Unit 7: Developing Artistic Voice

Content Area: **Fine Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **7-9 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Unit 7: Developing Artistic Voice

This unit focuses on helping students develop their own unique photographic style, or "artistic voice." Through experimentation, reflection, and guided exploration, students will learn to express their personal perspective and ideas through photography. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the relationship between technique, subject matter, and individual expression in creating meaningful and cohesive photographic work.

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

- What does it mean to have a unique artistic voice in photography?
- How do personal experiences, ideas, and perspectives influence the way we capture images?
- How can we blend technique and creativity to express ourselves visually in photography?
- What are the challenges and benefits of developing a distinct photographic style?

Essential Understandings

- Students will understand that developing an artistic voice is a personal journey that involves exploring different techniques, subjects, and themes.
- Students will recognize that a strong artistic voice is shaped by their experiences, values, and interests.
- Students will learn to make intentional decisions in their photography to create cohesive, expressive work that reflects their unique perspective.

Students Will Know

- How to identify and develop their own artistic style in photography.
- The importance of consistency in visual themes, techniques, and subject matter to create a cohesive portfolio.
- How to use various photographic techniques (composition, lighting, color, editing) to enhance and reflect their personal artistic voice.
- Strategies for critiquing their own work and making deliberate decisions to strengthen their photographic expression.

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

- Discuss the concept of artistic voice and how photographers express their unique perspectives.
- Examine the work of famous photographers who are known for their distinct styles and discuss what makes their work recognizable.
- Students explore different themes and subject matter that resonate with them (e.g., identity, nature, urban life, emotions)
- Encourage experimentation with various techniques (lighting, composition, angles, editing) to begin discovering how these choices affect their work.
- Students will choose a theme or concept that is personally meaningful to them and create a series of images based on that theme
- Emphasize the process of refining and evolving their ideas through multiple shoots, incorporating feedback, and self-reflection.
- Peer review sessions where students share their work and receive constructive feedback.
- Focus on how each student's artistic voice is coming through in their work and ways to strengthen it.
- Reflection on the process of developing an artistic voice, challenges faced, and areas for growth.
- Students will revisit their work, making intentional decisions to refine their portfolio and strengthen

their unique voice.

- Explore post-processing techniques to further emphasize their artistic style.
- Students will create a final portfolio or photo series that reflects their developed artistic voice.
- Accompany the work with an artist statement explaining their creative process, choices, and how they developed their unique photographic perspective.

Suggested Lesson Plans:

- Discovering Your Influences: Who Inspires You?
  Students will research and present on 2–3 photographers or artists they admire, analyzing style, themes, and techniques. They will reflect on how these influences can shape their own voice and begin a visual inspiration board.
- Visual Storytelling: What Do You Want to Say?
  Students will explore personal themes and messages they care about (identity, environment, culture, emotion, etc.). They will brainstorm concepts and create a mood board to guide a themed photo series that communicates a clear narrative or idea.
- Style Development: Experimentation with Technique and Aesthetic
  Students will experiment with various photography techniques (e.g., lighting, angles, editing, color palettes, composition) to find what resonates with their personal style. They will complete a "mini-series" using consistent stylistic choices.
- Artist Statements: Writing About Your Vision
  Students will learn how to write an effective artist statement that explains their intent, style, and subject matter. They will draft and revise a statement to accompany their developing portfolio.
- Capstone Project: Expressing Your Artistic Voice
  Students will create a cohesive photo series (6–10 images) that reflects their unique voice and vision as a photographer. They will present their work in a class critique, supported by their artist statement and process reflections.

- Class discussion and active participation required.
- Students will utilize library resources to find text example of magazine/newspaper chronicling topic in photo essay form for class discussion.

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.

Handouts, writing samples, 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:

- CreativeLive – Finding Your Artistic Voice in Photography
  https://www.creativelive.com/blog/finding-your-photographic-voice/
  (Insights and practical tips on discovering and refining a unique photographic style and voice.)

- The New York Institute of Photography – Developing Your Style
  https://www.nyip.edu/photo-articles/photography-tips/how-to-develop-your-photography-style
  (Comprehensive guide to exploring techniques and subject matter to build a personal photographic style.)

- Photofocus – How to Develop Your Personal Photography Style
  https://photofocus.com/how-to-develop-your-photography-style/
  (Article with exercises to experiment with composition, lighting, and editing that help develop your unique voice.)

- Aperture Foundation – Writing Artist Statements
  https://aperture.org/learn/artist-statement/
  (Helpful guide and examples for writing clear, meaningful artist statements that articulate creative vision.)

- Medium – Visual Storytelling: Crafting Your Personal Narrative Through Photography
  https://medium.com/@visualstorytelling/visual-storytelling-how-to-create-a-photo-series-that-tells-a-story-85d029c99339
  (Tips on conceptualizing and creating photo series that express personal themes and narratives.)

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

Suggested Strategies for Modifications:

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

Fine Arts Accommodations & Modifications

- Group work.
- Hands on activities to support unit objectives.
- Individualized instruction.
- Mini lessons in addition to large group instruction.
- Multi-media presentations.
- Outline of tasks to accomplish posted throughout the room.
- Peer critique of photographic work.

- Sticker chart so students may monitor individual success.
- Use of rubric as self-evaluation tool.
- Videos to enhance instruction where needed.
- Visual Aids and writing samples.