



The Art of Tony Ortega, Contemporary Chicano Artist

THE ALMA PROJECT
A Cultural Curriculum Infusion Model

Denver Public Schools

In partnership with Metropolitan State College of Denver





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**The Art of Tony Ortega,
Contemporary Chicano Artist**

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Grades 3–5

Implementation Time: 2–3 Weeks

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Unit Concepts

Environmental and Cultural Influences

Artistic Styles

Art Media and Techniques

Standards Addressed by This Unit

Visual Arts

- Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of creativity and communication. (VA 1)
- Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts. (VA2)
- Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, technologies, and processes. (VA 3)
- Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (VA 4)
- Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meaning of works of art. (VA 5)

Reading and Writing

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW 1)
- Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Introduction

Tony Ortega, a United States citizen of Mexican descent, was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and grew up in Northern New Mexico and Colorado. He was raised primarily by his grandmother and aunt and attributes some of his early interest in art to helping his grandmother with her quilt making. Early memories of time spent with his family in New Mexico—baking bread in a clay oven, fishing or swimming in the Pecos River, helping on the farm, visiting a historic church in Chimayo—profoundly influence the themes in his art work and the design of his compositions. pre-Columbian art and Mexican folk art also inform his work, as do the Impressionists and the American artist, Edward Hopper. While Tony Ortega has a signature style, his work continues to evolve. He characterizes his work as socially and politically conscious and he travels to Mexico and other parts of the Southwest, observing and questioning what it means to be Hispanic in today’s world.

Tony Ortega considers himself to be a “community artist.” He was schooled in the public schools of Denver, Colorado and gives back by working with children on public art projects and in after-school programs. Children are an ever present theme in his work and he has a simple, colorful



style that young people respond to. Tony Ortega exhibits in a variety of venues in the Southwest, has work in the collection of The Denver Art Museum, and is a recipient of the Colorado Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts.

Implementation Guidelines

This unit is designed to be used in visual arts classes for third, fourth, or fifth grade. The unit strengthens existing grade level visual arts curriculum in the five standards areas of art appreciation—aesthetic perception; techniques and materials; and creative expression. As students learn about and reflect on the inspiration for his work, it helps them understand what is important and unique about their own work. While the unit is designed for an art teacher, a classroom teacher could choose one or more of the activities and integrate it with the academic curriculum. For example, creating a mural could be part of a social studies unit on community, or creating a print or drawing based on a memory would be valuable in a reading and/or writing unit on memoir. Any lesson in this unit can stand alone, but it is recommended that students watch the introductory video on Tony Ortega before undertaking the hands-on activities.

Instructional Materials and Resources

Reproductions of Tony Ortega's work

Who Am I? by George Rivera (author) and Tony Ortega (artist)

Living Treasures of Colorado video, episode 22 featuring Tony Ortega episode 22.

Original print by Tony Ortega

Mexicolor; a book on art, architecture, and crafts in Mexico

Elements of Design video

Principles of Design

Discovering Drawing (teacher edition) by Ted Rose

Basic Printmaking by Bernard Toale

The Automat reproduction by Edward Hopper

Waterlilies reproduction by Claude Monet

Powerpoint presentation of Tony Ortega working with students to create a school mural (on CD)

Lesson Abstracts

Lesson 1: Meet Tony Ortega5

Learn about Tony Ortega, the artist, as he explains his methods and techniques in a video interview. Identify the media he uses and his artistic style.

Lesson 2: People in Places9

Create an original oil or chalk pastel drawing in the style of Tony Ortega. Explore how to draw figures and color them effectively using oil or chalk pastel blending techniques.

Lesson 3: *Who Am I?* 13

Learn about Tony Ortega, the man, based on this autobiographical work written by George Rivera and illustrated by Tony Ortega. Create your own artistic memoir, based on personal memories, in the form of an accordion book.

Lesson 4: Talking about Style 19

Compare and contrast three different styles of artwork. Learn how artists adopt techniques from other artists but adapt these to develop a style of their own.

Lesson 5: Monoprints25

Learn the technique of monoprinting. Create a monoprint of your own, demonstrating a knowledge of foreground and background.

Lesson 6: School Mural29

Learn about the artistic and political importance of murals. Create a collaborative mural that reflects what is unique about your school and community.



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)
- Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (VA4)

Benchmarks

- Students will select relevant material for reading, writing, and speaking purposes.
- Students will identify works of art as belonging to various cultures, times, and places.

Objectives

- Students will be introduced to artist Tony Ortega and learn how his background has influenced his artwork.
- Students will learn about the research methods, materials, and techniques used by artist Ortega.
- Students will expand their vocabulary by learning specific art terms.

Specifics

Tony Ortega is a contemporary Chicano artist who was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico and currently lives in Denver, Colorado. He was raised by women, primarily his mother, with help from his grandmother and great aunt. A recurring theme in his work is people in their environments and he likes to do series on particular regions such as the barrio in Northern Denver or rural farming communities in New Mexico. He researches his subject before beginning work by looking at travel photos and images in magazines. He considers himself a colorist and ‘pushes’ the colors to reflect what he is thinking or feeling. He rarely does faces on his people, as his work is more about groupings of people or families than individuals. The media he uses most often are pastels, oil or chalk pastels, acrylic paint, and printmaking.

What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Summarizing and synthesizing information

Paired reading and writing

Whole group discussion

Graphic organizer—webbing

Preteaching

Teacher introduces key vocabulary terms and does a quick review on webbing.



Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Set up the video *Living Treasures of Colorado*. Create pairs or partners for students combining low readers with stronger readers. Hang chart or butcher paper for web. Make copies of the worksheet on the following page.

Activities

Write the questions from the worksheet on the board. Explain that students will watch a video interview with the artist, Tony Ortega. At the end of the video students will be answering the questions on the board about his work to help them identify his style and techniques. After students have completed their worksheets, have a whole discussion and create a web showing Tony Ortega's themes, research methods, and materials. In the lesson to follow, students will be using some of these materials and techniques for their own project.

Vocabulary

Style – how an artist expresses him/herself (realistically, abstractly or in between)

Techniques – ways of using art materials. (blending oil or chalk pastels)

Medium – kind of art material used (paint, clay, etc.)

Theme/Subject Matter - idea for work (landscape, figures, etc.)

Resources and Materials

Posters of Tony Ortega's work from exhibitions

Video on Tony Ortega entitled *Living Treasures of Colorado*, episode 22

Chart paper

Markers



Video Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____ Score _____

After watching the video, discuss the questions on the board with your partner, and each of you complete the worksheet. It is okay if your answers are the same. At the whole group meeting, share what you learned about Tony Ortega to complete the web.

1. What does he do, before beginning work, to get ideas for his project?

2. Why doesn't he include features on people's faces?

3. What kinds of art materials (media) does he use?

4. What subject matter or themes do you see in Tony Ortega's work?



Lesson Assessment

Each student should have completed the worksheet on Tony Ortega, demonstrating what they learned about his working methods.

Assessment Rubric

Rubric Points	Description
4	Student answered all four questions with correct answers learned from the video.
3	Student answered three questions correctly.
2	Student answered two questions correctly
1	Student answered only one question correctly or answered no questions.



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of creativity and communication. (VA1)
- Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts. (VA2)
- Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, technologies, and processes. (VA3)

Benchmarks

- Students will select a visual image, theme, or idea for their work that will create and communicate meaning.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of art.
- Students will use different materials, tools, techniques, and processes in creating their own work.

Objectives

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of Ortega's central themes and art techniques through the creation of an original oil or chalk pastel drawing.
- Students will expand their vocabulary by learning and reviewing specific art terms.

Specifics

A theme everpresent in Tony Ortega's work is that of ordinary people going about their lives: children playing basketball or riding their bicycles; a family gathered around a new baby; or women talking at a lunch counter. Ortega describes himself as a community artist and he portrays the Latino world with respect and honesty. Often working in oil or chalk pastels, Ortega's work demonstrates what he refers to as physical blending and optical blending. Students have a chance to create their own oil or chalk pastel drawings and explore these blending techniques.

What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Modeling

Outlining

Blending

Preteaching

At a whole group meeting, do a mini-lesson demonstrating how to outline basic shapes lightly before coloring them in (creating a contour drawing). Show students how to draw a person by making ovals (a sausage person), which helps students be make people with bodies in different positions. Also, show the technique of blending light colors over dark and blending colors completely (e.g., blending red and yellow to make orange with no traces of red or yellow left) and blending them with strokes that still



show the original colors in addition to the newly blended one. The former technique is called physical blending, the latter, optical blending. These techniques are demonstrated in the video on Tony Ortega. Have construction paper and oil or chalk pastels ready to be passed out.

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

The teacher should hang posters of Tony Ortega’s work on the board. Hang them with putty, not pins.

Activities

To the Teacher

After mini-lessons in the pre-teaching section where you demonstrated outlining, drawing figures, and oil or chalk pastel techniques, lead a whole group discussion where students share their individual ideas for their drawing. Facilitate this process with questions such as:

“What in your community is of special interest to you?”

“Are there things in your neighborhood that represent the special people that live there?”

“What type of foliage (trees, flowers, greenery) line the streets or yards in your community?”

The students’ ideas should come from their daily lives and community, such as playing in the schoolyard, the ice cream vendor with his cart, taking care of a younger sibling, etc.

To the Student

Lightly sketch your idea with contour lines so that you can see the basic shapes and design of your picture. If you need to, use ovals to create your ‘sausage person’ so that you can show the body in different positions. When you color in with oil or chalk pastels, blend from dark to light, sometimes blending completely (physical blending), sometimes not (optical blending). The latter technique shows more lines and textures.

Vocabulary

Techniques – ways to use art materials

Oil or chalk pastels – drawing tool that is a cross between chalk and crayons

Contour drawing – drawing only the edge or outline of something

Blending – physical (completely mixed) or optical (lines giving the appearance of mixing colors)

Resources and Materials

Posters and exhibition catalogues of Tony Ortega’s work (provided)

Oil or chalk pastels - box of 16 or 24 colors shared by two students

Dark colored construction paper, 12” x 18”



Lesson Assessment

Students should have completed an oil or chalk pastel drawing, based on their own idea, using the oil or chalk pastel techniques learned from looking at Tony Ortega's work and seen demonstrated on the video.

Assessment Rubric

Rubric Points	Description
4	Student picked an original idea, sketched the idea using contour lines, and physically and optically blended the oil or chalk pastels, going dark to light. Work was done with thought and care.
3	Student picked an original idea, sketched the composition using contour lines, but did not use techniques for blending oil or chalk pastels.
2	Student picked an original idea but didn't demonstrate knowledge of contour drawing or blending.
1	Student copied an idea and didn't demonstrate knowledge of contour drawing or blending.



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)
- Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of creativity and communication. (VA1)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies.
- Students will demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- Students will read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.
- Students will select visual images, themes, and ideas in their own works of art to create and communicate meaning.

Objectives

- The student will demonstrate his or her understanding that memories can form ideas for artwork by contributing to a group chart on the childhood experiences of Tony Ortega.
- The student will demonstrate knowledge of the writing process (with an emphasis on editing/revising) by writing a description on a memory of his/her own.
- The student will demonstrate his or her understanding of the narrative quality of artwork by illustrating their memories as part of an accordion book, combining writing and visual imagery.

Specifics

Artists of all kinds (adults and children alike) draw on their backgrounds and experiences for ideas for their artwork. Tony Ortega's work is influenced by his childhood in rural New Mexico and Colorado. His ancestors were Spanish, Mexican, and Indian. Many of the images in his artwork reflect his childhood experiences, especially those with his pets and family on the farm. The drawings in his autobiographical work *Who Am I?* illustrate how meaningful it can be to draw on memories and traditions for ideas for artwork and should inspire students to reflect on memories of their own. These reflections become the source of inspiration for their artwork.



What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Independent reading

Graphic Organizer – Chart

Group discussion

Modeling

Elements of the writing process

Preteaching

Prep the students for this exercise by having a discussion about memories. Explain that some memories are like treasures while others can be quite painful. These memories and experiences shape the people we become. Talk about how important details can be in enriching writing and drawing.

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Pair students for reading *Who Am I?*, again putting a strong reader with a more reluctant one (this can be the same pairs as before). Chart paper should be hanging in the meeting area. Other materials should be ready to be passed out as needed, starting with worksheets and pencils and then construction paper and colored pencils to illustrate the memory. Oak tag is passed out last for completion of the accordion book.

Activities

To the Teacher

Begin the reading and writing piece by having students independently read “Who Am I?” and look at the illustrations. Afterward, have a whole group discussion based on what Tony Ortega, as a child, learned about himself after his summer vacation in New Mexico. Write their contributions on the chart.* Afterward, explain that each student will be writing three important memories of their own using the writing process (pre-writing, draft, editing, and publishing). Refer to the “Memories” worksheet at the end of this lesson. Each memory should have an opening sentence, at least three descriptive sentences – more is fine – and a closing sentence. Review this process with students, if necessary. Have students check their work and their partner’s for errors, providing them with strategies to correct as much as they can themselves. Published writing will consist of a memory, either handwritten or printed on the computer, each on a 6” x 6” piece of paper. The writing can be cut out from the worksheets. Students should have used correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. The memories should be glued to the front of the folded accordion book.

*Example of chart: What we learned about Tony Ortega from his memoir *Who Am I?*

- spent time with his grandmother—helped her with her quilt and baking bread
- his two pet dogs, Cholo and Vato, were always with him
- fed chickens at the farm
- swam and fished in the Pecos River



- visited family
- observed unusual animals
- visited a church in Chimayo where people went for miracles
- his ancestors were Indians, Mexicans, and Spaniards

Continue the activity with the drawing piece. When the written memories are complete, have students do colored pencil drawings of each of their memories on the 6" x 6" construction paper. Interesting details and a background should be included. These are to be glued to the reverse side of the accordion book.

To the Student

Think of memories that have a significance for you. For example, when the character Pano in *Who Am I?* went to visit a church in New Mexico, he took home some special dirt which was thought to make miracles happen. Imagine how he must have felt... Sometimes ordinary, everyday events are the most special ones, such as listening to your grandfather telling a story about his youth or how he met your grandmother; or a trip to the animal shelter to pick out that very special cat or dog. Be sure to include how you felt about the experience paying special attention to details. When you do your drawing, think of it as a visual story which includes a who, what, when, and where just as a written story does. Include a background and interesting details.

Vocabulary

Quilt – bedcovering with stitching, often using scraps of fabrics decoratively arranged.

Ancestors – people related by blood

Memoir – an essay or book about a person's past or memories written by that person

Accordion Book – a folded book that resembles the musical instrument, the accordion

Spaniards – people from or descended from the country of Spain.

Indians – indigenous people living in the Americas

Resources and Materials

Multiple copies of the book *Who Am I?* illustrated by Tony Ortega and written by George Rivera

Chart paper

Memory Worksheets

Pencils

Writing paper cut in 6" x 6" sections

6" x 6" white construction paper

Colored pencils

6" x 18" oak tag folded in three sections

Glue



Memories Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____ Score _____

Directions: Write one paragraph about each of three memories. Use the writing process as directed and write your final version on this worksheet. Possible topics might include “my fondest memory,” “an unusual experience I had,” “visiting a new place for the first time,” or “doing something I am proud of.”

Memory 1



Lesson Assessment

Students should have completed short paragraphs, using the writing process, for three memories of their choosing. Once completed, students should create a detailed colored pencil drawing of each. Students should attach these to the front and back of an accordion book.

Assessment Rubrics

Rubric Points - Writing	Description
3	Using the writing process, the student wrote a thoughtful and descriptive paragraph of a memory that has fewer than three spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors in his/her published piece.
2	Using the writing process, the student wrote a descriptive paragraph of a memory that has between three and five spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors in his or her published piece.
1	The student did the assignment but did not include descriptive language and had six or more spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors in his or her published piece.

Rubric Points - Art	Description
3	The student did a thoughtful drawing of his/her memories, including a background and interesting details.
2	The student did a drawing of their memories with a few details.
1	The student did a drawing of his or her memories but without much care or inclusion of details.

Extension

Provide students the option for extra credit by reading and writing about a memoir or biography of a famous artist and what his/her childhood may have been like.



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (VA4)
- Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meaning of works of art. (VA5)

Benchmarks

- Students will identify works of art as belonging to various cultures, times, and places.
- Students will examine and critique works of art.

Objectives

- Students will use observation and critical thinking skills (analysis, interpretation, and judgment) when examining a piece of art.
- Students will expand their vocabulary by learning new art terms.

Specifics

An art style reflects both an individual artist's choices about how to express him/herself, as well as the styles of particular times, places, and cultures. The early twentieth century American artist Edward Hopper, the late nineteenth century Impressionist artist, Claude Monet, as well as the late nineteenth century post-impressionist artist Vincent Van Gogh, all influenced Tony Ortega. In this lesson, students compare and contrast the styles of these three artists and understand how an artist can be influenced by a style, but adapt it to develop a unique and personal style of his/her own.

What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Group Discussion

Drawing Conclusions

Looping

Cooperative Learning

Venn Diagram

Worksheets

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Hang the three posters of the four different artists with chart paper under each one. Draw a Venn diagram with the heading “Compare and Contrast the Styles of Tony Ortega, Claude Monet, Vincent Van Gogh, and Edward Hopper.” A sample is included in this lesson.



Preteaching

To prepare for this lesson, have students review what they know about style.

Style is not easy to define, but children get the idea of style as being how you express yourself. Just as music performers choose a way to dress and the kind of music they play, artists choose subject matter, media, and art techniques. Review the elements of art – line, color, shape, texture, form, value, and space – and the principles of design – pattern, movement, balance, rhythm, contrast, and emphasis.

Activities

To the Teacher

Have a group discussion on the meaning of style in art. Referencing the reproductions of Ortega, Hopper, Monet, and Van Gogh. Ask questions to help students describe the work in the following areas.

- artist's choice of subject matter (realistic, abstract or non-objective [you may need to review terms])
- type of medium used (painting, sculpture, collage, printmaking, etc.)
- particular techniques the artist uses (blending, soft or hard edges, visible lines or brushstrokes, etc.)

Record students' feedback on chart paper describing the style of each of the artists.

To the Student

Think of what style means to you. What style of clothes do you like, for example? Artists make choices that determine their art style. Do you think when and where they live makes a difference? Have art styles changed over time? Compare and contrast the art styles of the nineteenth century impressionist artist Claude Monet, the late nineteenth century post-impressionist artist Vincent Van Gogh, and the early twentieth century realist artist Edward Hopper with contemporary Chicano artist Tony Ortega. Define Tony Ortega's style in your own words. After group discussion, help fill in the Venn diagram. Then complete the worksheet "Understanding Style in Art."

Vocabulary

Realistic – subject is recognizable.

Abstract – subject is usually recognizable but shapes are changed or simplified. Can also be used to describe non-objective art that is just lines or shapes or colors.

Non-Objective – not realistic; visual idea is about lines, shapes, colors and other elements of art and principles of design such as pattern or texture.

Contemporary – recent or taking place right now.

Impressionists – Group of European and American artists working in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They chose to work outdoors rather than in the studio, concerning themselves with light reflections. They were more interested in the overall 'impression' of a subject than including every detail.

Post-Impressionists – Group of European artists working in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who were influenced by the impressionists but went on to develop unique styles of their own. Post-impressionists generally used bolder colors and more defined shapes in their work.



Resources and Materials

Reproduction of Monet's – title to be provided – cb (I'm thinking one of the waterlilies series)

Reproduction Hopper's "title" to be provided - cb (the famous one of the people in the diner)

Reproduction of a Van Gogh self portrait

Reproduction of Ortega's "title to be provided – cb (maybe the zoot suit one)

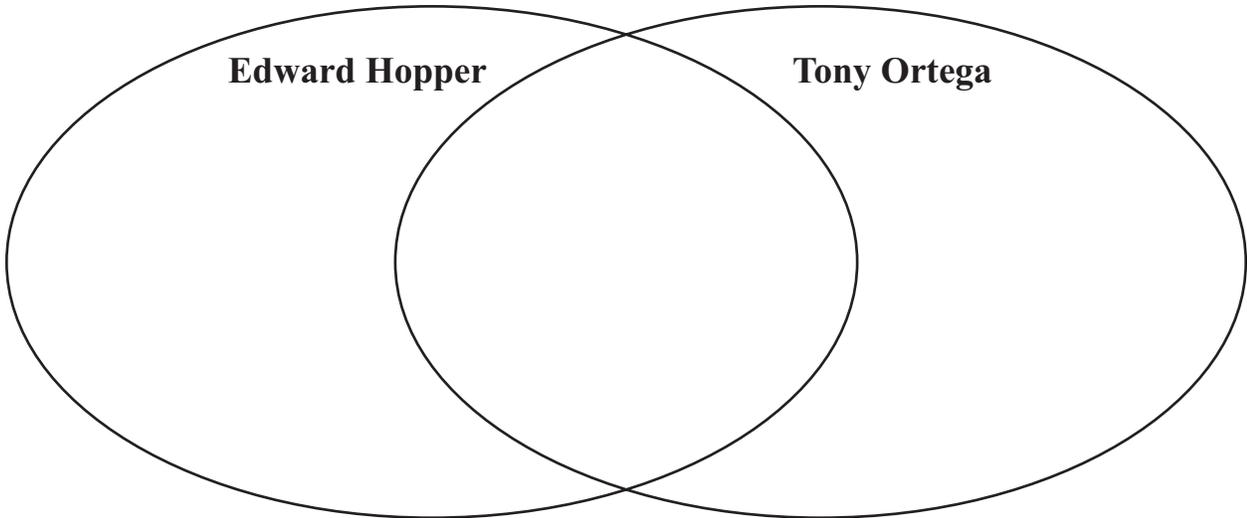
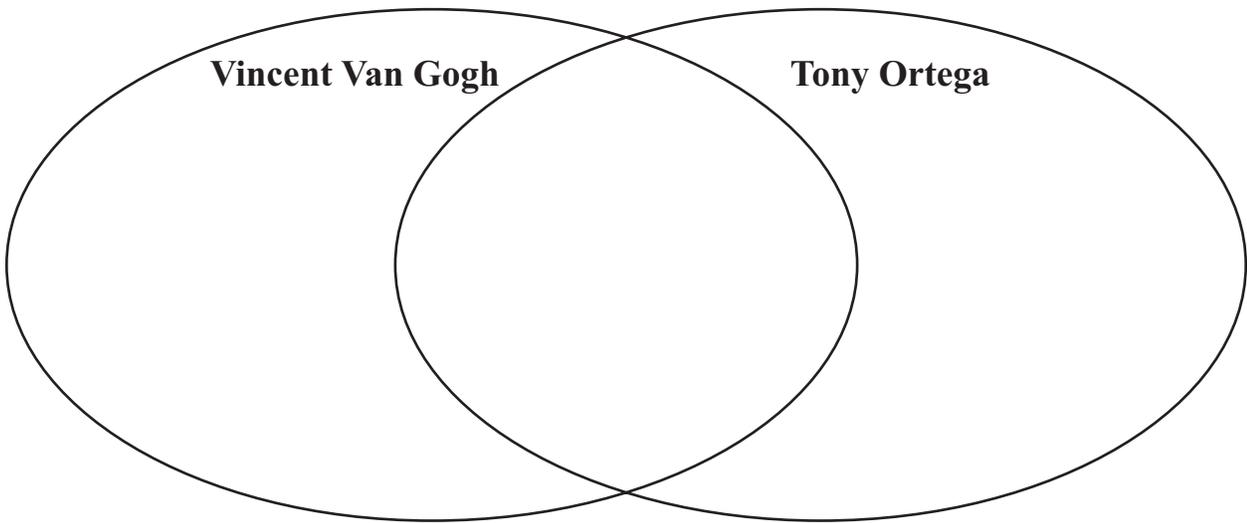
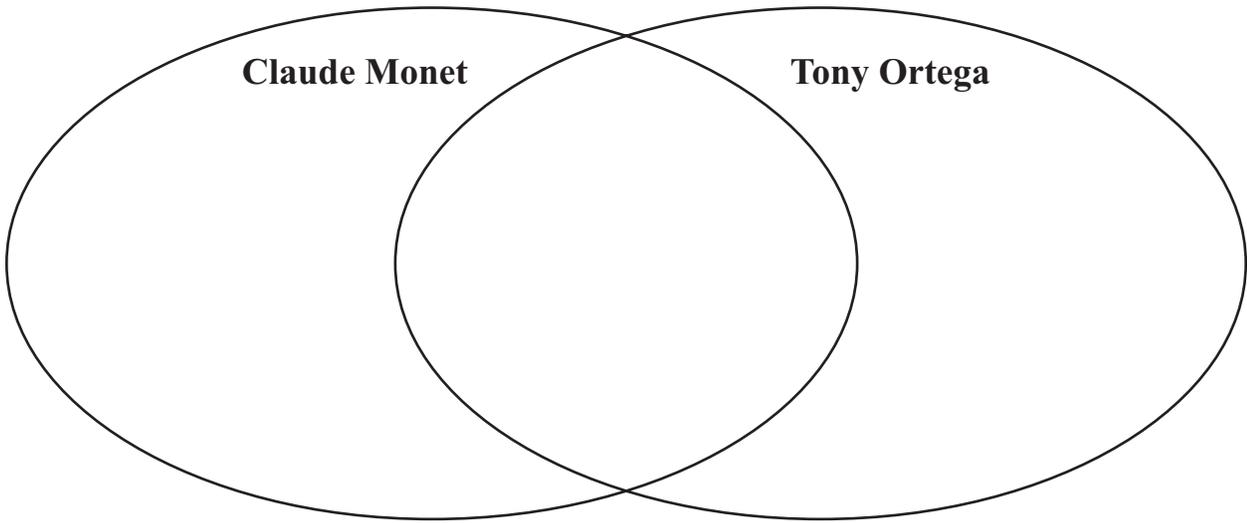
Chart Paper

Marker

"Understanding Style" worksheets



Venn Diagram Sample: Compare and Contrast the Styles of Tony Ortega, Claude Monet, Vincent Van Gogh, and Edward Hopper.





Lesson Assessment

Ingroup discussion and on worksheet, students demonstrated an understanding of how art styles differ depending on artist, time, place, and culture.

Assessment Rubric

Rubric Points	Description
3	The student demonstrated understanding that style has to do with choice of subject matter, material, and elements of art. Could identify key characteristics of the styles of the three artists.
2	The student showed some understanding of the concept of style in art but could not identify similarities and differences in the work of the three artists.
1	The student did not demonstrate an understanding of what style means in art.



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of creativity and communication. (VA1)
- Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts. (VA2)
- Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, technologies, and processes. (VA3)

Benchmarks

- Students will select a visual image, theme, or idea for their work that will create and communicate meaning.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of art.
- Students will use different materials, tools, techniques, and processes in creating their own work.

Objectives

- The student will create an original monoprint demonstrating knowledge of foreground and background.

Specifics

Like all artists, Tony Ortega has media he prefers. Printmaking, especially creating etchings and monoprints, is one of his chosen media. With monoprints, there is only one print pulled from the printing plate. For reference, the students are fortunate to have a framed, original monoprint by Tony Ortega included in this Alma Project bin. Please remember that this is a costly original piece of art and that it should be handled carefully and stored securely. Students will be able to understand how the visual qualities of prints compare to the characteristics of drawing and painting by doing a monoprint of their own.

What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Modeling

Discussion

Cooperative Learning

Preteaching

Review the elements of sketching

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Have materials listed ready to be passed out. The first day, provide newsprint and pencils for sketching. The second day or additional class sections if necessary, supply monoprint ink, brushes, and mylar along with 9" x 12" paper and bryers or spoons to transfer image.



Activities

To the Teacher

Demonstrate steps involved in making a monoprint. First, students sketch their ideas lightly with pencils on the newsprint. Figures in the foreground, environment in the background. ‘Overlapping’ may occur when figure in front obscures figures or objects in the background. Explain that this effect helps viewer understand the spacial characteristics of the work. This idea is copied as a temporary “painting” using monoprint ink and brushes on the the mylar. The mylar is then turned upside down in the center of the construction paper and rubbed with the back of a spoon or a clean breyer to transfer the monoprint. Students should be sure to paint the background and press thoroughly over the mylar surface to transfer the entire image. For a theme, I suggest “children playing,” since Tony Ortega uses this a lot in his work. Students need to come up with an individual idea around this theme. Sharing at a group meeting and listing these on a chart works well to stimulate others to come up with an idea. Ideas might be “hanging on the monkey bars,” “playing soccer on the playground,” “up for bat at a baseball game,” etc. Have students who are interested share their artwork with the group. Explain the difference between an original print and a reproduction.

To the Student

When sketching your idea, work large and don’t press down hard with the pencil so that you can erase easily. Making mistakes is normal and you can change them easily by erasing if you have drawn lightly. Also, it is easier to see all the shapes making up the design your picture. A variety of shapes will make it more interesting. When the sketch is completed, copy your idea using brushes and monoprint ink on the mylar. Use *contrasting* colors so your ideas will show up clearly. For example, don’t give your figures blue shirts if they are against the blue sky of the background. Remember to have figures in the *foreground* (front of your picture) and an interesting *background* (area in the back) behind them. Be sure to press thoroughly to transfer the image from the mylar to the paper.

Vocabulary

Monoprint – an original print (copy) of an artwork - only one can be made.

Reproduction – an inexpensive copy of an artwork which is not an original piece of art.

Foreground – part of picture which is larger and in the front.

Background – part of picture which shows what is in the back.

Contrast – colors which are quite different from each other.

Breyer – roller used in printmaking

Overlapping – when one visual idea ‘hides’ part of another because it is in front of it.



Resources and Materials

Original framed monoprint by Tony Ortega

6" x 9" pieces of newsprint

Pencils

6" x 9" pieces of mylar (or plexiglass if budget allows)

Monotype ink in bottles (water based)

Brushes

9" x 12" white construction paper

plastic spoons or breyers (rollers used in printmaking)

Lesson Assessment

Students should complete an original monoprint demonstrating knowledge of foreground and background. Working in partners, students do a peer assessment of each other's work.

Assessment Rubric

Have students work in pairs to assess each other's work by using the "Peer Assessment Sheet" on the following page.



Peer Assessment Sheet

Student Name _____ Date _____

Title of Work _____

Foreground and Background	
Points	Description
3	The monoprint shows foreground and background clearly.
2	The foreground and background are there but not clearly indicated.
1	There is no difference between foreground and background.
Points Earned:	

Contrasting Colors	
Points	Description
3	The student used contrasting colors all the time.
2	The student used contrasting most of the time.
1	The student did not use contrasting colors much.
Points Earned:	

Care and Detail	
Points	Description
3	The student did extremely thoughtful work with interesting details
2	The student put care in the work but not many details
1	The student completed the work but in a sloppy manner.
Points Earned:	



What Will Students Learn?

Standards

- Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of creativity and communication. (VA1)
- Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts. (VA2)
- Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, technologies, and processes. (VA3)
- Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Benchmarks

- Students will select a visual image, theme, or idea for their work that will create and communicate meaning.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of art.
- Students will use different materials, tools, techniques, and processes in creating their own work.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Objectives

- Students will design and paint an original idea that reflects diversity in their community.

Specifics

As a community artist, Tony Ortega often creates murals with students to honor and reflect diversity. Sometimes the theme is the school environment, the neighborhood or both. This kit includes a Powerpoint presentation on CD that shows Tony Ortega designing a mural for a school and executing this with the students. In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to design their own mural reflecting their school and/or community. In doing so, they should gain a greater understanding of themselves, their families, and their neighbors. Also, they should learn the value of working collaboratively on an art project that will add life and beauty to their school.

What Will Be Done to Help Students Learn This?

Instructional Strategies

Summarizing and synthesizing information

Whole group discussion

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Arrange students in groups of four . Keep in mind maturity levels of students and drawing abilities, spreading students highly skilled students around as much as possible. Have materials ready to be passed out as needed.



Activities

To the Teacher

After having the students watch the Powerpoint presentation, explain that they will create their own mural. Have students as a group decide whether they want their mural to reflect just their school. School themes might include specials, reading in the classroom, recess, or hanging the flag. Community themes could be going to church, having a neighborhood picnic, playing in front yards, or going to school. Group your students, then have each group pick one of the chosen themes from a hat. Explain that each group will list what is important to include in their segment and lightly sketch the design. Encourage students to erase and re-design a lot before painting. Shapes should be bold and varied. Encourage students to mix up different skin color shades to reflect the ethnic and racial diversity in your community. Interesting details should be included in both the foreground and the background.

Installing the Mural. As this project was done in pieces, you have the option to hang the mural segments side by side or arrange these individually around the school. You may want to title the different themes or have students do this. Some teachers may want to border their segments with 3” borders of colored butcher paper.

To the Student

List your ideas for your theme with your partners. For example, if your subject is the playground, what activities will you include? What shapes will you need to draw them? What will be in the foreground and in the background? How can you create ‘sausage people’ to show the children playing particular games? Lightly sketch your idea on your butcher paper. Do not press hard, because you may want to erase and you don’t want the pencil lines to show after you paint.

Painting part: Create unusual colors by mixing – use optical and physical blending as you did in pastel drawing. Create spacial interest by overlapping figures in foreground. Be sure to include interesting details throughout. Paint the entire background thoughtfully. Make your ideas stand out by using contrasting (really different) colors.

Vocabulary

Mural – large painting that hangs on a wall or is painted directly on a wall.

Foreground – visual ideas in front of painting.

Background – visual ideas in back of painting.

Contrasting – colors that are really different from each other.

Community – group of people who come together—who live, work, go to school, celebrate, and pray together or have a shared interest or concern.

Diversity – With respect to people, people of different races or ethnic backgrounds.



Resources and Materials

Powerpoint presentation of Tony Ortega working with students on a school mural.

Four pieces of 36" x 36" squares of cut white butcher paper. (It is best to reinforce each of these papers by stapling the same size paper to the back.)

Pencils and erasers

Acrylic or Tempera Paint, including colors for a range of skin tones

Brushes

Chart Paper and marker

Writing paper

Lesson Assessment

Individual groups will complete the assessment worksheet evaluating their work together on a segment of the mural.

Assessment Rubric

Points	Description
4	Students did thoughtful work with important details. Foreground and background are evident, colors are contrasting and students did some creative blending.
3	Students did three out of the above four objectives.
2	Students did two out of the four objectives.
1	Students did one or less out the four objectives.



Cynthia Beneduce

After completing her undergraduate work at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Cynthia Beneduce received her master's degree in education at Bank Street College in New York.

Her work in the arts began soon after college with a job at the Metropolitan Museum. Always fascinated by American folk art, Cynthia turned this interest into a professional livelihood when she opened a shop in New York City specializing in primitives and folk art. Eventually she realized that combining the arts with working with children would be an extremely rewarding profession. After receiving her degree at Bank Street, she worked in Manhattan for five years teaching art to young children with special needs. She moved to Denver in 1999 and currently works teaching art at the elementary level with Denver Public Schools



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- Leick, Melba. *Mexicolor: The Spirit of Mexican Design*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998.
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