TALKING PICTURES

Suggested Grade levels/subject: 9-12/ Language Arts/English, Social Studies, US History, Art

Time required: Two 40 minute periods + homework

Essential Questions: How can art tell a story? 
Who decides whose story gets preserved in history?

Objectives
- Students will analyze and interpret artwork with peers.
- Students will determine how stories get preserved through history.
- Students will interpret past and present through creative expression.
- Students will analyze literature integrating knowledge and ideas

Materials
- Images from Everything That Rises, printed out (preferably)
- Sticky notes
- Short story, Everything That Rises Must Converge by Flannery O’Connor (1965) 
(http://thomasaquinas.edu/pdfs/alumni/everything-that-rises.pdf)

Vocabulary
- Collage
- Underground Railroad
- Riots
- Civil Unrest
- Foreground
- Middle Ground
- Background
- Point of view
- Perspective
- Composition

Instructions
Day 1
1. Divide students into two groups. Each group should view all the art (online or using printed out copies tacked to a bulletin board) and ask them to sort them into groups based on whatever makes sense to them. (There are many ways to group the works: urban/suburban; color; perspective; interior/exterior, etc.) Each group has to justify their sorting and how they came to that decision as a group.
2. Hand all students sticky notes and have them write a word or phrase to describe each work. They should put the note near each picture, and take time to view what others wrote. *What do they notice about the language used for the pictures? Why do certain colors or scenes evoke certain moods or words to describe those scenes?* Explore with students how the depiction of a site influences the language used to describe it.

3. Explain to students that something historically significant happened at each of these sites. Some are Underground Railroad sites, and some are scenes of civil unrest/rioting. Keeping the sticky notes associated with each photo, have them re-sort the images based on these two categories and again, justify their reasons for doing so.

4. Provide context for each work per the chart below, either telling students aloud or labeling each work with the title, provenance, and category of historical significance. Ask students *Now that you know the history/location for each artwork, does that change the words associated with each scene? How? Why or why not?*

5. Have students hypothesize why some of the Underground Railroad sites are better preserved than others, and why some of the sites of the civil unrest are better kept-up than other sites. *Who decides what history gets preserved? How does what we see influence our perception of what’s inside/what happened/the history of a place?*

**Wrap-up (Day 1)**

Explain to students that they will continue exploring the artworks tomorrow, and assign students the Flannery O’Connor short story *Everything That Rises Must Converge* for homework.

(http://thomasaquinas.edu/pdfs/alumni/everything-that-rises.pdf)

**Day 2**

1. Discuss and analyze the story with students. Note when the story was written (1965) and ask students *How does this connect to the artwork we viewed?* Note that *although the connections to civil unrest in the 1960s fits with the chronological context of the story, how might the Underground Railroad sites connect to the story?*

2. Ask students *Why do you think the artist, Casey Ruble, decided to title this collection of work *Everything That Rises*? What does it say about the way society values historical places? Again, who decides what history gets preserved and whose story gets told?*

3. Have students pick one of the artworks to write a story about. They can begin in class and continue for homework. If you want the stories to have a more historical angle, have them research the stories of civil unrest and the Underground Railroad in New Jersey (see “Background information for the Educator” below, for some starting points). The story could also be written in a “pass the pen” format (group writing), with small groups of students adding paragraphs to the story.

**Wrap-up (Day 2)**

Discuss with students how they see the connection between language, history and art. Have them write a one paragraph reflection on this connection after having completed these activities.
Extension Activities

- Have students “hang” the artwork as if it were a gallery with 4 walls. How would they group the art? How would they label it (if at all)? Have them write a brief description about their choices and thoughts along to accompany their visual layout.
- Students could read a novel about people harboring escaped slaves such as Free Enterprise by Michelle Cliff or fiction such as Underground by Jean Ferris as a balance to the Flannery O’Connor story.

Background Information for the Educator

Casey Ruble is a New Jersey artist and resident who, after researching sites of civil unrest and the Underground Railroad in her home state, photographed the sites as they are today. She used these photographs to create paper collages that rather than become faithful reproductions, convey the mood and emotion of the place. Some of the titles of her work come from newspaper accounts of the event that took place at the site. For more see www.caseyruble.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Historical Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Boonton)</td>
<td>Boonton</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone here is aware of what has happened but they also want to forget as quickly as possible.</td>
<td>Jersey City</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Burlington)</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Timbuctoo)</td>
<td>Timbuctoo</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened?</td>
<td>Paterson</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Jersey City)</td>
<td>Jersey City</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The governor answered “no” when asked about any Communist instigation of the riots.</td>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music. Even laughter. And always the gunfire.</td>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Cherry Hill)</td>
<td>Cherry Hill</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Jersey City)</td>
<td>Jersey City</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“They said they’d rather die here than in Vietnam.”</td>
<td>Plainfield</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Lawnside)</td>
<td>Lawnside</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Swedesboro)</td>
<td>Swedesboro</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled (Allentown)</td>
<td>Allentown</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wind was out of the west at 20 m.p.h.</td>
<td>Asbury Park</td>
<td>Civil Unrest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Resources on sites/topics/events


Standards Alignment

Common Core English/Language Arts

Literacy RL9-10/11-12.1-3 Key Ideas and Details: Cite textual evidence to support analysis; determine themes and analyze their development in text; analyze the impact of the author’s choices.

Literacy RL9-10/11-12. 4-6 Craft and structure: Determine meaning of words and phrases, as they relate to tone; analyze author’s choices concerning structure of text; analyze point of view reflected in literature.

Literacy RL9-10/11-12. 7&9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Analyze representation of a subject in two artistic mediums; analyze how an author draws on/transforms source material.

Literacy W9-10/11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real/imagined experiences

Literacy SL9-10/11-12 1-3 Comprehension and Collaboration: Participate in discussions – come prepared; work with peers; pose and respond to questions; respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives

Literacy SL9-10/11-12 4-6 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Present information and evidence clearly, concisely, logically; make strategic use of digital media; adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks

Social Studies

6.1 U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.
6.1.4.D.11- Determine how local and state communities have changed over time, and explain the reasons for changes.
6.1.12.D.13.a - Determine the impetus for the Civil Rights Movement, and explain why national governmental actions were needed to ensure civil rights for African Americans.

Visual and Performing Arts
1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies: All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

   1.4.8.A.1- Generate observational and emotional responses to diverse culturally and historically specific works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art
   1.4.8.A.5 -Interpret symbolism and metaphors embedded in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
   1.4.8.A.7 - Analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of representative works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
   1.4.12.A.2- Speculate on the artist’s intent, using discipline-specific arts terminology and citing embedded clues to substantiate the hypothesis.
   1.4.12.A.3- Develop informed personal responses to an assortment of artworks across the four arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and visual art), using historical significance, craftsmanship, cultural context, and originality as criteria for assigning value to the works.

For more information about programs for educators and students please contact Cara Bramson, Director of Education and Community Engagement, at cbramson@artcenternj.org or 908.273.9121 x 213.

The exhibition, Casey Ruble: Everything That Rises, and related programs were made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this exhibition, website and exhibition catalog do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.

Created in partnership with Museum Partners Consulting, LLC.
www.museumpartnersconsulting.com
info@museumpartnersconsulting.com
New Jersey Council for the Humanities & Visual Arts Center of New Jersey

TEACHER SURVEY FORM
Talking Pictures

Complete this survey and receive a free Membership to the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey at the Individual Level!

Please return the completed survey to: Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Attention: Cara Bramson, 68 Elm Street, Summit NJ 08901 or cbramson@artcenternj.org.

1. Overall, I found the quality of this lesson plan to be:
   - [ ] Excellent
   - [ ] Very Good
   - [ ] Average
   - [ ] Disappointing
   - [ ] Unsatisfactory

2. Did the lesson plan align with your curriculum?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   How or why?

3. Please tell us what impact the lesson had on your students. (Check all that apply)
   - [ ] Learned something new about the topic
   - [ ] Engaged in a meaningful discussion
   - [ ] Inspired to learn more about the topic
   - [ ] Reflected on the topic from a new perspective
   - [ ] Explored an issue of importance to their community
   - [ ] Explored how art can impact other disciplines
   - [ ] Expressed a desire to visit a gallery/museum
   - [ ] Other: __________________________

4. Do you plan to share ideas from this lesson plan with other teachers?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

5. Did you know about the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey prior to using this lesson plan?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

6. Do you plan to visit the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey within the next year?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

7. Was NJCH acknowledged for its support of this lesson plan?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. Additional Comments/Suggestions:

   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

continued on next page
9. How would you describe yourself?
   Age: □ Adult (19-39) □ Adult (40-64) □ Senior (65+)

   Ethnicity: □ African American □ Asian □ Caucasian □ Latin/Hispanic □ Other

   Gender: □ Female □ Male □ Other

10. I would like more information from □ Visual Arts Center of New Jersey □ New Jersey Council for the Humanities

    Name (First and Last) _______________________________________________________

    Home Address _____________________________________________________________

    City ____________________________ State _________ Zip Code ________________
Casey Ruble: Everything That Rises

Exhibition Artwork
Casey Ruble

*Everyone here is aware of what has happened but they also want to forget as quickly as possible.*, 2014

Paper collage

8 x 6 inches
Casey Ruble

Music. Even laughter. And always the gunfire., 2015
Paper collage
8 1/4 x 6 inches
Casey Ruble
**Untitled (Burlington), 2014**
Paper collage
8 13/16 x 6 5/8 inches
Casey Ruble
*Untitled (Jersey City)*, 2015
Paper collage
8 x 6 inches
Casey Ruble
What happened?, 2015
Paper collage
7 x 7 inches
Casey Ruble
*Untitled (Swedesboro)*, 2015
Paper collage
8 x 6 inches
Casey Ruble
Untitled (Jersey City), 2014
Paper collage
6 x 8 inches
Casey Ruble

“They said they’d rather die here than in Vietnam.”, 2015

Paper collage

6 1/2 x 8 inches
Casey Ruble
Untitled (Allentown), 2014
Paper collage
6 x 8 inches
Casey Ruble
*The wind was out of the west at 20 m.p.h.*, 2014
Paper collage
6 x 8 inches
Casey Ruble
*Untitled (Boonton)*, 2014
Paper collage
6 x 8 inches
The governor answered "no" when asked about any Communist instigation of the riots. 2014
Casey Ruble

Untitled (Lawnside), 2015

Paper collage
6 x 8 inches