

Lesson Plan:
my school community



Artist:
Howardena Pindell

Art Work:
Lehman College Environs
1992, glass tile mosaic

Location:
Lehman College, CUNY
Apex Building, basement level
250 Bedford Park Boulevard West
Bronx

Grades:
2-4 and Special Needs

About the Art:

The artist researched the Lehman photo archives to get a sense of the history of the campus and the Bronx. The mosaic wall was fabricated by a company in Italy according to Pindell's design, which she made from photos of students playing sports, historic buildings in the Bronx, scenes of the campus and the swimming pool. The shimmering light on the glass tiles and the vibrant colors emphasize the vitality of the subject, campus life.

Activity Objective:

Students will be able to draw images of their school community from observation and memory. Students will be able to collage (cut and paste) construction paper to color their drawings. Students will create a mural from their individual pieces. Students will understand the importance of Public Art.

Questions for Discussion:

What do you see? What place is she describing? What is it made from? Does it look like a photograph? How is it different? How many different colors do you see in the water of the pool? In the sky? In the trunk of the tree? Who do you think the artist wanted to see her art? What is Public Art?

Materials:

8.5" x 8.5" paper square for each student
pencils and erasers
white glue
pieces of construction paper in a variety of colors
a big roll of paper (optional)
tape

Procedure:

- Ask the students to think about their favorite activity, place or people from the school community they want to share.
- Tell the students to draw their images on the paper. They should fill the whole paper by including figures and background images.
- When most of them are finished, pass the glue and the pieces of construction paper, and show them how to tear off the paper with their hands, in case they need to get smaller pieces. If wanted they could crumble the paper into little balls. Ask them to remember how the artist used a variety of colors to fill each shape.
- Students start coloring their drawings by pasting little pieces of construction paper in their shapes. Tell them to fill their whole drawing with colored papers, including background areas, so almost no white is shown.
- When finished, get a big piece of paper from the roll. All the students' pieces should fit and form a big square (or rectangle).
- Let the children decide, in order, where they want their piece to be. They should only use a little piece of tape to hold it. Discuss and decide with the group if it looks good, what should be changed and how, and let them vote and decide the final arrangement of the pieces.
- When the class is over, the teacher should be able to glue down all the pieces to the big paper. (Tip: If there's no big paper roll, use your chalkboard as a temporary placement, and then join all the pieces together using masking tape in the back).



School bus made with pieces of crumbled construction paper.

Closure:

Ask a few students to talk about their pieces. Ask them to describe their technique / process. Choose someone to talk about the whole finished piece. Mention that as a community they worked together to show others about their school.

New York City Strands of Art Education:

1. Art making
2. Making connections
3. Community and cultural resources
4. Careers and lifelong learning

National Art Education Learning Standards:

1. Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes
2. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
3. Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the works of others
4. Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures