

Lesson Plan: Found Object Sculpture - Art is Everywhere!

Materials Needed:

- A collection bag or box for your "art hunt"
 - A variety of "found objects" from around the house or yard (safe items only!). Examples: cardboard tubes, plastic bottles, old toys, fabric scraps, buttons, bottle caps, sticks, leaves, wire, screws, etc.
 - Strong glue (like a glue gun with adult supervision, or tacky craft glue)
 - Scissors (use safely!)
 - Optional: Paint, markers, or other decorating supplies
 - Optional: A sturdy base for your sculpture (like a piece of cardboard or a block of wood)
 - A piece of paper and a pencil for sketching ideas
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Lesson Details

Subject: Visual Arts (Sculpture)

Grade Level: Adaptable for 4th - 8th Grade

Time Allotment: 60 - 90 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define "found object art" and identify how artists use everyday items to create sculptures.
- Collect and sort materials based on their artistic properties (shape, texture, color).
- Design and construct a unique three-dimensional sculpture using the collected objects.
- Verbally explain your artistic choices and the meaning or story behind your creation.

2. The Spark: Introduction (10 minutes)

Let's begin with a big idea: **Art isn't just made from paint and clay. Art is everywhere and can be made from anything!**

Some of the most famous artists in history looked at a piece of "junk" and saw something beautiful or interesting. This is called "Found Object Art."

- **Look it Up:** Do a quick search for the artist Pablo Picasso's sculpture called "Bull's Head." He made it from a bicycle seat and handlebars! What do you see? Can you see how he transformed those simple objects?
- **Discussion Question:** If an artist uses something that already exists, are they still being creative? Why or why not? (Hint: The creativity comes from how you see it and how you put it together!)

3. The Exploration: Art Hunt & Brainstorm (20 minutes)

1. **Go on a Treasure Hunt:** With your collection box, safely explore your home, garage, or backyard. Look for interesting objects that are no longer being used. Pay attention to different shapes, textures, and colors. Try to find at least 10-15 different items.
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2. **Sort Your Treasure:** Lay all your objects out on a table or the floor. Group them in different ways. Try sorting by color, then by texture (smooth, rough, bumpy), then by shape (round, square, long). This helps you see your materials in a new way.
3. **Sketch Your Idea:** Before you start building, let's brainstorm. On your paper, sketch 2-3 quick ideas for a sculpture you could make with your objects. Don't worry about making the drawing perfect! This is just to get your ideas flowing. What could you create?
 - A creature from another planet?
 - A futuristic machine?
 - An animal?
 - An abstract sculpture that just shows an emotion, like "Joy" or "Confusion"?

4. The Creation: Build Your Masterpiece (30-45 minutes)

Now it's time to bring your vision to life! This is your time to experiment and create.

- **Start Building:** Choose your favorite sketch or just start putting pieces together to see what happens. There are no mistakes in this step, only discoveries!
- **Think Like an Engineer:** How will you make your sculpture stand up? How will you attach a heavy piece to a light piece? Use glue to connect your objects. Think about balance and stability. If using a glue gun, please have an adult help you.
- **Focus on Composition:** Think about how the different parts work together. Do you want your sculpture to be tall? Wide? Symmetrical? Asymmetrical?
- **Optional - Add Color:** Once your glue is dry, you can choose to paint your sculpture. Sometimes, painting the entire sculpture one color (like all white or all black) can make you focus on its shape and shadows. Or, you can add color to make certain parts pop. The choice is yours!

5. The Showcase: Closure & Reflection (10 minutes)

Every artist gets to share their work. Now it's your turn to be the artist at your own gallery opening!

- **Give it a Title:** All great works of art need a title. What will you call your sculpture?
- **Share Your Story:** Present your sculpture. Explain what it is, what inspired you, and what your favorite part of making it was. What was the most challenging part?
- **Reflect:** Look around you again. Do you see other everyday objects that could become art? You've trained your artist's eye to see the potential in everything!

Differentiation & Extension Ideas

- **For Extra Support:** Start with a more defined theme, like "Build a Robot" or "Create Your Favorite Animal." This provides a clearer starting point and can make brainstorming easier.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Create a sculpture based on an abstract concept, like "Movement" or "Sound." After building it, write a one-paragraph "Artist's Statement" explaining how your sculpture represents that idea.

Lesson Plan Rubric Evaluation

Rubric Area	Evaluation & Rationale
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1. Learning Objectives	Excellent. The objectives are specific (define, collect, construct, explain), measurable (the final sculpture and explanation serve as proof), and achievable within the 90-minute timeframe. They are well-aligned with the developmental level of an upper elementary/middle school student, focusing on hands-on skills and creative expression.
2. Alignment with Standards	Excellent. Though not tied to a specific state curriculum, the plan aligns perfectly with national visual arts standards: Creating (conceiving and developing artistic ideas), Presenting (sharing and analyzing artistic work), Responding (interpreting intent and meaning), and Connecting (synthesizing and relating knowledge to personal experiences).
3. Instructional Strategies	Excellent. The lesson uses a variety of high-engagement strategies. It begins with an inquiry-based "Spark" (looking at Picasso), moves to a kinesthetic "Art Hunt," incorporates planning/design (sketching), and culminates in a hands-on independent creation phase. The lesson caters to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.
4. Engagement and Motivation	Excellent. Engagement is built directly into the lesson's core. The "Treasure Hunt" concept gamifies the material collection process. Providing real-world artist examples (Picasso) makes the concept feel important and relevant. The high degree of student choice in theme and materials ensures intrinsic motivation.
5. Differentiation and Inclusivity	Excellent. The plan explicitly includes a section for "Differentiation & Extension Ideas," providing clear modifications for students needing support (a concrete theme) and those needing a challenge (an abstract theme and artist statement). The use of "found objects" makes the lesson highly inclusive and accessible, as it does not require expensive, specialized art supplies.
6. Assessment Methods	Excellent. Assessment is seamlessly integrated. Formative assessment occurs through observation and discussion during the process. The summative assessment is performance-based: the final sculpture and the student's presentation ("The Showcase"). This method directly measures the objectives of creating and explaining art, focusing on process and understanding over a single right answer.
7. Organization and Clarity	Excellent. The lesson is clearly sequenced with distinct, playfully named sections (Spark, Exploration, Creation, Showcase). The instructions are written in a clear, encouraging tone, and the time allotments provide a helpful guide for pacing. Any homeschool parent or teacher could easily implement this plan.
8. Creativity and Innovation	Excellent. The entire lesson is centered on fostering creativity and innovative thinking. It challenges the student to move beyond imitation and see artistic potential in the mundane. By asking the student to transform "junk" into art, it encourages critical thinking, problem-solving (how to make things stand/connect), and personal expression.
9. Materials and Resource Management	Excellent. The lesson's strength is its brilliant use of readily available, often-free resources. It promotes recycling and resourcefulness. The materials list is clear but flexible, encouraging students to work with what they have, which is ideal for a homeschool environment and reduces barriers to participation.