



LESSON PLAN: COMMUNITY MURALS : READING ART

Topic/Theme:

The Art of Observation: Murals of Inglewood

Class Level:

Middle School / High School

Duration: 45 minutes

Learning Experience

Brief Description of Unit: Based on the work of Amy Herman, she developed a class (and TED talk) which was a class based on the art of perception. She taught people how to look at artwork. She used them as a vehicle to read the visual world around them. This idea is applied to the murals of Inglewood. Four examples are given, along with prompting questions to have students truly analyze the iconography of the murals.

Specific Learning Objectives

- 1. Visual Descriptions** Students learn to discuss visual ideas and learn terms for visual description
- 2. Process** Students learn to recognize different materials and techniques used in mural making
- 3. Content** Students learn to compare and contrast objects that are similar and different
- 4. Application** Students learn to apply visual learning to the outside world

Inglewood Artworks:

- *Parks Make Life Better*, Wayne Healy, David Botello + Michelle Glass Darby Art Action Youth
- *Inglewood Stories*, Michael Massenburg
- *The Many Faces of Inglewood*, Karen Koblitz
- *The History of Transportation*, Helen Lundeberg

Podcast: Rosa Lowinger: http://inglewoodpublicart.org/History_of_Transportation.html

The History of Transportation PDF:

http://inglewoodpublicart.org/pdf/About_The_History_of_Transportation.pdf

Podcast: Wayne Healy + David Botello: http://inglewoodpublicart.org/Parks_Make_Life_Better.html

Podcast: Karen Koblitz: http://inglewoodpublicart.org/Many_Faces_of_Inglewood.html

Podcast: Michael Massenburg: http://inglewoodpublicart.org/Inglewood_Stories.html

Amy Herman: <http://www.artfulperception.com>



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Brief Description

Teaching and Learning Sequence:

Show the students murals, and let them analyze the iconography in each. New key words:
Iconography: the visual images and symbols used in a work of art or the study or interpretation of these.

Juxtaposition: the fact of two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect.

Classroom Applications:

- The teacher does not have to be the expert in murals
- The teacher allows the students to “read” the images; the students tell the class what they see
- Students drive the visual exploration; the teacher guides discussion by asking questions

Open Ended Questions for Teachers:

- What’s going on in this picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

Specific Questions for Teachers:

Parks Make Life Better, Wayne Healey , David Botello, Michelle Glass with Darby Art Action Youth:

- What imagery do you see in the mural?
- How do the arching lines change the flow of the mural? Do they help or hinder?
- What actions do you see? Are they appropriate for a park?
- How is the the title relevant to the mural? Do you agree?
- How is the mural made specific for Inglewood? What imagery in the mural is ubiquitous to all parks, and what imagery is specific to Inglewood?
- What images are 3-dimensionally rendered, and what images are 2-dimensionally rendered? How does that change how we view the mural?
- Do you think this is specific to the year it was made, 2014? How do we know it is placed in that year? Do you think you’ll be able to look back in 20 years and notice how time has changed?
- How would you describe the colors? Do the colors enhance the imagery?
- Looking at the mural in relationship to where it is located in the park, is this an appropriate use of design in a park? What would you have done differently?



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Inglewood Stories, Michael Massenburg:

- How is Inglewood Stories different from Parks Make Life Better? What are the similarities and differences?
- What imagery do you see here?
- Does the text help or hinder the image?
- What do you see in the image that relates to the mural's placement in a library?
- How can you describe the colors in the background? Does this help or hinder the image?
- What could the hands symbolize? Or the postcard? Or the license plate? Or the boy listening to headphones? Do you think these have meanings?
- Why might some of the figures look unfinished?

The Many Faces of Inglewood, Karen Koblitz:

- How is this mural different than the other two? Is the iconography different due to the material used? How is the material different, and how do the tiles help or hinder the design?
- Looking at the style of the painting, can you assess something about the age of the students?
- Given that the tiles were made by children, what are on their minds? How is this different from adult-created murals?
- Do the colors enhance the mural? How does the border help? Does this remind you of a patchwork quilt? What is the symbolism behind that?
- What is the benefit behind having a child-created mural in a public place?

The History of Transportation, Helen Lundeberg:

- Describe the history of transportation as depicted in this mural. Are we past this today?
- How is this mural different from the other three? What do we see in this mural? Analyze the iconography.
- How can you pinpoint the era it was created without knowing the exact date? How do you know the divisions between the eras? What do the clothes, vehicles, and baggage say about particular people and particular eras?
- Is anyone familiar with the Works Progress Administration or the New Deal? Given that this was funded for this, can you think of why this might be an appropriate mural for the time?
- The mural was originally situated along Florence Boulevard, one of Southern California's most traveled commuter arteries. How was this an appropriate space for the mural?
- This mural was made by mortar and crushed rock. How does this help or hinder the style of the mural?

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-Overall questions:

- Looking at these murals in their spaces, and analyzing the iconography, how else can you



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Overall questions:

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Looking at these murals in their spaces, and analyzing the iconography, how else can you use these skills? Can you use them to analyze a building set in a neighborhood? A painting in a museum? What about other non-art related analyses, such as reading an X-ray? Examining a crime scene?

- Do details make a difference? How can you incorporate looking at details into your life? What about type-0s? Does the color of the walls, the size of the room affect your mood or actions?