PATTERNED PUMPKINS

Lesson Plan for Double Helix
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NAMES

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BIG IDEA/TOPIC

Pattern, repetition, and variation in art.

DESCRIPTION OF BIG IDEA/TOPIC EXPLORED IN THIS LESSON:

In this lesson, students will explore the use of pattern, repetition, and variation through the artwork of contemporary Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. Students will look at examples of Kusama's pumpkin sculptures and identify how she uses repeated shapes, dots, lines, and colors to create visually intriguing compositions. After learning about these ideas, students will decorate their own miniature white pumpkins inspired by Kusama's work. Students will be encouraged to experiment with shapes, colors, and pattern arrangements.

RELEVANCE FOR LEARNERS:

This lesson introduces students to an important contemporary artist while encouraging creativity and individual expression. Students encounter pattern regularly in their everyday lives, like in clothing, nature, architecture, and more. By learning how to

identify and form patterns, students will get a better understanding of how artists use repetition and variation to communicate visually with an audience. This lesson also provides kids with another opportunity to experiment on a three-dimensional surface, which is great for creativity.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How can artists use repetition and variation to create unique and visually interesting patterns?

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

Students will understand that patterns are created through the repetition of visual elements. They will also learn that variation can make those patterns more visually interesting. Students will recognize that artists can use similar techniques while creating artwork that reflect their own individual creativity.

LESSON GOALS:

Students will know:

1. Who Yayoi Kusama is and how she incorporates patterns into her art.
2. How repetition and variation contribute to the creation of patterns.
3. How patterns can be used to decorate and transform three-dimensional objects

Students will be able to:

1. Find and identify examples of repetition and variation in artworks.
2. Experiment with varying and repeating shapes, lines, and colors.
3. Apply their understanding of pattern to make and original pumpkin design.

PREPARATION:

Materials list:

- Miniature white pumpkins (1 per student)
- Sharpies
- Paper towels

- Presentation

Preparation before the lesson:

Before students arrive, teacher will organize pumpkins and decorating materials. The presentation will be displayed and tables will be arranged so that students can comfortably decorate their pumpkins. We will refrain from passing materials out until the end of the lesson. The teacher will also provide examples of pattern and repetition during the lesson.

LEARNING STEPS:

1. Introduction and Attention Grabber: (1 min)

   Teacher: Welcome students and introduce the attention grabber for the day.

   Students: Participate in the attention grabber, listen to introduction, and prepare for lesson.

2. Introduction to Yayoi Kusama: (3-5 min)

   Teacher: Introduce Yayoi Kusama and display examples of her artwork, focusing mainly on pumpkin sculptures. Ask students what they notice about her work and encourage them to identify similarities.

   Students: Observe the artwork, participate in discussion, identify visual elements used throughout the sculptures.

   - Possible questions:
   - What do you notice about these pumpkins?
   - What shapes or designs are repeated?
   - How are these different from most pumpkins or pumpkin art that you've seen?

3. Introducing Pattern, Repetition, and Variation: (3-5 min)

   Teacher: Introduce the concept of pattern and explain how repetition and variation can contribute to its creation.

   - Pattern: A design created through the arrangement and repetition of visual elements.
   - Repetition: Using the same visual element multiple times.

- Variation: Changing aspects of a visual element, such as its size, color, shape, or orientation.

Use examples to demonstrate how lines, shapes, and dots can make different designs.

Draw examples on the white board.

Students: Observe examples, identify repeating elements, and talk about how variation can change a pattern.

4. Project Instructions:

   Teacher: Display examples of decorated pumpkins and explain the assignment.

   Explain how to apply patterns to the curved surface of a pumpkin.

   Students will decorate a mini white pumpkin using patterns inspired by Yayoi Kusama. They may experiment with dots, lines, shapes, colors, and different arrangements, but it has to create some kind of pattern.

   Emphasize that students should not just copy Kusama and they should make their own creative choices.

5. Independent artmaking (rest of class)

   Teacher(s): Distribute materials and allow students to begin decorating.

   Circle the classroom, offering guidance and encouragement.

   Questions like:

   - What pattern are you making?
   - What elements are you repeating?
   - Where could you add in some variation?
   - Why did you pick these shapes or colors?

   Students: Experiment and make individual artistic decisions about color, shapes, and patterns.

6. Cleanup (5 min)

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING:

Student understanding will be assessed informally throughout the class period through observation of participation and interaction with the content.

Teachers will look for:

1. Students' ability to identify pattern, repetition, and variation in examples.
2. Intentional use of repeated visual elements.
3. Experimentation with shape, color, arrangement, and more.
4. Students' ability to explain their understanding of concepts to teachers and/or peers.