

Character Metaphor

Advanced Art, 12th Grade

Big Idea: You are your best inspiration.

Students Will:

- Use metaphor to create a personal artwork.
- Create thumbnails and preparatory sketches before creating a final artwork.
- Dedicate time to creating a meaningful artwork about themselves.
- Develop proficiency in a medium of choice.
- Interpret classmate's metaphors and offer feedback to improve them.

Opening

Students will be presented my personal art history via slideshow. Without me explaining what they are, they will be asked to analyze the pieces, with some assistance from me if needed to figure out what they are. The conversation will be steered towards the obvious fact that a green muppet is in all of these, and that he represents me. I will ask the students why I might use a muppet to represent myself (funny, goofy, kind, caring, passionate, etc.) From there, I will explain that I frequently use characters in my artwork that represent different parts of me, sorta like a metaphor for me. I will further explain that artists have been using metaphoric characters for centuries, and you probably have seen some before without realizing it.

From there I will show them a photo of the Statue of Liberty, and ask them to figure out what traits she has that represent liberty. (Stepping on chain, torch to light the darkness, etc.)

Afterwards, I will show them the artist Trenton Doyle Hancock, who also frequently uses character metaphors he uses to represent himself.

The first piece shows one of Hancock's *Mounds*, which represents his creative thought process. He often organizes things in large piles, and sees his own mind as one large mound that oozes creativity.

As for the nightmare creature on the right, that is The *Bringback*, a character that represents his nostalgia. The Bringback is a time travelling thief that steals objects from the past and *brings them back* to the future for his own enjoyment.

Next I will explain their assignment, to make a character metaphor of their own! I will go step by step on how to create their character:

- To start, brainstorm a metaphor that works for you. Try writing a “I am a _____” statement, and explain it.
- Create at least 3 sketches of different designs for the character. More often than not your first design is not the best one you come up with.
- Create a final artwork using your best design.

I will keep a slide on the screen with all of the directions for their reference, and they are free to work on their characters!

Expand:

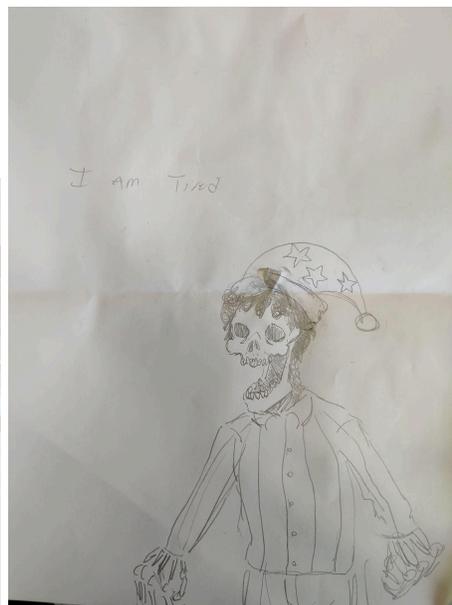
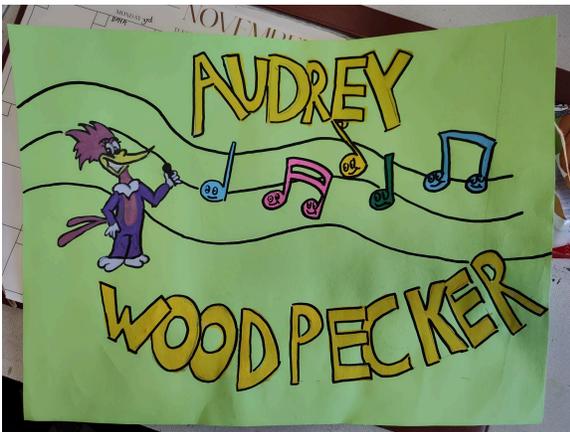
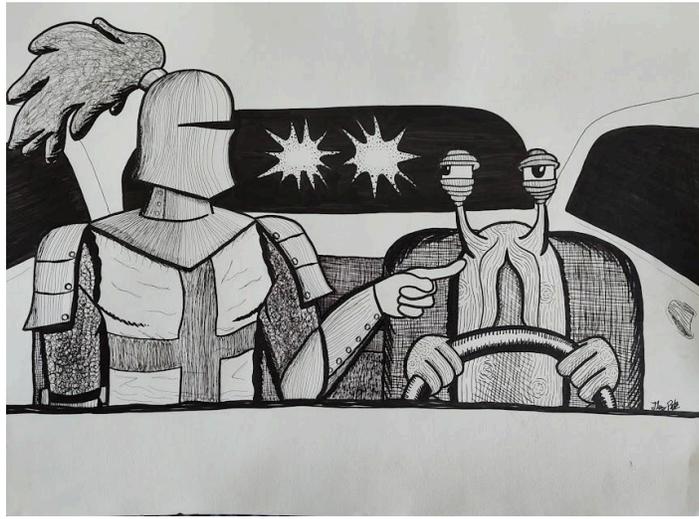
After creating characters, they can be placed in context to further explain what they might mean. For example, a character about talking may be reading a long speech, or a character about putting on appearances may be on a date. A similar creative process can be used to create the setting as creating the character. Explain that by putting the character into context, the artwork becomes infinitely more interesting.

After creating the artwork, hold a critique where students try to interpret their peer's artwork! Some of them may have the context of their friend's work; challenge them to talk about works they don't already know about. Ask how successful they think the artwork is, and if anyone has feedback on making it more successful.

After a successful critique, tell students that once they are out of school, there won't always be prompts to inspire your art practice. When completely stumped on inspiration, you can always look inward at yourself to create compelling artwork.

Materials: 18x24 Paper or canvas, mixed media, sketchbook.

Exemplars



Rubric:

4pts: Student has thorough sketches and plans for their final piece. 4 or more ideas are present, with a final more refined drawing of their character in full value. Student has 2 or more sketches of scenarios to place their character to gain more meaning.	3pts: Student has 4 ideas for their character, with a refined illustration of their character.	2pts: Student has 3 ideas for their character with an illustration of their character, or 4 ideas without the final rendering of their character.	1pt: Student has under 3 ideas for their character.
4pts: Student chose a deep personal metaphor that they represented in a creative manner. The use of materials expertly shows what they are trying to convey and heighten the feeling of the artwork.	3pts: Student rendered their metaphor in a creative manner. The use of materials compliments the ideas and feelings they wish to convey.	2pts: Student rendered their metaphor, with a surface level representation. Neatness of materials could be improved.	1pt: Student represents an idea literally, rather than metaphorically. Neatness and intention of materials can be improved.
4pts: Student shows excellent work ethic, dedicating time and effort into creating the best idea possible. Idea has been refined with care to create an artwork that represents a part of themselves.	3pts: Student shows good work ethic, dedicating time to refining their idea and creating an artwork that is important to them	2pts: Student dedicates time to creating the artwork, mostly remaining on task with the assignment.	1pt: Student is repeatedly distracted from the project or unmotivated without asking for assistance.
4pts: Student demonstrates a greater understanding over the medium they chose for the project. The textures, layering of materials, and line/brushwork emphasize the meaning behind the artwork, conveying emotion that highlights the metaphor.	3pts: Student demonstrates proficiency in the medium they chose for the project. The project is intentional with the line/brush work.	2pts: Student is developing proficiency in the medium they chose for the project. Most of the material use appears intentional and finished.	1pt: Student shows a novice understanding of the medium they chose for their project. The artwork appears unfinished or unintentionally messy.
4pts: Student makes 2 or more attempts at interpreting metaphors and 2 or more pieces of well articulated and kind constructive criticism.	3pts: Student makes 2 or more attempts at interpreting metaphors and 2 or more pieces of feedback	2pts: Student makes at least 1 attempt at interpreting a classmate's metaphor and 1 piece of feedback.	1pt: Student made 1 comment during the critique

