**Curriculum Overview**

**Enduring Idea**: Throughout time and across cultures, humans have used art to respond to their world. to different situations, experiences, people, and ideas.

**Rationale**:

I chose to base my curriculum off of the idea of responding to situations through art, because I think it is an important aspect of art, and also an aspect that up to this point, students may not really have been exposed to. Certainly they’ve been exposed to the idea of using art to express yourself, but creating art in response to something is something that I feel goes even deeper. It forces students to process ideas, events, and their reactions to them, and then to interpret and work through those thoughts through a piece of art.

What I think is so important about that is that not only is it prevalent throughout art, and has the potential to create awareness, it also has the ability to be intensely personal to the artist. After all, it is your own response that you are interpreting. It is teaching students a healthy way to think about and work through their world as well as their reactions to it. They can simply express their reactions, but it also can help students to become aware of their reactions. I think that is extremely key for students, particularly at this stage of their lives, when they are becoming their own people, and are on a journey of self discovery.

Learning about responding, and giving students a way to respond, and think about responding is just another important step in that process of self discovery, and it is one that I feel the arts are uniquely able to pursue. It engages students in a different way of viewing their world. Not only are given the opportunity to express their responses, I will be equipping them with the tools to do so. This curriculum is meant to give students a voice, but also to help them think about how they want to use that voice.

Even beyond creating art, I want students to come away from this class better able to engage their world, and to consider and interpret their responses to it, whether through art, journaling, or any other medium.

Also, because this curriculum is constructed for an Intro to art class, that is open to all students, I think it is an important aspect of art making to consider, and one that is not immediately apparent. I am focusing on not only teaching students to analyze their own reactions, but also on showing them the precedent that exists in art history and the art world, so that they can see different ways that art has been used as a response throughout history.

**Program Overview**:

My program is rooted in the importance of using art to respond to the world, and so I created a curriculum that covers a wide range of responses. I focused my units on 4 main areas that I felt were important things that we as humans respond to in our day to day lives, thus giving students a starting point to begin thinking about their responses. The 4 topics that I chose are responding to the environment, responding to other people, responding to our own experiences, and responding to beliefs and other intangible things. I designed the curriculum to begin at the most apparent and accessible of these topics, and progress to the most abstract, so that as we move through the curriculum, students are learning and growing in their ability to process and analyse responses so that they are able to better engage the more difficult ideas presented later. In that way, the year long curriculum becomes a journey for students to follow.

In addition to progressing from a conceptual perspective, the curriculum progresses skill wise, as well. It is perhaps not so much a progression as it is a sampling, introducing students to a wide array of materials, and in turn giving students the opportunity to explore their responses in many different ways.

By exploring these various avenues, students are also exploring technique, as well as gaining skills in each area. My goal is for student to get a taste of everything, so that they may find what it is they love to do, and then pursue that.

**Unit 1: Responding to your Environment**

**Overview and Rationale**:

Responding to your environment is an important idea for students to understand, since it is something that we encounter and interact with on a daily basis. Thus, it is a good starting point for students in this curriculum, because they have already encountered it, and have had to respond to it in various ways. Through this unit, I will simply be bringing these ideas to students notice so that they consciously think about them. Even more so, if students haven’t been engaging in that before, this will give them the opportunity to further explore and engage the world around them with a fresh perspective.

This unit approaches our relationship and response to the environment and the world around us from diverse perspectives, and engages students in different creative and art making processes, starting from the ground up, with a drawing project. It also takes students through ideas such as responding to their world dimensionally, through sculpture and installation based projects. Through these concepts, my goal is for students to think about and engage their environment differently, and to be more aware of their responses to it.

**Lessons:**

1. Reaction and Interaction
2. Harmonious Existence
3. Constructing Environment
4. Environment Inspiration

**Lesson 1: Reaction and Interaction**

**Overview and Rationale**:

In this lesson, students will have the chance to directly react to and interact with their immediate environment. Through looking at the work of street artists like Banksy, they will be introduced to a different side of art then they may have been exposed to before, and in turn will gain different ideas and experience. Through this, students will be given a different way to think about and respond to the world around them, by directly being influenced by what is already there.

I chose to use drawing for this lesson because I drawing is an important basis for almost all art forms and mediums. Even more, it is something that most students have done before, and so can be thought of as common starting ground. Through this drawing project, students will not only address their immediate physical environment, but also the idea of their community, and how that is also an environment.

**Lesson 2: Harmonious Existence**

**Big Idea:**  Artists can work in a harmonious way with their environment.

**Overview and Rationale:**

Students will learn in this lesson a different way of responding to the environment, particularly the natural one, but it can be applied to any environment. Through examining the work and Andy Goldsworthy, they will learn about responding to the environment in a beneficial way, that will not harm the world around them, but instead focuses on how to harmoniously work with it. They will explore this idea by designing and creating their own installations, which may be either indoors or outdoors, but they must use non-permanent materials that are specific to the location that the chose.

Not only does this cause students to consider their environment, but it forces them to think about their effect on the world around them. It shows students that they can still find ways to respond to their environment, as well as work through their own thoughts and relationship to the environment in a non-harmful way.

**Lesson 3: Constructing Environment**

**Big Idea:**  Artists can respond to their environment by creating and fabricating it.

**Overview and Rationale:**

Through this lesson, students will explore the idea of creating and constructing their own environments. By looking at architecture throughout history, as well as some contemporary architecture that directly responds to the needs of the world, both people and nature (“green” houses, solar/wind enrgy, etc) students will formulate their own ideas about what an environment can be. They will then apply these ideas to their own design, not only thinking about how their design responds and works with or against the environment, but also thinking about the response and reaction that their own designs might achieve.

This project will cause students to consider their own impact, and how their response causes or is affected by that idea. Additionally, students will apply design skills and knowledge and learning of architecture in order to effectively complete this project. They will simply be drawing up designs, but they will also thoroughly label them and have a chance to explain their design choices. In this way, I hope to cause students to think about and analyze their own responses to spaces, both natural and created.

**Lesson 4: Environment Inspiration**

**Big Idea:** Artists can respond to their environment by gaining inspiration from it.

**Overview and Rationale:**

In this final lesson of the unit, students will go beyond simply physical responses to the world around them, and break into more conceptual responses. They will look as how artists take inspiration from their world, but natural and industrial, to create art. We will view and discuss Maya Lin’s *What is missing* project as an example of inspiration from the world around you. We will also view Andy Wyeth’s work, as well as others from different environments (cities, small towns, north, south, global, etc). Students will then choose any location or environment that they find inspiring, and create an image in response to it.

Students will be encouraged to take their ideas a step further, by learning about this possibility. From this lesson, students will see how artists respond to all of their surroundings, and how they do so in unique and varying ways. I want students to walk away from this lesson with the increased perception of the world around them, and how they respond to the world, in a inspirational manner, as well as how their responses can affect it.