



Lesson 5: Collage, Part 2

Time: minimum 45 minutes
Grades: adaptable to grades K-12

Objectives

Students will:

- Become familiar with the Interdependence Hexagon Project
- Understand the concept of a human right, including those defined in the United Nations' *Children's Rights & the Environment*
- Describe what a healthy environment means to them, and depict that vision using collage

Materials

- magazines (other media such as scrapbook paper, newspaper, fabric, foil, also can be used)
- Modge-Podge, containers
- sponge brushes

Vocabulary

- hexagon
- environmental justice
- right

Resources

- Interdependence Hexagon Project: <https://hexagonproject.org/>
- UN *Children's Rights & the Environment*: <https://www.unep.org/resources/other-evaluation-reportsdocuments/childrens-rights-and-environment>
- artist statement card: <http://www.earthconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/wereclaim-artist-statement-printable.pdf>

Lesson Plan

1. Hexagons, the Interdependence Hexagon Project, & Environmental Justice

- Discuss Hexagons: Ask if anyone knows the shape of the canvas. It is a hexagon, a polygon with six sides. Can anyone think of a place we might see this shape?
 - Common answer is in a beehive. Discuss further how hexagons often are found in nature (e.g., turtle shell, fly eyes, snake scales).
 - Ask students to compare an array of hexagons vs. circles. Hexagons fit together perfectly. In a beehive, this is important. Hexagon cells use the least amount of space and building materials, and their structure is light, yet very strong.
 - Bees have an innate knowledge of making the hexagon shape. Each worker bee creates an individual cell, but many bees are working at the same time to create the honeycomb. All bees are required to support the survival of the hive. A beehive is its own ecosystem.
- Discuss Hexagon Project: Started in 2006, the Interdependence Hexagon Project is an all-volunteer non-profit community arts organization based in Scranton, PA. Every year, the Project invites the public worldwide to contemplate social and global challenges facing the

world, and use art as a vehicle to reimagine how these challenges can be addressed through critical thinking, research, and creative expression.

- **Discuss Environmental Justice:** The theme of the Interdependence Hexagon Project for 2023 is **environmental justice**. Ask students to think back to the discussion of abandoned mine lands and the **right** people have not to live near polluted lands. Oftentimes, some people have more pollution to deal with than others. Everyone has the right to a clean earth. The United Nations outlined several rights children have in regard to the environment. They include rights to life, health, basic needs, and play. *Rights* declares that there should be respect for *all* children's views and that concerns should be addressed.

2. Activity

- Review with students the places they brainstormed when choosing the background for their artwork. Now brainstorm what things would make that place ideal. What would it need to support a happy and healthy life? List these on the board.
- Show examples of and/or demonstrate to students ways of creating a collage. Techniques can include filling in a shape, cutting out a picture, tearing paper, and building a picture. Students may also want to add found words, add drawings, or color shapes in.
- Students start collaging on canvas, using the magazines as their media. As they glue, make students aware the Modge-Podge will dry clear. Instructors will want to coat entire canvas with Modge-Podge when completed to ensure everything adheres.
 - **Note:** For WeReclaim!, we took a picture of each student prior to the activity. These were printed in multiple various sizes, and students could cut them out and incorporate them into their artworks. This not only emphasized their role as artist, but also that they were part of/have a role in the world envisioned.





Previous page: Student working on her collage; Above: Examples of artworks with student photos included.

3. Conclusion & Extensions

- After artworks were completed, an exhibit was held during a family night. Artworks were hung on the wall in a honeycomb pattern, flanked by artists' statements the students had composed. Knowing artworks will be shared publicly often adds to motivation. Public display also draws attention to students' efforts, which can boost their confidence. In relation to this project, seeing artworks grouped together underscores the Hexagon Project's theme of interconnectedness.
- Because of time limitations, we had to shorten/eliminate several activities. Based on our experience, we would recommend including them, if possible.
 - **Artist Statements:** These were done after artworks were complete, with students completing the statement, "I have the right to an earth where..." It may be appropriate to do this prior to the start of collage, so that students can firm up what they want to represent in their artworks.
 - **Preliminary Sketch:** Similar to the artist statement, allotting a period to sketching may strengthen students' ideas, as well as offer the opportunity to think about how they will use collage to depict them (or even practice basic collage techniques).
 - **Critique:** In art, critique does not equate with criticism; it is a process of looking at and talking about art with others. The artist can describe his/her process and motivation. Viewers can provide affirmations, ask questions, and offer suggestions. It truly is an important part of the creative process, allowing for clarifications, amplifications, and revisions. For this project, having a critique on initial sketches (or prior to gluing) would be most beneficial.

- **Public Presentation:** Whether doing an in-class, school-wide, or parent exhibit, having each student verbally describe his/her artwork to others is an excellent opportunity to build presentation skills.



Above: Student exhibit during Family Night; Below: Example of artist statement card.

