

InsideART, Spring 2024

*Robert Rauschenberg at USF Graphicstudio*



### **Title**

***OFFSET: Robert Rauschenberg at USF Graphicstudio: Art, Democracy, and Diplomacy***

### **Estimated Time for Completion of Lesson**

2 class periods

### **Concept/Main Idea of Lesson**

This lesson is intended as an introduction to the concepts and practices of Robert Rauschenberg's art, the importance of collaboration and achieving a mutual understanding through the creative process, and the legacy of these innovations still present in contemporary art today.

### **Intended Grade Levels**

Grades 9-12

### **Infusion/Subject Areas**

Visual Arts  
Social Studies

### **Curriculum Standards**

#### **Florida Curriculum Standards**

- Visual Arts:

VA.912.C.1.2: Use critical-thinking skills for various contexts to develop, refine, and reflect on an artistic theme.

VA.912.C.1.4: Apply art knowledge and contextual information to analyze how content and ideas are used in works of art.

VA.912.C.3.1: Use descriptive terms and varied approaches in art analysis to explain the meaning or purpose of an artwork.

VA.912.C.3.3: Examine relationships among social, historical, literary, and/or other references to explain how they are assimilated into artworks.

- Social Studies:

SS.912.H.2.5: Describe how historical, social, cultural, and physical settings influence an audience's aesthetic response.

National Standards for Arts Education

Anchor Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

National Council for the Social Studies

Culture

People, Places, and Environments

Global Connections

**Instructional Objectives**

The student will:

- Examine the life and work of artist Robert Rauschenberg.
- Consider how multidisciplinary creative collaborations can be egalitarian when giving equal attention to treatment, ideas, mediums, and their exchange.
- Consider Rauschenberg's notion that artists could serve as catalysts for social change and how the multidisciplinary approach addressed pertinent issues of the day.
- Review the ROCI project with the framework of Rauschenberg's belief in the power of art as a catalyst for positive social change and how the central tenant of the project; "the exchange of art and facts" could serve as a democratic and diplomatic initiative.
- Consider how generations of current contemporary artists (including those in *OFFSET*) still work under Rauschenberg's medium and material radicality, experimentation, and legacy of the anti-formalist way of working between art and life.
- Design their own artwork.

**Pre-Teaching:** Familiarize yourself with all lesson materials, and review the Notes View at the bottom of the PPT slides. Activate the PowerPoint presentation and display slide 1.

**Learning Activities Sequence**

**Attention-Getter:** *Whole Class Discussion*

Tell students that today they will become familiar with Rauschenberg's concepts and wide range of practices. Ask them to note different ways or if they have ever thought about creative collaborations that encourage positive change in the world. Ask students to note examples of how they believe positive social change can be achieved. Ask the students if they think the arts can participate in encouraging positive social change.

**PPT-Guided Teacher Presentation and Critical Viewing**

Tell students that today they will learn about the work of Robert Rauschenberg, an artist whose work is featured in *OFFSET: Robert Rauschenberg at USF Graphicstudio* at the USF Contemporary Art Museum in Tampa.

They will look at the innovations that created our current visual culture and at the legacy that came afterward. Frame the expectation by inviting students to consider how the visual and social impact of these works became a potent catalyst for social change. Encourage students to take notes during the presentation, making note of any works they would like to further research.

Share the PPT presentation (slides 1-27), encouraging students to take notes throughout, pausing to relay biographical information about the artists, point out features of the selected works and concepts, and field questions from students.

### **Whole Class Discussion and Debate**

Facilitate a class discussion by asking students to frame ideas of democracy and diplomacy through artmaking and the collaborative exchange of creative ideas:

*Do you feel that ART can spark a dialogue with goals toward achieving mutual understanding through the creative process?*

*Can ART be part of a peace-making effort between groups of people and nations?*

*Do you believe artists could serve as catalysts for social change? If yes, how so?*

*Do you think that creative collaborations between artists and the exchange of ideas could be a device to generate social change?*

### **Synthesizing, Writing, and Cooperative Learning:**

Based on the whole-class discussion, ask students to individually draft a working list of ways in which creative collaborations between artists and the exchange of ideas could be a device to generate positive social change toward achieving a mutual understanding through the creative process.

Allow students to share their drafts with a classmate sitting nearby. Encourage them to share their lists and further brainstorm together, then edit or add to their lists after listening to their classmates' ideas.

Formulate a whole-class list generated from the individual students' lists and post this on the board.

### **Closure: Personal Reflection and Creation**

1. Pair students into groups of two.
2. Ask them to imagine they have been awarded a large grant to be part of a multi-media peace-making enterprise between people and/or issues.
3. They can use the funding to create an artwork, gather materials, and do research.
4. The final artwork will be a collaborative effort, take the form of a **Combine** and be showcased in front of their school. What issues matter most?
5. Allow students to brainstorm what they would focus on, what kind of places they could source found materials, and how they would begin research and engage in important dialogues. Encouraging students to include a short (1-2 paragraphs) essay explaining their ideas.

**Vocabulary**

Collaboration, Combine, multi-disciplinary, multi-media, diplomacy, democracy, oeuvre, cyanotypes, etching

**Evaluation/Assessment**

Engagement throughout the class, participation, design of a *Combine*, and essay explaining their proposed work.

**Assignment**

Create a *Combine* inspired by someone important to you and as a collaboration with materials.

**TO BEGIN:**

Look closely at Rauschenberg's Combines. Encourage students to:

1. Let their eyes wander across the artwork. What do you see?
2. Describe the materials, the shapes, and the colors.
3. Recognize any items that look familiar.
4. How many different materials and/or processes were used?
5. Think about the individual you're making the work for or about and begin with colors, images, and objects related to them or your connection to them.
6. Gather materials.

**Materials and Resources**

- PowerPoint Presentation: *OFFSET: Robert Rauschenberg at USF Graphicstudio (Day 3)*
- Pen and paper or student notebooks
- Computer with projector
- A substrate for artwork (like a large poster board, piece of cardboard, canvas board, wood and/or paper)
- Scissors
- Glue or glue stick
- Tape
- Found objects such as items from a junk drawer, playing cards, old toys, fabric, sticks, and other natural objects
- Found images such as magazine images, old greeting cards, newspaper clippings, photographs
- Materials that connect objects: string, twigs, chopsticks, small details or pieces of furniture
- Materials that bend or move: paper chains, wire, rubber bands
- Personal materials: drawings and paintings you've made, doodles on scrap paper
- Paints, inks, markers, pencils, colored pencils
- Solvent if you want to create a solvent transfer

**Make It:**

## Plan the composition

1. Experiment with the placement of materials. Sometimes it helps to sketch out ideas.
2. Consider how the actual composition is inspired by the person in mind
3. Consider how the materials and images work together to tell the desired story
4. Cut out images and text
5. Plan where or if a solvent transfer will be added (advanced technique)

Create the *Combine*

1. Once there is a basic place to begin the composition, begin to collage the materials to the substrate and/or to each other
2. Use the glue and tape to attach your pieces to the substrate
3. Allow some things to join through overlapping
4. Remember each artist can paint over any portion, rip something, or make visual connections through the materials, images, lines, or color

Keep working until artists are happy with their *Combines*!

**Special Learner Accommodations**

Things to consider:

- Extra time for note-taking
- Translation dictionaries for ELLs
- Visually-rich PPT
- Graphic organizers
- Small group discussions/Cooperative learning
- Alternative assessment options

**Internet Links**

Rauschenberg Foundation: <https://www.rauschenbergfoundation.org/>

USF Contemporary Art Museum-OFFSET: Robert Rauschenberg at USF Graphistudo: [http://usfcam.usf.edu/CAM/exhibitions/2024\\_OFFSET\\_Rauschenberg/OFFSET\\_Rauschenberg.html](http://usfcam.usf.edu/CAM/exhibitions/2024_OFFSET_Rauschenberg/OFFSET_Rauschenberg.html)

**Video Links**

THE WORLD IS MY PALETTE - John R. Blakinger Talk - October 22, 2023

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qz6jHpv\\_9iU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qz6jHpv_9iU)

Charlie Rose interviews Robert Rauschenberg for his retrospective at the Guggenheim museum and walks through the Rauschenberg retrospective together, 1998.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDUbPqBRPvY>