

MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art

Age: Kindergarten

Lesson Duration: 2-4 Weeks

Subjects: Art, Design & Community

Mural Inspired by Travis Czekalski & Jon Stommel

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY
DESIGNED BY MONA
EDUCATORS



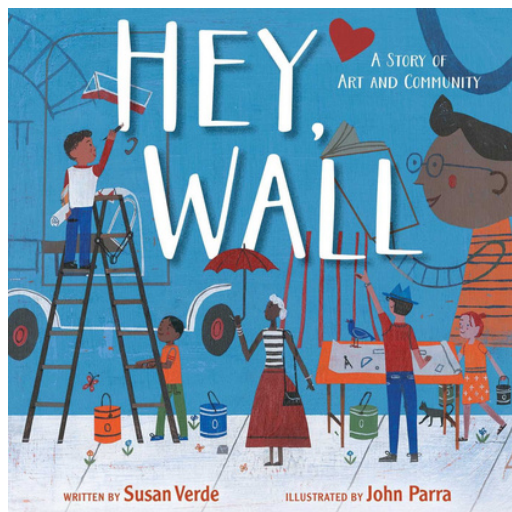
MoNA art educator example

Description

In this multi-session, collaborative art assignment, students will complete a classroom mural. To engage students in conversations about community-based art, they will be introduced to Northwest muralists Travis Czekalski and Jon Stommel and read the text *Hey, Wall: A Story of Art and Community* written by Susan Verde.

Vocabulary

- ✓ Community
- ✓ Mural
- ✓ Line
- ✓ Shape
- ✓ Form
- ✓ Color
- ✓ Texture
- ✓ Space



Materials

- *Hey, Wall: A Story of Art and Community* book **or** this read-aloud video
- About the artists (included)
- Paper
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Colored pencils
- Acrylic or watercolor paints
- Brushes & water Cups
- Large thick white paper

Travis Czekalski & Jon Stommel of the art duo 'Rather Severe'

Living and working in Portland, Oregon, the duo creates murals that emphasize community and the beauty of public spaces. When beginning a new mural, the artists will often speak directly to community members. The artists then create a mural using bright, bold colors and designs -- blending the community vision with their own artistic ideas!



Image credit: <http://www.rather-severe.com/about>

The murals that you see on this page come from a project called the Woodstock Street Art Project. The artists were asked to create three murals for the Woodstock neighborhood in Portland. People who lived in this neighborhood wanted it to be brought to life by bright colors and works of art. This might remind us of the story *Hey, Wall!*

To learn more about *Rather Severe*, head to their [website](#).



Instructions

Large Group

- 1) Begin by asking students about their knowledge of murals and community art.
 - Guiding questions: What is a mural? Have you seen a mural before? What is a community? Who is in a community?
- 2) As a class read Susan Verde's *Hey, Wall: A Story of Art and Community*.
 - Alternative option: play this [read-aloud video](#).
- 3) Introduce the artists & explore images (full size images included at end of lesson).
 - Introduce ideas of size, subject matter, and color as appropriate to learners' age group/experience level.
 - Here, it may be helpful to use VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies). VTS tips and resources can be found at the end of the lesson!
- 4) As a class, decide on a mural plan. Once a plan has been reached, students will take turns working on the mural in small groups.
 - The examples in this lesson focus on bold colors and community. Instructors should feel welcome to use their discretion in further guiding parameters for the mural.

Small Groups

- 5) Break students into small groups relevant to class size. 2-4 students per group is preferred. Remind the group of the class mural plan, and that some students will have to wait their turn while their classmates draw and paint their ideas.
- 6) Before picking up paints have students sketch what they plan to add to the mural using paper and pencil.
- 7) After a quick sketch, have students pick the colors that they will use for their section of the mural.

8) Two to three students can work together and begin painting (depending on group and mural size).

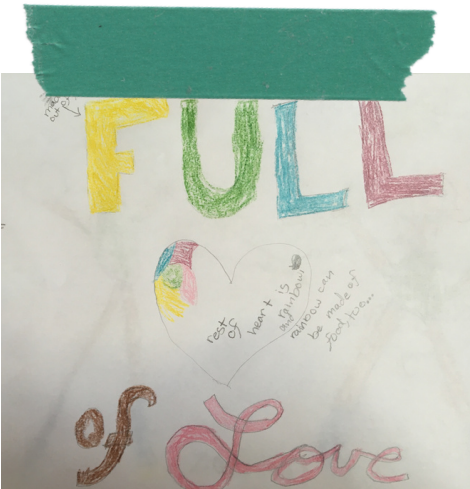
- Have the first 2-3 students draw their idea, then move to painting. The next group of students draws their ideas while the first is painting. Staggering tasks and repeating the process until each student has had a turn painting and the project is finished.

Closer

9) Once the mural is complete, hold a gallery walk for students to view their completed mural.

- It is important to establish a gallery walk as a safe and productive critique process.
- Introduce the critiquing concept as appropriate to age group/experience level.
- Guiding questions: Does the mural look like the plan we created as a class? What is presented well? What is our favorite thing about the mural? What is one thing we would do differently next time?

10) As a class, decide on a final title for your mural!



Students from the University Child Development School Kindness Camp created a food-themed mural for the University Food Bank in Seattle, Wa. Students began by sketching their ideas and worked collaboratively to paint the final image. Image credit: MoNA art educator



Additional discussion & reflection:

“I used to think _____, but now I know _____.” Have students share out their responses to this prompt and write them down.

Display with the mural.

Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr1.2.K** (Engage collaboratively in creative art-making in response to an artistic problem)
- **VA:Cr2.2.K** (Identify safe and non-toxic art materials, tools, and equipment)
- **VA:Cr2.3.K** (Create art that represents natural and constructed environments)

Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

What's going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say that...?
What more can you find?

Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to VTS in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: <https://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators>



One of three murals completed for the Woodstock Street Art Project in Portland, OR.
Image credit: <http://www.rather-severe.com/#/woodstock-street-art-project/>



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Detail of a mural for the Lincoln, NE Archival Agency
Image credit: <http://www.rather-severe.com/#/archrival-agency-mural/>



Detail of a mural at La Bonita restaurant in Portland
Image credit: <http://www.rather-severe.com/#/la-bonita/>