

Learning to See

A Lesson based on the works of art in
Jim Dine, Some Drawings

At the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University
April 7-June 18, 2006

This exhibition of nearly 80 works on paper, the majority from private collections, illustrates the range and mastery of Jim Dine's draftsmanship over more than four decades. Early tool collage drawings are shown alongside powerful portrait and figure studies drawn in a variety of media. In recent years, Dine has created large painterly pastels executed with a bravura that places them somewhere between painting and drawing.

Goals of this Lesson:

1. To examine how an artist sees an object.
2. To realize that the scale of an object can be changed in order to create drama in a work of art.
3. To explore materials and objects and how they can be altered.

Illinois Learning Standards fulfilled:

Fine Arts

State Goal 25: Know the language of arts.

State Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

Age Level: Elementary and Middle School
Estimated Time: 80 minutes (may be completed in multiple classes)
Specific Topic: Learning to look closely at an object
Subtopic: How to use/render objects in charcoal

Key concepts:

- Learning to see
- Rendering objects in personal style
- Use of shade/light
- Additive/subtractive methods
- Awareness of Composition

Objectives of this lesson:

1. Students will learn how to see detail in objects despite their size.
2. Students will use light and shade to convey shape.
3. Students will learn to use not only additive processes, but also subtractive.
4. Students will be aware of composition while creating their work.

Suggestions for student assessment:

Evaluate student work using the following criteria. It is advisable to share the criteria with your class before asking students to begin the assignment. Does the student work:

1. Convey an understanding composition and its effect on the work?

2. Realize they can convey shape not only through line, but shadow?
3. Acknowledge that an object's scale can be altered to create a dramatic work of art?

Teaching resources necessary to support this lesson: Slides or large copies of Jim Dines drawings that display small objects, or other artwork.

Lesson Plan:

- I. Share works of art by *Jim Dine*, or pieces of art that use small objects to create a bigger work of art. **[10 minutes]**

-Before you start the lesson, ask students to bring in an object that they can fit in the palm of their hand.

- II. Discuss by asking the following questions:

- What kind of shapes do you see?
- How are the shapes defined?
- Does the artist use shade and light? If so, how?
- Lead a discussion about how when small objects are rendered in large scale, the objects take on a more dramatic effect. Ask students if the black and white charcoal adds to the effect and why.

[10 minutes]

III. After the discussion have the students set up their object in front of them. Have them look at the object and try to think of how they want their drawing composed (looking at it straight, from above, from below...). Hand each student a piece of drawing paper and have the charcoal readily available. **[10 minutes]**

IV. Demo how to use charcoal i.e. blending, erasing, pressure, etc. **[10 minutes]**

V. Once students have decided how they want their composition arranged, let them begin drawing. While they are drawing remind them to pay special attention to light and shade, how not only line can define shape, and that their erasure may also be used as a tool, not just a means to get rid of mistakes. **[35 minutes]**

VI. After students have completed their drawings, set them up around the room so that the students can see what their peers accomplished. Try to have them guess both what the object depicted is and whom they think depicted it. **[15 minutes]**

Supply List

- ✓ **18"x 24" drawing paper**
- ✓ **Varying hardness of charcoal (vinyl and compressed)**
- ✓ **Rubber Erasers**
- ✓ **A Lamp (if there is not a good light source in the room).**



Completed work from *Learning to See* lesson plan