Unit 3: Mixed Media Photography

Content Area: **Fine Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **1-2 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Unit 3: Mixed Media Photography

This unit will introduce students to the concept of mixed media in photography, blending traditional photographic techniques with other art forms such as painting, drawing, collage, and digital manipulation. Students will explore how combining different media can transform a photographic image and allow for deeper creative expression. Through hands-on projects, students will develop a personal artistic approach, experimenting with ways to enhance or alter their photographs with other artistic elements.

Revision Date: July 2025 - Samantha Berk

Standards

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-WPvAtENnEgi0EStZXo0uiFYv1Nu4/edit

1.5.12acc.Cr1a	Individually and collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.
1.5.12acc.Cr1b	Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.
1.5.12acc.Cr2a	Through experimentation, practice and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.
1.5.12acc.Cr2b	Demonstrate awareness of ethical implications of making and distributing creative work.
1.5.12acc.Cr2c	Redesign an object, system, place, or design in response to contemporary issues.
1.5.12acc.Cr3a	Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, re-engage, revise, and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision.
1.5.12acc.Pr4a	Analyze, select and critique personal artwork for a collection or portfolio presentation.
1.5.12acc.Pr5a	Evaluate, select and apply methods or processes appropriate to display artwork in a specific place.
1.5.12acc.Pr6a	Make, explain and justify connections between artists or artwork and social, cultural and political history.
1.5.12acc.Re7a	Recognize and describe personal aesthetic and empathetic responses to the natural world and constructed environments.
1.5.12acc.Re7b	Evaluate the effectiveness of visual artworks to influence ideas, feelings, and behaviors of specific audiences.
1.5.12acc.Re8a	Identify types of contextual information useful in the process of constructing

	interpretations of an artwork or collection of works.
1.5.12acc.Re9a	Determine the relevance of criteria used by others to evaluate a work of art or collection of works.
1.5.12acc.Cn10a	Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research and experimentation to explore other subjects through artmaking.
1.5.12acc.Cn11a	Compare uses of art in a variety of societal, cultural and historical contexts and make connections to uses of art in contemporary and local contexts.
1.5.12acc.Cn11b	Compare uses of art in a variety of societal, cultural and historical contexts and make connections to global issues, including climate change.

Essential Questions

- How can the combination of photography with other media enhance the storytelling and emotional impact of an image?
- What are the technical and conceptual challenges when working with mixed media in photography?
- How do different materials and techniques influence the viewer's interpretation of a photograph?
- In what ways can mixed media photography push the boundaries of traditional photographic practices?

Essential Understandings

- Photography can be enhanced and transformed by combining it with other art forms, expanding creative possibilities.
- Mixed media allows photographers to communicate complex ideas, narratives, and emotions in innovative ways.
- The integration of various materials and techniques in photography can challenge traditional boundaries and offer new forms of artistic expression.
- Experimenting with mixed media encourages risk-taking, problem-solving, and creative decision-making in the artistic process.

Students Will Know

- How to integrate traditional photography with other media such as painting, drawing, and digital manipulation.
- Techniques for physically altering prints (e.g., collage, painting on photographs) and digitally enhancing images with mixed media elements.

- How to balance and merge various art forms to create cohesive mixed media works.
- The historical and contemporary use of mixed media in photography.
- How to critique mixed media work, considering both the photographic elements and other artistic additions.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Fine Arts students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Evidence of progression may be demonstrated in divergent ways through the Artistic Process of Creating, Presenting/Producing, Connecting, and Responding.

Tasks will include:

- Preview/Answer essential questions
- Meaningfully and appropriately participate in class critique and discussions
- Complete class projects including weekly critique assignments
- Complete self-assessment rubrics
- Participate in assessment discussions with teacher
- Complete final exam

Learning Plan

1. Preview Essential Questions (Class Discussion + Journal Prompt):
   Begin the unit by presenting essential questions to spark curiosity and personal connection:
   - How can photography be transformed through the use of other materials?
   - What does it mean to blend media in a meaningful way?
     Suggested activity: Students write personal reflections and predictions in their sketchbooks or journals before sharing in small groups.
2. Introduce Mixed Media Photography (Mini Lecture + Slide Presentation):
   Define mixed media photography and explore its potential for storytelling and creative expression. Discuss how it merges photography with drawing, painting, collage, and more. Introduce key terms like overlay, transfer, layering, texture, and alteration.
3. Artist Study: Contemporary and Historical Examples (Visual Analysis):
   Present a range of artists who use mixed media with photography—e.g.,

Suggested Artists to explore:

- Robert Rauschenberg (photographic transfer & collage)
- Maggie Taylor (digital and photographic layering)
- David Hockney (photo collages)
- Lorna Simpson (text and photography)
- Alma Haser (photographic sculpture)
  Suggested Activity: Analyze how each artist uses materials to add meaning or abstraction.

4. Class Brainstorm: What Other Materials Can Be Used? (Interactive Anchor Chart):
   Collaboratively generate a list of traditional and unconventional materials that can be combined with photography (e.g., thread, paint, fabric, newspaper, found objects, charcoal, ink, acetate, vellum, text, wax, etc.). Post the chart as an ongoing reference.

5. Material Exploration Stations (Hands-On Practice):
   Rotate through stations where students experiment with integrating photographs and other media. Examples:
   - Watercolor wash over black and white photo
   - Image transfers using gel medium
   - Embroidery or stitching into photo prints
   - Layering vellum or acetate for transparency effects
   - Drawing or inking over photographs
     Encourage students to take notes on techniques they enjoy.

6. Mini Mixed Media Challenges (Short Prompts):
   Assign 2–3 quick "challenge prompts" such as:
   - Alter a portrait to reflect an emotion using only line and color.
   - Create a surreal scene by combining photo fragments and found textures.
   - Merge a photograph with a text overlay that changes the meaning.

7. Photography Collection Walk (Independent Shooting Assignment):
   Students go on a photo walk (in school or at home) to capture images with future alteration in mind. Encourage experimentation with angles, texture, and lighting, keeping composition in mind. These photos will be used in later projects.

8. Sketch and Plan Final Mixed Media Composition (Creative Planning):
   Students choose one or more photos from their collection and sketch 2–3 different ways to manipulate or layer them with other media. Include annotations about materials, mood, and message.

9. Create Final Mixed Media Piece (Studio Work Time):
   Students develop a finalized mixed media photographic artwork using the materials and strategies explored earlier. Encourage originality, experimentation, and craftsmanship. Multiple class periods can

be devoted to this phase.

10. Gallery Walk + Reflection (Presentation and Critique):
    Host a gallery-style viewing of all final works. Students give and receive peer feedback using a structured critique protocol (e.g., “Describe, Analyze, Interpret, Evaluate”). End with a written reflection: What mixed media techniques helped you enhance or transform your photo the most? How does combining media change the viewer's experience?

Materials

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Digital Cameras, Sketchbook, Various Pencils, Sharpies, Markers, Various Papers, Various Erasers, Mirrors, Blending Sticks, Charcoal, Graphite, Sharpeners, Colored Pencils, Oil Pastel, Chalk Pastels, YouTube Videos, Value Scales, magazines, glue, scissors, Watercolor, Watercolor paper, paint brush, ink, printing materials, chromebooks, ipads, Paint, Color Wheels, Drawing Pen, Rulers

Websites:

- The Art Story – Mixed Media Art
  https://www.theartstory.org/definition/mixed-media-art/
  (Clear overview and history of mixed media art.)

- Creative Bloq – How to Combine Photography with Other Art Forms
  https://www.creativebloq.com/inspiration/mixed-media-photography
  (Practical ideas and inspiring mixed media photography examples.)

- The J Paul Getty Museum – Image Transfer Techniques
  https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/image-transfer-techniques-for-artists/
  (Step-by-step image transfer methods.)

- Tate Modern – Robert Rauschenberg
  https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/robert-rauschenberg-1877
  (Biography and collage techniques.)

- Maggie Taylor Official Site
  https://www.maggietaylor.com/
  (Examples of digital photographic layering.)

- Creativebug – Stitching on Photographs Tutorial
  https://www.creativebug.com/classseries/videos/stitching-on-photographs
  (Embroidery and stitching techniques on photos.)

- Art is Fun – Mixed Media Materials List & Ideas

https://www.art-is-fun.com/mixed-media-materials
(Comprehensive list of mixed media materials.)

- Digital Photography School – How to Take Photos for Mixed Media Art
  https://digital-photography-school.com/how-to-take-photos-for-mixed-media-art/
  (Tips for capturing photos suited to mixed media manipulation.)

- National Art Education Association – Art Critique Guide
  https://www.arteducators.org/research/standards-positions
  (Structured critique protocol for peer feedback.)

- The Getty Museum – How to Critique Artwork
  https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/build_lessons/art_critique.html
  (Guidelines for conducting critiques and reflections.)

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

Suggested Strategies for Modifications:

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

Fine Arts Accommodations & Modifications

- Auditory re-phrasing to assist students.
- Examples of successful projects to model.
- Group critique of work.
- Hands on activities to support unit objectives.
- Individualized instruction where needed.
- Mini lessons in addition to large group instruction.
- Use of document camera and projector.
- Use of handout as guideline for working procedure.
- Use of Visual Aids such as photographs, and presentation tools.
- Videos to enhance instruction.
- Working in small groups.
- Written outline of procedure as guideline.