



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1996 Volume III: Race and Representation in American Cinema

Representation in Art and Film: Identity and Stereotype

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.03.10
by Martha Savage

This unit is designed to make older middle school students look at and reflect upon art and film and to create art work with a deepening awareness of identity and stereotype. Examining stereotype in contemporary life, in personal experience, as a tool used by artists to heighten understanding, and the uses and absence of stereotype in depiction of characters in cinema are key components. Students create art work which expresses and elaborates upon these ideas. Through analysis of image and stereotype, students consider and evolve a more complex perception of personal identity.

Contemporary artists and film makers address stereotype and identity in a variety of ways. Approaches employed by African American artists Betye Saar, Faith Ringgold and Robert Colescott and film maker, Spike Lee are used to teach several of the lessons.

This unit is composed of seven lessons. The lessons employ both media with an emphasis on visual art, as well as a wide variety of age appropriate readings, videotapes, writing and discussion. Oral and written articulation of concepts, ideas and thoughts are balanced with a studio component. Visual articulation stresses a hands-on approach and demonstrates and reinforces student understanding and shows a synthesis of knowledge of complex topics.

Lesson #1: A Scrapbook/Journal Create an ongoing personal repository for ideas, reflection and information.

Lesson #2: Stereotype Defined Create a definition and rubric for identifying and interpreting stereotype.

Lesson #3: The One and Only Me, A Self-Portrait Interpret meaning in a portrait and express unique, individual qualities through a self-portrait.

Lesson #4: Get a Life! Rewriting and Redrawing the Lives of Well-Known

Stereotype Characters in Advertising Undo a familiar stereotype.

Lesson #5: Recontextualization Photo collage Critically examine ideas

about stereotype by recontextualizing, reversing and manipulating appropriated images.

Lesson #6: Heritage Shadow Box Select and utilize culturally significant objects and symbols in an artwork.

Lesson #7: Film Evaluation/Posters Reflect upon stereotype verses authentic film characters.

(Recommended for Art, grades 7-12)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>