

Peter Max: Pop Art, Color, Symbolic Figures and Objects, Statue of Liberty

How do artists use elements of art to create symbolism?
What kind of effects can color create?

LESSON OVERVIEW/OBJECTIVES

Students will work with various art supplies to create symbolic figures and objects. Students will explore the work of Peter Max and the pop art culture. Also, students will explore color, the use of color, and its application in conveying meaning and feeling in art particularly that of pop culture. In the spirit of Peter Max, students will create a version of the Statue of Liberty and create their own symbols for freedom.

KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO VISUAL ARTS CORE CURRICULUM:

Based on Utah State Visual Arts Core Curriculum Requirements (3rd Grade)

Standard 1 (Making): The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.

Objective 1: Explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes.

- a. Practice using skills for beginning drawings.
- c. Paint with complementary color schemes.
- f. Establish more natural size relationships among objects in drawings.

Objective 2: Use a broad range of art materials in supporting the visual arts needs at school.

- b. Use new art materials and newly learned techniques and processes to celebrate important days and historical events.

Objective 3: Handle art materials in a safe and responsible manner.

- a. Ventilate the room to avoid inhaling fumes from art materials.
- b. Dispose and/or recycle waste art materials properly.
- c. Clean and put back to order art making areas after projects.
- d. Respect other students' artworks as well as one's own.

Standard 2 (Perceiving) : The student will analyze, reflect on, and apply the structures of art.

Objective 1: Analyze and reflect on works of art by their elements and principles

- a. Determine how artists create dominance in their work; e.g., size, repetition, and contrast.
- b. Examine significant works of art and point out how the artists have created illusion or feeling of depth.

Objective 2: Create works of art using the elements and principles.

- a. Identify dominant elements
- e. Create a work of art that uses contrast to create a focal point. Use that to convey the most important idea or part of the work.

Standard 3 (Expressing):The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.

Objective 1: Explore possible content and purposes in significant works of art

- a. Explain possible meanings or interpretations of some significant works of art.

Objective 2: Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for their own artworks.

- a. Group significant works of art according to theme or subject matter
- b. Judge which works of art most clearly communicate through the use of symbols.
- c. Create symbols in art that express individual or group interests.
- d. Create a work of art that uses a similar subject matter, symbol, idea, and/or meaning found in a significant work of art.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Understand that the elements of art are the building blocks for creating works of art.
- Recognize qualities of symbolism and be able to create symbolic art.
- Experiment with various media and tools to communicate ideas and emotions.
- Learn about the artist Peter Max and his work.
- Learn about composition, symbols, color, and the pop art culture.
- Utilize the topic of the Statue of Liberty to learn about symbolism and history.

SUPPLIES

- Images and art samples of the work of Peter Max
- Images of the Statue of Liberty and/or parts of Statue of Liberty such as the head, torch etc.
- Black and White images/cartoon images of Statue of Liberty or parts of the Statue
- Color Wheel Chart - to remain in classroom or accessible for students
- Map of the United States - to remain in classroom or accessible for students
- Art pencils H& B, markers
- Large drawing paper (16" x 20" or 11" x 17" or 8.5" x 11"). One large sheet and several smaller sheets of paper per student
- Acrylic paints
- Different sizes and styles of paint brushes (bristle, foam, sponge, etc.)
- Transparencies to be used for copying Statue of Liberty images
- Scissors
- Glue

VOCABULARY

Pop Art - Pop Art was a style of modern art in the 1960's that used the imagery of mass-media, mass-production and mass-culture as a critical or ironic comment on traditional fine art values.

Symbolism - is the practice or art of using an object or a word to represent an abstract idea. An action, person, place, word, or object can all have a symbolic meaning.

Collage - is a technique of an art production, primarily used in the [visual arts](#), where the artwork is made from an [assemblage](#) of different forms, thus creating a new whole. A collage may sometimes include [magazine and newspaper clippings](#), [ribbons](#), [paint](#), bits of colored or handmade papers, portions of other artwork or texts, [photographs](#) and other [found objects](#), glued to a piece of paper or canvas.

Color theory - In the visual arts, color theory is a body of practical guidance to color mixing and the visual effects of a specific color combination.

Primary Colors: Red, yellow and blue

In traditional color theory (used in paint and pigments), primary colors are the 3 pigment colors that can not be mixed or formed by any combination of other colors. All other colors are derived from these 3 hues.

Secondary Colors: Green, orange and purple

These are the colors formed by mixing the primary colors.

Tertiary Colors: Yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green & yellow-green

These are the colors formed by mixing a primary and a secondary color. That's why the hue is a two word name, such as blue-green, red-violet, and yellow-orange.

Color Harmony - Harmony can be defined as a pleasing arrangement of parts, whether it be music, poetry, color, or even an ice cream sundae.

Analogous colors - are any three colors which are side by side on a 12 part color wheel, such as yellow-green, yellow, and yellow-orange. Usually one of the three colors predominates.

Complementary colors - are any two colors which are directly opposite each other, such as red and green and red-purple and yellow-green. In the illustration above, there are several variations of yellow-green in the leaves and several variations of red-purple in the orchid. These opposing colors create maximum contrast and maximum stability.

Color from Nature - Nature provides a perfect departure point for color harmony. As an example, red yellow and green create a harmonious design, regardless of whether this combination fits into a technical formula for color harmony.

Statue of Liberty - The Statue of Liberty is a colossal neoclassical sculpture on Liberty Island in New York Harbor in New York City, in the United States.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Introduction

Before beginning the lesson, show images of both the Statue of Liberty and Peter Max's paintings of the Statue of Liberty. Give them a few minutes to respond to the images. Encourage comparisons and contrasting statements as well as descriptions of what they see.

Introduce your students to concepts of symbolism, modern art and pop art. These ideas may be new to your students but you have the visual art pieces to help explain the concepts. Explain that artists can use objects (real or imaginary) words and letters to represent an abstract idea such as the Statue of Liberty. Its how artists represent these objects or words that showcase the style of art and elements of art that were used in the making of the work. Tell students that you will be discussing Peter Max, the Statue of Liberty and symbols of freedom. They will be creating their own version of the Statue of Liberty in the style of Peter Max using a variety of color palettes.

About the Artist

Peter Max (born Peter Max Finkelstein, October 19, 1937) is a German-born American illustrator and graphic artist, known for the use of psychedelic shapes and color palettes as well as spectra in his work. At first, works in this style appeared on posters and were seen on the walls of college dorms across America. Max then became fascinated with new printing techniques that allowed for four-color reproduction on product merchandise. Following his success with a line of art clocks for General Electric, Max's art was licensed by 72 corporations. In September 1969, Max appeared on the cover of Life magazine, The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson and The Ed Sullivan Show. One of the most famous of all living artist's, Peter Max is also a pop culture icon. His bold colors, uplifting images and an uncommon artistic diversity have touched almost every phase of American culture and has inspired many generations. Peter Max has painted for six U.S. Presidents and his art is on display in Presidential Libraries and in U.S. Embassies. Max has painted our Lady Liberty annually since America's Bicentennial and in 2000 a collage of his Liberties adorned over 145 million Verizon phone books.

About the Statue of Liberty

"The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World" was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the United States and is recognized as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy. The Statue of Liberty was dedicated on October 28, 1886. It was designated as a National Monument in 1924. Employees of the National Park Service have been caring for the colossal copper statue since 1933.

Create: Your own Statue of Liberty, symbol of freedom, and color palette in the style of Peter Max

1. Review the history and significance of the Statue of Liberty. Ask each student to think about what freedom means to them and think about a symbol they could make to reflect freedom.
2. Look at color ways that Peter Max uses in his art and the Statue of Liberty paintings in particular. Review color ideas with students such as warm and cool colors, complementary, analogous and natural colors. Remind students about color and how important their choices are as colors make us feel certain ways when we see them.
3. Give students transparencies to work with that either have the Statue of Liberty face, complete image or torch copied onto it. If time permits, you could offer instruction and have students create their own Lady Liberty. In the style of Peter Max, have students add color accents and highlights to Lady Liberty. You can use acrylic paints, sharpies or oil pastels for this part of the lesson.
4. On a larger piece of art paper, have students paint the background. They can use warm or cool colors, analogous or complementary colors, they can create patterns etc.

5. When paint is dry, affix the transparency of the Statue of Liberty to the painted background with clear drying glue.
6. Return to the idea of symbols that could represent freedom. Have each student add their freedom symbol to their artwork. Discuss composition so that students can determine the best placement for their symbol. They can add their symbol as many times as desired to complete their artwork.
7. Have students discuss their creative process for this project. Also have them talk about what freedom means to them and why inspired the symbols they created.
8. Make sure work is titled and signed. Mount work on black background for possible inclusion in a Veterans Day celebration.

Supplemental Materials

<http://www.libertyfoundation.org>

<http://www.petermax.com>

VISUALS

Sample Peter Max Images

