

The Story Tree – Create your own story character



Grades: 5th-8th grade

Visual Arts

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Lesson Description:

Many stories have unforgettable characters in them, which truly add to the entire plot, but what makes a great character? In this project, student will create their own fairytale characters. Students should think about not only what the character looks like, but what are their mannerisms, where do they live, what is their demeanor? It is the little quirky details that make fairytale characters so unique and memorable.

Objectives:

- Students will learn about the newest addition to the UnMuseum; *The Story Tree*
- Students will come up with their own fairytale character
- Students will understand the importance of character development to a stories plot

Materials and Resources:

Newsprint (for sketching)

Pencils

Transparent Plastic Overhead Sheets

Sharpie Markers

Overhead Projector

Critical Questions:

- What are the parts of a story?
- What role do characters play in a story? Why are they important?
- What makes a great character?

Activities:

Preliminary Discussion:

- Discuss the UnMuseum piece *The Story Tree* and how it combines the artists love of fairytales with their love of art
- Have students discuss their favorite fairytales, especially their favorite characters from fairytales. Have students explained why these tales and characters are their favorites, make them think of why they appeal to them.

Art Activity:

- Students will start by developing some characteristics of their character:
 - What do they look like?
 - What do they do?
 - Are they a Hero or a Villain?
 - Are they mean, funny, weird, arrogant, nice, etc.?
 - What setting are they in?
 - Do they have a job?
 - Are they on a quest?
 - Are they at home?



- Next, using a sheet of news print and a pencil, students should start to draw their character and a setting for them. Have them do several sketches and decide on which one they like best.
- Students will also write a page long story with their character in it. It can be an introduction to their character and what they do.
- Using the sketches they have made student will be given to pieces of transparent plastic overhead sheets. They will use the sheet with sharpie markers to draw their character on one sheet and their characters setting on the other.
- Once they are done, project the character in front of their setting on the overhead projector. It may be fun for students to switch their backgrounds and characters with one another and see if any other setting fits with their character.

Assessment:

- Students understand how to express narrative through story book images
- Students use fairytales and other stories to gain inspiration for their own story book character
- Students have created their own story book character and a setting for them

National Standards:

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

5-8.2 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

Using knowledge of structures and functions

5-8.1 Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work

5-8.2 Students employ organizational structures and analyze what makes them effective or not effective in the communication of ideas

Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

5-8.2 Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks

Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

5-8.2 Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts

Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

5-8.1 Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art

5-8.2 Students analyze contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks through cultural and aesthetic inquiry

Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

5-8.1 Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context

5-8.2 Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts

