

Amy Oestreicher

Methods of Teaching Art to Children Lesson Plan #1 for Elementary School Children

Title of the Lesson Mayan Art & History

Unit of Study: Mayan hieroglyphs, dieties, art and culture

Lesson # 1: as an overview and preparation for the following two Mayan lessons

Grade 5th Grade

The Big Idea:

To have students learn how imperative art was as the basis for Mayan culture – how embedded it was in their ways of communication (i.e. Mayan script/hieroglyphs), in how they worshipped (deities), and in their entire way of life (class structure, architecture, décor, etc.). Students will understand how art was not confined to a land of “high art” but part of the Mayan everyday life.

Specific Content Standards addressed in this lesson:

- Visual images of Mayan art in all of its various forms
- Introduction to Mayan hieroglyphs
- Introduction to Mayan Dieties
- Overview of Mayan art: pottery, architecture, dress, etc.
- Summary of how Mayan art tied so closely into their culture

Specific Essential Questions addressed in this lesson (What leading questions can you ask of students to get them to understand the Big Ideas?):

- How is art a part of *your* every day life?
- Who were the Mayans?
- Why was art so important to their culture?
- How did they communicate?
- What did the Mayans hold “sacred”?
- What is “sacred” in your life?
- How were the Mayans an “advanced” civilization?
- How did the Mayans use art to communicate?
- How did the Mayans use art to worship?
- What were some core Mayan beliefs?

Learning Outcomes/Expectations/objectives:

As a result of this lesson, students will understand that:

- Art plays different roles in various cultures
- Even ancient societies can produce art that we can relate to today
- There are many different languages and forms of writing that people communicate by
- The concept of polytheism
- Mayan art has a lasting influence on various cultures and art we see today
- The Mayans were ahead of their time in terms of art, culture, advances, etc.
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As a result of this lesson, students will know that:

- They are capable of understanding different cultures, however ancient and obsolete
- Certain Mayan myths
- They can use art in their every day life
- They have enough knowledge to be prepared for the following two lessons
- Masks were an important part of religious ceremonies

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

- write certain Mayan Hieroglyphs
- familiarize themselves with various Mayan Gods
- hopefully gain insight on how Mayan culture has influenced modern cultures today
- tie links from Mayan cultures to other cultures
- see how Mayan Art and Culture go hand in hand
- recognize Mayan signature art techniques in art they see around them today
- gain confidence in themselves in knowing another important chapter in history

Learning Activities: Step-by-step description of the lesson components as follows:

- 1.) Brief Overview of the Mayans: who they were, when they were at their peak, what they contributed to society, and their mysterious disappearance.
- 2.) Brief overview of mayan art: history, architecture, sculpture, wood carving, stucco modeling, mural painting, writing, bookmaking, ceramics, body decorations (SHOW SLIDES OF PICTURES)
- 3.) Overview of Mayan Script: Mayan hieroglyphs, is the writing system, using logograms, almost like modern Japanese script, practice few letters
- 4.) Overview of Mayan religion and culture – their ways of worshipping. Explain (with pictures) the forms of Mayan rituals, ceremonies, sacrificing, key beliefs, and how religion was so tied into their daily life and culture
- 5.) Go over core Mayan beliefs and the various gods that they related every part of their life to – familiarize themselves with key Mayan deities.
- 6.) Read one Mayan myth in class that demonstrates a key god(s)
- 7.) Make sure key Mayan points are addressed: Nature Gods, Afterlife, Underworld,

- Masks, Priests, Pyramids. Festivals, daily life
- 8.) Have students draw with colored pencils, chalk pastels, and brightly colored construction paper on white paper their vision of a day in the life of the Mayan people. Have them write a few sentences on the back to explain their picture
 - 9.) Discussion, wrapping it up: Have each student explain their picture and how it represents the Mayan art/culture

Pacing - how much time will each component take?

- 1.) Brief Overview of the Mayans: 15 minutes
- 2.) Brief overview of Mayan art: 20 minutes
- 3.) Overview of Mayan Script: 10 minutes
- 4.) Overview of Mayan religion and culture, masks – 10 minutes
- 5.) Go over core Mayan beliefs and the various gods – 15 minutes
- 6.) Read one Mayan myth in class that demonstrates a key god(s) – 10 minutes
- 7.) Make sure key Mayan points are addressed: Nature Gods, Afterlife, Underworld, Masks, Priests, Pyramids. Festivals, daily life – 10 minutes
- 8.) Have students sketch/draw/cut their vision of a day in the life of the Mayan people. – 30 minutes
- 9.) Share pictures in class w/discussion – 15 minutes

****That would bring the total time to roughly 2 hours and 10 minutes, give or take. This could be divided over a two day period – an hour each. The first day could be the overview of art, culture, myths, etc. in combination with the social studies period since this is primarily an arts history lesson in preparation for the mask-making and print-making in the upcoming lessons. The second day could be learning the specifics about hieroglyphics, deities, and drawing their picture/summary****

Introduction/Opening:

(How will you begin to lead the students towards the outcomes you expect of them?)

By giving a brief introduction to what the Mayan Culture is and the art they produced. I will use a lot of visual representation – constantly showing slides, perhaps a power point presentation, passing around prints of Mayan art. Presentation will be very visual.

Demonstration:

(Does something need to be demonstrated to make these expected outcomes clearer?)

Many visual representations. Also, sharing an actual Mayan myth will provide an example of how art, religion, daily life and culture are all related in their society. Diego Rivera painted some very vivid Mayan murals that illustrate Mayan myths, including the creation myth. This will show them how art can tell a story – I will go over how stories

and passing them on were vital to their culture, and show how art helps to make this process effective.

Body

Activity #1

- Intro/Overview. Slides, Showing Art, History Lesson. Reading Myth.

Transition

Time for students to ask questions, share their opinions, talk about how art related so deeply into culture

Activity #2

Students artistically create a day in the life of the Mayans, write a little description on the back.

Transition

Sharing their pictures in class

Closure

Discussion, check-in, more sharing what they learned about Mayans, preparing them for making their own hieroglyphics and masks of dieties in the following two lessons

Materials needed for the lesson: (List these materials per student): Attach handouts (if any).

- Chalk pastels
- Large white paper
- Pencils/pens
- Colored pencils
- Scissors (1 pair for every four students)
- Construction paper

Teacher Materials needed for demonstration:

- projector
- computer
- slides of art/hieroglyphics/masks
- power point presentation

- book with Mayan myths in it
- book with Diego Rivera mural paintings

Modifications/Extensions (for students on IEP's or language differences.)

- Extra assistance and explanation
- Supplementary handouts
- Student peer mentor
- Have them sit in front of class if they have any additional questions
- Write key words on white board
- Help with scissors if needed

Assessment of Student Understanding

(How will you assess student understanding of the content of the lesson?)

- › Authentic, performance based tasks that have students apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding.
- › includes pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment evidence
- › Can be individual or group based
- › Can include informal methods (such as thumbs up, thumbs down, and formal assessments, such as quiz, answers to questions on a worksheet, written reflection, essay

- written reflection that they will write on the back of their drawing
- they crayon drawing of every day Mayan culture
- their discussion afterwards and the questions they ask
- how well they are able to engage in the following two lesson plans in terms of writing hieroglyphics and creating masks of deities

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- I will see if they can comprehend the history overview.
- How well they can relate what they learned to the picture they draw at the end as well as their description on the back
- Assess their discussion/questions afterwards.
- At very end, students will give thumbs up/thumbs down for how well they understood the lesson.

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Elementary School Mayan Unit:

Lesson 1: Mayan Art/Culture History Lesson

Lesson 2: Stelas and Mayan Hieroglyphics

Lesson 3: Making a Mask of a Mayan God