

UNIT OVERVIEW

Unit Title	Composition, Context, Representation, and Reality
Unit Length	7 school days / lessons
Grade Levels/Subjects	Grades 7-12, Visual Art and ELA
Unit Overview	<p>Students begin by exploring how composition conveys meaning and is imbued with the point of view of the composer. All composition, in some way, interprets reality, and all composition has some reality it fails to capture. Students explore both their own photos as well as <i>1619 Project</i> photography and text through the lens of point of view and reality.</p> <p>This opening exploration leads into learning about untold stories in our local community, where a Commemorate committee has worked to uncover records on, remember, and honor enslaved folx who lived, labored, and built the town.</p> <p>Students will then revisit the idea of reality and point of view in art to study and analyze the forthcoming sculpture “Yesterday” by Vinnie Bagwell, which is due to be installed on the grounds of our elementary school, discussing how art in public spaces has the power to share untold narratives.</p> <p>Finally, students will engage in challenging truth-telling (either personal, local, historical, and/or global), creating intentionally either through visual or literary media.</p>
Objectives & Outcomes	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Explore the relationship between composition, point of view, and reality. → Revisit local historical records to honor enslaved folx who built our town.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Consider how public art can make reparations.→ Engage in personal truth-telling via creative, intentional making (either art or words). <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Students will understand that a single composition, including historic artifacts (documents, photographs, etc.), does not tell the whole story. Composition is intentionally designed to impact perspective, which impacts the narratives told.→ Students will understand that composers are driven by their perspectives to create in ways that put their truth into the world. An act of composition empowers people to add their voices to the world and expand the narrative.
Standards	<p>National Core Arts Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Responding Anchor Standard #8 - Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.→ Connecting Anchor Standard #10 - Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.→ Connecting Anchor Standard #11 - Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding. <p>Next Generation ELA Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Reading Anchor Standard #6 - Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text, drawing on a wide range of global and diverse texts.→ Reading Anchor Standard #7 - Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including across multiple texts.→ Reading Anchor Standard #9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. <p>Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Diversity Standard #8 - Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.→ Diversity Standard #9 - Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Diversity Standard #10 - Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified. → Justice Standard #13 - Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today. → Justice Standard #14 - Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics. <p>New York State Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Inclusive Curriculum - [Teachers will] Play a role in helping schools to understand and align curriculum to the variety of histories, languages and experiences that reflect the diversity of the State population. → Inclusive Curriculum - [Teachers will] Incorporate cooperative learning activities to encourage understanding of diverse perspectives.
<p>Facilitation Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Images from <i>The 1619 Project</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Women and children in a cotton field in the 1860s with accompanying worksheet [.pdf] ◆ Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge by Jonathan Bachman, with accompanying worksheet [.pdf] → Model poem from <i>The 1619 Project</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ “February 12, 1793” by Reginald Dwayne Betts, an erasure of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 → Resources to explore local history: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ “Our Town and Slavery” by Cathy Sears and Sarah Cox in Irvington Historical Society’s <i>The Roost</i>, vol. 20, p 1-7 ◆ Irvington Public Library presentation of Sears and Cox’s “Our Town and Slavery” → Resources to explore artistic responses to/commemoration of local history: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ “Commemorating Enslaved Africans in Irvington through Public Art” by the Irvington Historical Society ◆ Video: Vinnie Bagwell’s artist statement ◆ “Design Unveiled for Enslavement Memorial” by Jackie Lupo for <i>Rivertowns Enterprise</i> ◆ Images: Vinnie Bagwell art

Performance Task	<p>Students will engage in personally meaningful truth-telling by composing one or both of the following creative pieces:</p> <p>For ELA: Students create a found/blackout poem, using Reginald Dwayne Betts’ erasure of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 as a model.</p> <p>For Visual Art: Students create a collage or otherwise alter an original image to communicate a new perspective on the realities captured/not captured by the image.</p> <p>In both projects, students will be encouraged to challenge themselves to reach and communicate a truth that feels brave to share.</p>
Assessment/Evaluation	<p>Formative assessments include class discussions and short, low-stakes, informal writing and drawing.</p> <p>Summative assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Students will use a single point rubric to self-assess in the culminating maker project.→ Teachers will use a single point rubric to provide feedback on student reflection.

UNIT PACING/DAILY LESSONS

Pacing	Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson	Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)	Lesson / Activities	Lesson Materials
<i>Week 1</i>				
Day 1	<p><u>Assign prior to day 1:</u> Students bring a photo they've taken to class. Let students know in advance that the photo will be shared with the class community.</p> <p><u>Digital option:</u> Students look through phone/camera roll for a photo and post it to a shared digital space (ex: Google Slides).</p> <p><u>Analog option:</u> Collect student</p>	<p><u>Enduring Understandings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Compositions (images) deliberately convey a message. → Choices are made in the delivery of that message. <p><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What is real? → Are compositions (photographs) reality? → What is the role of the composer in presenting a new "reality" to their audience? 	<p><u>FIRST RE-VISION: RE-VIEWING PERSONAL IMAGES</u></p> <p>Step 1: Students use the following writing prompt to analyze their original chosen photos.</p> <p>Student Writing Prompt: You took this photo for a reason; it's your piece of reality. You presented the subject of your photo in a way that shows your view of the subject and your view of reality, which may be really different from how someone else who was also there at the time viewed this same moment/event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What was <i>not</i> captured in this image? What else was happening that may not be evident to viewers looking at your photo? → How was the image (i.e., the subject you captured) altered in your photo? Did you use an app, crop, choose a certain angle, arrange the composition to only include certain things, etc.? → What choices did you make in presenting this reality? How did you construct this reality? Is it "real"? 	<p><u>Digital option, part 1:</u> Shared digital space (e.g. Google Slide deck) for posting student photo/images. Assign each student a slide.</p> <p><u>Analog option, part 1:</u> Centralized location in the physical classroom space to post students' print images.</p> <p><u>Digital option, part 2:</u> Photo editing or design software (e.g. Canva or PhotoShop), and electronic devices for students to work on editing their images.</p> <p><u>Analog option, part 2:</u> Art supplies to alter students' photo copies:</p>

	<p>photos in advance and make a second copy of each student’s photo. Students will need one original and a second copy they can alter.</p>		<p>Step 2: Using digital means or a second copy with art supplies, students intentionally alter their photos to change the story told.</p> <p>In the shared digital or classroom space, students post the original photo next to the altered photo.</p> <p>Step 3: Gallery Walk: Students examine one another’s photos and reflect on how alterations and choices change the presentation of photo subjects. Ask students to share/consider the difference between the photographer’s point of view and “reality” as well as realities that might not be obvious from the way the photo was captured.</p>	<p>(e.g. scissors, markers, glue, colored pencils, collage paper bits, construction paper, etc.)</p>
<p>Day 2</p>	<p>Worksheet for the photo <i>Women and children in a cotton field in the 1860s</i> [.pdf]</p> <p>Worksheet for the photo <i>Women and children in a cotton field in the 1860s</i> [.docx]</p> <p>Worksheet for the photo <i>Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge</i>.</p>	<p>(Continued from Day 1)</p>	<p><u>SECOND RE-VISION: RE-VIEWING HISTORICAL IMAGES</u></p> <p>Display or distribute copies of two photos taken from <i>The 1619 Project</i>: (1) <i>Women and children in a cotton field in the 1860s</i> and (2) Jonathan Bachman’s <i>Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge</i>. Consider each individually.</p> <p>Have students write, draw, or sketchnote individually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Describe what you see about the subjects captured in each photo. → Which deliberate choices were made by the composer of each photograph to convey these messages? → Is there point-of-view in the composition? → Which realities might not be immediately obvious 	<p>Copies of the two photos to display or for students to view as a class. These can be displayed on slides and/or as print copies.</p> <p>Resources for helping students name feelings, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoffman Institute List of Feelings and Body Sensations → 100 List of Feeling Words → Pyschpage List of Feeling Words

	<p>photographed by Jonathan Bachman [.pdf]</p> <p>Worksheet for the photo <i>Taking a Stand in Baton Rouge</i>, photographed by Jonathan Bachman [.docx]</p>		<p>in the photo? What else might have been happening that may not be evident to viewers looking at the photo?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What message is conveyed in each photograph? → Social-emotional check-in: How are you feeling about these photos? <p>Worksheets for these questions are provided in the resources column at left.</p>	<p>→ List of Feeling Words for Kids</p>
<p>Days 3-4</p>	<p>“Our Town and Slavery” by Cathy Sears and Sarah Cox in Irvington Historical Society’s <i>The Roost</i>, vol. 20, p 1-7</p> <p>Irvington Public Library presentation of Sears and Cox’s “Our Town and Slavery” ~ start video at 19:08</p>	<p>Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → There are untold stories and constructed realities in our community. → Engaging with historical artifacts and artwork can create empathy through community. 	<p><u>THIRD RE-VISION: RE-VIEWING LOCAL HISTORY</u></p> <p>Conduct a class shared reading of Sears and Cox’s “Our Town and Slavery.” <i>[Teachers may also wish to show selected excerpts from the Irvington Public Library presentation of “Our Town and Slavery.” At 19:08, the researchers briefly describe the research they conducted and their methodology.]</i></p> <p>Have students write, draw, or sketchnote individually and share responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → What do you know about Hannah, Dick, Teem, David, and David from the documents? → What do you want to know about them? What are you wondering? → Like the photographs we’ve examined (days 1-2), are these documents a full representation of reality? What was not captured? → What was the role of New York State in the slave 	<p>Copies of “Our Town and Slavery” for each student</p>

			trade? → Social-emotional check-in: How are you <i>feeling</i> about this information about your community?	
Day 5	<p>For teacher background information: “Commemorating Enslaved Africans in Irvington through Public Art” by the Irvington Historical Society</p> <p>Video: Vinnie Bagwell’s artist statement</p> <p><i>Rivertowns Enterprise</i> article: “Design Unveiled for Enslavement Memorial”</p> <p>Images: Vinnie Bagwell art</p>	<p><u>Enduring Understandings</u></p> <p>→ Composition (art) in public spaces has the power to create a narrative.</p> <p>→ There are multiple “realities” or perspectives in any representation.</p> <p><u>Essential Questions:</u></p> <p>→ What is the composer’s responsibility in telling truth or presenting reality?</p> <p>→ How does power factor into which narratives are told?</p>	<p>Step 1: Share with students a brief mini-lesson (summary) about work done in the Irvington community history- how a community initiative revealed untold human stories, mobilized to publicly recognize them, and actively sought an artist whose mission is to tell these untold stories.</p> <p>Step 2: Show students Vinnie Bagwell’s artist statement, the design for her sculpture “Yesterday” from the <i>Rivertowns Enterprise</i>, and images in the “Vinnie Bagwell art” document.</p> <p>Step 3: Ask students to discuss how the statue addresses point-of-view, reality, and untold/unrepresented truths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How does Vinnie Bagwell’s art function because it is in a public space? → How does it tell a specific story? → What story/reality/perspective does it tell/share? → Which choices has the artist made to convey this reality? → How is the narrative geared toward the place/audience where the composition would live (elementary school)? 	<p>Display screen and speakers to show video with sound</p> <p>Copies of <i>Rivertowns Enterprise</i> article for each student (or display for class)</p>

Pacing	Focus text(s) / resource(s) for today's lesson	Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)	Lesson / Activities	Lesson Materials
<i>Week 2</i>				
Day 6	Reginald Dwayne Betts on the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 Optional: Original text of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793	(continued from Day 5)	<p><u>FOURTH RE-VISION: RE-VIEWING HISTORIC WORDS</u></p> <p>Discuss and analyze Betts' work in the tradition of found poem/collage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Which words remain and why? How does that create meaning? → What is the impact of the remaining words (compared to the original text)? → What's the effect of blacking out words visually? What meaning lives in the action/technique (choice) to black out? How does this technique create the expression? (How would it be different if it was red/blue? How is it different from highlighting?) → How do words and visuals interact here? 	Copies of Reginald Dwayne Betts's poem for every student (or the poem can be projected for the class)
Day 7	Images students brought in on Day 1	(continued from Day 5)	<p><u>FIFTH RE-VISION: RE-VIEWING YOUR OWN TRUTH</u></p> <p>Discuss with students:</p> <p>Mississippi author Kiese Laymon wrote, "I wanted to write a lie." What does it mean to write the truth? What does it mean to write a lie? Why might someone want to</p>	Student self-assessment for final project(s) [.pdf] Student self-assessment for final project(s) [.docx] Teacher assessment for final project(s) [.pdf]

			<p>write a lie?</p> <p>English/Language Arts Found poems repurpose public text for a new purpose, helping the audience to re-view words and ideas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify a truth you want to lean into. (You might write about something important to you or, alternately, about what you're thinking/feeling after our shared learning about Cox and Sears' work.)2. Identify a public document connected to that truth.3. Construct a found poem by either printing the document and intentionally choosing which words to strike (as Betts did) or by using and reordering only words found in the original text.4. How does your work alter, re-view, or repurpose the meaning of the original document? <p>Art Revisit your constructed image (photo) and your first telling of the story (writing prompt) from day 1. Make a collage or write a narrative that tells more of the story than your photo might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ How did this moment actually happen?→ Which parts of the story that might not be apparent in the photo can you represent?→ Whose point of view can you add? (Is there someone in the photo, or even someone who <i>isn't</i> represented in the photo, who would have seen this moment a different way?) <p>Social-emotional Check-in:</p>	<p>Teacher assessment for final project(s) [.docx]</p>
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Composition, Context, Representation, and Reality

Unit by the Radical ReVision team, part of the 2022 cohort of *The 1619 Project* Education Network

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ What feels vulnerable to share? (What might feel like a deep reach requiring bravery to share?)→ What's at stake when you share another point of view? | |
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