materials and techniques affect an artwork's meaning, purpose and value.

Preparation

Read and make copies of "Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials" worksheet.

Make arrangements for field trip to the Tempe Center for the Arts (TCA).

Before your visit, talk with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Provide the docent with a copy of "Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials" worksheet in advance of your trip and discuss the extent to which students might complete any or all of the worksheet at the center or whether any or all of the questions or ideas might be addressed during their tour.

Resources

["Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials" worksheet \(pdf\)](#)

Activities

Introduction: Before your visit to the TCA explain that students should be looking for artworks that transform old materials into something new.

Guided Practice: Distribute the "Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials" worksheet to all students, and ask them to answer as many questions as they can during their tour. As possible draw students' attention not only to Lisa Sipe and Samuel Troxell's work (featured on worksheet) but also to Kyle Jordre's recycled paint can installation.

If time and circumstances permit, invite students to participate by weaving recycled plastic bags on the community loom or by calculating their carbon footprints in the in-gallery game.

If writing responses on the worksheet is not practical or possible during the tour, use the worksheet to guide students in focused observation as circumstances permit. For example, you might use questions on the worksheet when students assemble or travel to the TCA or when they assemble for or travel back to school.

Take notes on any new information presented by the docent as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour. If the circumstances of the visit do not allow students

to complete their worksheets, explain that later, in class, you will lead a discussion of discoveries they made about how several artists in the exhibition transformed old materials into something new using the online Green Revolution Preview.

Assessment Checklist

Students are able to explain how an artist's choice of materials can add meaning to his or her art (by completing their "Questor Questions about Transformation: New Meaning from Old Materials" worksheets).

Lesson Three

Objectives

1. Students will be able to use fiber (cord making and applique) techniques.
2. Students will be able to communicate a (“green”) value visually.
3. Students will be able to use cool colors symbolically.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Creative Process: PO 203: Develop plans for his or her own artwork (e.g. sketches, models, and notes).

CREATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques: PO 102: Use materials, tools and techniques appropriately in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques: PO 202: Demonstrate purposeful use of materials, tools and techniques appropriately in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Meanings or Purposes: PO 101: Select and use subject matter and/or symbols in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Meanings or Purposes: PO 201: Explain purposeful use of subject matter, symbols and/or themes in his or her own artwork.

Preparation

Preview *Symbols in Cloth* and *Color and Eco Flags* PowerPoints. Decide whether students will applique their Eco Flags with glue, with needle and thread or with a combination. Sewing requires specific instruction in threading a needle, practice in one or more stitches and in knotting thread.

Resources and Supplies

Symbols in Cloth PowerPoint

Color and Eco Flags PowerPoint

Paper and pencils

Markers

Scissors

Recycled cotton cloth (large pieces and two-inch torn strips)

Fabric markers

Tapestry needles and embroidery floss (OPTIONAL)

Activities

Review: Review the theme in life: “We all make decisions based on deeply-held values. For example, many people value ‘green’ practices to help preserve the earth’s natural environment.” Review practices introduced and discussed in Lesson One: The Web of Life.

Also review the theme in art: “Across cultures and times, artists and others have made artworks and other special objects that express or declare their values.” Explain that students will be making Eco Flags to express their concerns for the natural environment.

Review the unit's two key questions: 1. What materials can be used to construct fabric or decorate with fibers? 2. How do artists use cool colors symbolically? Explain that students will be working with recycled cotton fabric and using cool colors to symbolize nature.

Introduction: Display the first 17 slides of *Symbols in Cloth and Color* PowerPoint to:

- Preview making an Eco flag (slides 1 and 2)
- Show things made with natural fibers rather than with artificial fibers (slides 3-8)
- Introduce several traditional fiber techniques (slides 9-13)
- Lead students in discussing how fiber work has been used to express ideas (slides 14-17)
- Conclude this section of the PowerPoint by explaining that students will be making their own Eco Flags to express their concern for the natural environment.

Definition and Examples: Display slides 18-25 to:

- Show different color symbolism in several cultures (slides 18-20)
- Define cool colors and ask students to list specific things in nature that are blue, green or purple (slides 21-22)
- Explain how cool colors often symbolize nature (slides 23-25)
- Present the four requirements of the Eco Flag assignment.

Reflective Writing: Write the word "ecology" on the board and ask students to write what the word means to them. Remind students of Chief Seattle's words (in Lesson One) about how all things are connected and how we need to work together to preserve the web of life.

Step-By-Step-Instructions: Show *Eco Flag* PowerPoint slides to:

- Re-introduce the Eco Flag assignment (slides 1-4)
- Explain how to make cords from which to fly their Eco Flags (slides 5-7)
- Ask students to make drawings that show what ecology means to them (slide 8)
- Color in shapes in the drawing with markers (slide 9)
- Cut out shapes from drawing to use as patterns to trace before cutting fabric shapes to applique on a plain rectangular cloth background (slide 10)
- OPTIONAL: Practice sewing skills (slides 11-12)
- Applique (by sewing or gluing) shapes of fabric onto background and gluing cord to top edge of flag (slides 12-13)
- Show examples of fabric work that express concern for the natural environment using mostly cool colors made by people who have developed advanced sewing skills (slides 14-15)
- Remind students of the importance of the ideas their Eco Flags express (slide 16).

In-Process Feedback: After students have completed their drawings, ask them to partner with one or two classmates or consult with you seeking suggestions for pieces of cloth to choose and colors to use.

Presentation: Ask each student to write on card a title or slogan for his or her Eco Flag. Display completed Eco Flags. Mix up cards and read them one at a time asking students to suggest which flag the card might refer to and point to evidence, such as choice of fabric, color and subject matter that supports their conclusions.

Vocabulary

fiber (natural and artificial)
wreath
lei
lariat
tapestry

lace
macrame
pieced work
applique
embroidery
badge

symbolize
Buddhist
Tibet
Virgin of Guadalupe
Navajo
turquoise

slogan
ecology
floss
overhand knot

Extension Idea

WRITING: Ask each student to write a persuasive paragraph arguing for the significance of the idea expressed in his or her Eco Flag.

Assessment Guides

_____ 1: Students will be able to use fiber (cord making and applique) techniques.

Exceeds Expectations: The flag has least six cloth pieces carefully and firmly applied (with glue or sewn) onto a flag, which is held by a well-twisted cord.

Meets Expectations: The flag has least five cloth pieces applied (with glue or sewn) onto a flag, which is held by a cord.

Approaches Expectations: The flag has two to four cloth pieces applied (with glue or sewn) onto a flag, which is held by a cord.

Fails to Meet Expectations: One or no cloth pieces are applied on the flag and/or there is no cord.

_____ 2: Students will be able to communicate a (“green”) value visually.

Exceeds Expectations: Both the flag and the written slogan clearly and effectively communicate a “green” value.

Meets Expectations: Both the flag and the written slogan communicate a “green” value.

Approaches Expectations: A “green” value is suggested in some way either by the flag or in the written slogan.

Fails to Meet Expectations: No “green” value is readily apparent in the flag or referred to in the written slogan.

_____ 3: Students will be able to use cool colors symbolically.

Exceeds Expectations: Cool colors appear more than once in the flag and strengthen its “green” message through their reference(s) to the natural environment.

Meets Expectations: Cool colors in the flag relate in some way to the natural environment.

Approaches Expectations: The flag has at least one cool color.

Fails to Meet Expectations: The flag has no cool colors.