

Empowerment Topic: Visual Arts Careers

Lesson Objective

To help familiarize students with career possibilities in visual arts and to begin to explore the value of such careers.

Preparation

Preview the video (1 minute 38 seconds) in advance of the lesson.

Warm-up Activity

1. Ask students to tell what they know about the phrase “visual arts.”
2. After explaining what is meant by visual arts (artistic activity involving the act of telling stories through things we can see such as photography, art, videos and movies) have students name people they know personally or whom students have heard of who have careers as visual artists.
3. To acquaint students with the work of visual artists, visit your public library to secure some background information about photographers, artists, film producers and directors who live(d) and work(ed) in your city or town.
4. While there, request recommendations for similarly themed short biographies or summaries aimed at the middle grade audience.
5. Have students each choose one visual artist career; help students list the pros and cons of having such a career.

View the Video: *Visual Arts Careers*

1. Tell students they will be watching the video titled “Visual Arts Careers.” (Tip: You can use steps 2, 3 and 4 to establish a framework for watching the video, or just skip ahead to step 5.)
2. Explain that the video presents role models who work as visual artists who talk about why visual arts is a good career choice.
3. Point out that each of the role models in the video is a visual artist. (NB: Each woman’s career title appears on the screen along with her.)
4. Tell students that, as they view the video, they should listen for reasons the visual artists believe that they should consider visual arts as a career.
5. View the video together.
6. Tell students they are going to view the video again; before this second viewing, invite students to formulate questions or comments about the benefits (good parts) of working as a visual artist as discussed in the video and to be prepared to discuss these after viewing the video.
7. Following the video viewing, have students tell about the types of visual arts careers they think they might enjoy learning more about and why.

Video Follow-Up

1. Ask students to discuss or record their video-related questions, comments, reactions and responses.
2. Invite students to note specific things they learned about the different visual arts careers featured in the video and to reflect upon their observations (e.g., "I liked when one role model said that women should consider a career in television and film because a lot of time authentic women's voices aren't heard.")
3. Encourage students to edit any written work so it can be shared with classmates.
4. Use student writings as a springboard to further discussion.

Extension Activities

- Invite students to research and explore other types of visual arts careers not included in the video. Help students discover what it would be like to work in each career. Have students explain why they would or would not want to work in each of these careers.
- Invite one or more visual artists to visit with students. Encourage the artists to share the nature of their work and to answer any questions the students may have about pursuing a career as a visual artist.

Related Questions to Explore

Use the list of questions below to help students learn more about the information presented in the video:

- What is a Photography Curator and what kind of work do they do?
- How is it possible to use artwork to tell a story?
- How would you feel if your artwork was on display for all to see? Explain your answer.
- What does it mean when we talk about someone's "authentic voice?"
- How is being a visual artist like being a magician?
- Besides exploring the Career Girls website, what are some other ways you can learn more about career possibilities as a visual artist?