Lesson Series: Oscar Moya  
Theme: Identity - Hard Working People  
Grades: 3rd, 4th & 5th

Authors:
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Summary
This lesson investigates real world examples of individuals we can appreciate and celebrate and prompts students to make direct connections to their own lives. Students discuss examples in their everyday life experiences and identify individuals that have an importance to them. Students look closely at Oscar Moya’s acrylic painting Cuello Azul (Blue Neck) and gain further knowledge by reading, and discussing texts connected to the art work. As a final activity, students will render and color an illustration that celebrates a family member that exemplifies and celebrates an example of hard work with the use of artistic elements.

Lesson Overview
Grade: Elementary (3–5)  
Time Required: 5 class periods (40 – 50 minutes each)

Background Needed
There is no specific background needed for this lesson

Essential Questions
- How do artists use everyday life experiences to promote and celebrate pride and significance?  
- How do artists use personal examples within their work?  
- How can artists use the elements of art to tell a story of pride and importance?

Enduring Understandings
- Life experiences help develop self-identity and allow for celebration of pride and resilience.  
- Real life examples and experiences can help us understand and convey our identity.  
- Understanding the use of the elements of art can facilitate the ability to describe and transmit an idea.

Objectives
Students will be able to:
• analyze and interpret a work of art  
• write a description associated with the art being showcased  
• provide visual evidence to support narrative  
• identify how space and shape are used in paintings to create emphasis  
• write a description that describes a family member or friend that connects to the painting Cuello Azul (Blue Collar) as a form of appreciation and celebration  
• create an illustration that demonstrates the understanding of placement, emphasis, shape, and space, and how to create the illusion of space with the use of foreground, middle ground and background along with understanding basic color theory.
Key Vocabulary
Identity
Theme
Working class
Space
Symbol

Standards Connections
Common Core Standards
Anchor Standards in Readings
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2
English Language Arts Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2
Anchor Standards in Writing
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.A, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.B
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.D
Anchor Standards in Speaking and Listening
Comprehension and Collaboration:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1
Presentation and Knowledge of Ideas
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.C
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.2
Visual Arts
VA:Cr1.1.3a
VA:Cr1.1.4a
VA:Cr1.1.5a
VA:Cr3.1.3a
VA:Cr3.1.4a
VA:Cr3.1.5a

Materials In the Classroom
- Background Information about Oscar Moya
- Visual Thinking Strategy writing worksheet guide
- Pencils and pens
- Drawing paper
- Colored pencils
- Writing paper or journals
- Computer with internet access
- Color Wheel worksheets
Works of Art
- Oscar Moya, Blue Neck (Cuello azul)

Lesson Steps

Lesson Day 1
Have students explore the image by Oscar Moya: Display the image of Blue Neck (Cuello azul) by Oscar Moya, and allow students to view and study the image closely before classroom participation. Discuss what students see in the painting and if any of the symbols and figures in the work allow for further conversation. Discuss connections that can be made to real life experiences, and the importance of hard work in our everyday life. Discuss the need to sustain a life for themselves and others as a form or survival. Discuss the idea that hard work in school allows us to achieve the ultimate goal of knowledge. Use the following questions to allow students to begin writing a free analysis with the help of these questions:

- What do you see in the picture?
- Why is hard work important?
- Who can you think of as an example of hard work?

Chart students’ responses on the board under the following categories as they share:

Description/Adjectives       Emotions/Feelings       Verbs/Actions -ing       Thoughts

Lesson Day 2
Teacher and students re-visit Blue Neck (Cuello azul) and review background information about artist Oscar Moya and his work. Teacher asks students to share a few more adjectives and verbs based on the information given. Project and distribute copies of Oscar Moya’s Blue Neck (Cuello Azul) and explain that this is an acrylic painting. Explain that acrylic paintings are the leading alternative to traditional oil paintings because they use less harmful materials.

Divide students into small groups of three or four. Request that students begin to study the painting by Oscar Moya for a moment on their own to look for clues that can help us understand the meaning the artist is trying to convey (colors, lines, symbols, placement emphasis, space). Inform students that they will participate in a Visual Literacy exploration. They will discuss methods the artist uses to celebrate and bring attention to those individuals who work hard on a daily basis. Have students discuss each of the questions in their individual groups before recording their responses.

1. Teacher distributes Visual Thinking Strategy writing worksheet guide, along with pencils and pens.

2. Teacher directs students to use the VTS writing guide to work on recording information. This will later facilitate the writing of a description based on the painting and an individual in their family who they admire and appreciate for their hard work.

3. Students use their Visual Thinking Strategy writing guides to begin writing their first description of a family member who exemplifies hard work that reminds them of Oscar Moya’s painting. Teacher directs students to share drafts with three peers and ask for peer to peer compliments and respectful suggestions for improvement.
**Close Look Questions:**

What do you see in the painting? List all the things you can see, pay attention to all the details in the painting.

- What images and symbols in the painting are familiar?
- What is the painting about? What makes you say that?
- What symbol or subject make the painting to have the highest importance? Can you share evidence that makes you say that?

**Lesson Day 3**

Conduct a close art study and color theory read:

Teacher projects image of Blue Neck (Cuello azul) and discusses the painting with the students as they collectively analyze the painting. Teacher talks about elements of art such as foreground, middle ground and background to discuss the composition of the painting, as well as the mood of the painting with the use of color and lines. The teacher asks questions related to color theory to assess students' knowledge and understanding of color, and the effect it can have in art. Teacher discusses how the artists used lines to direct the eye to the center of the painting.

**Teacher discusses art terms and vocabulary as needed, such as:**

- foreground—the part of a scene that appears closest; what is in the front of the middle ground and background

- background—the part of a scene that appears most distant; what is behind the foreground and middle ground

- shape—a closed line. Shapes are flat and can express length and width. Shapes can be geometric, like squares and circles; or organic, like free-form or natural shapes.

- emphasis—the part of the design that catches the viewer's attention. The artist makes one area stand out using size, color, texture, and shape, contrasting it with other areas.

- Line- and the 5 types of lines that allow artists to manipulate illustrations as well as direct the viewer eye in a piece of work.

- Color-theory will be discussed as this can help artists create a mood when using a certain color pallet.

1. Teacher passes out color wheel worksheets for students to engage and practice color theory. Students only receive the Primary colors (color pencils) and explore methods of color mixing.

**Exploration of the artwork:** Use questions like the following to guide a class discussion of Cuello Azul (Blue Collar)

- What topics were discussed with your classmates during peer to peer analysis of the painting?
- What symbols did Moya use in his painting to help you identify the meaning of the painting?
- What methods did the artist use to bring attention to the main figure in the painting?
• Did the colors used in the painting give you a certain feeling?
• Did the colors used by the artists bring attention to certain symbols and figures in the painting? Can you explain how?
• Why do you think the painting is named Cuello Azul (Blue collar)? Did information about the artist’s background and other exercises help you with answer this question?

**Have students free write about Hard Work:** Look at the painting and everything in it—the person, the clothing, the place, the colors and the contrast between them, the angle from which you see the person, the background and edges. Think about how it makes you feel and imagine what may be happening at this moment, what may have happened leading before this moment, or what happens after it. What does it make you think or feel about hard work?

Write a fiction story, a poem, or an essay about a worker, a group of workers, or a work situation that the painting inspires for you. It could be a real or imagined job, or a combination of the two, or even a job that only exists in dreams. What job might this person be doing? What other hard jobs does it help you imagine, whether they are real jobs or imagined jobs? Where does this work happen? What's going through a worker’s head as they do their job? What does the worker see, hear, smell, taste, or feel on their skin as a part of the job? Is what you imagine for your writing real, or a dream, or combination of the two? What is at stake with this job?

**Lesson Day 4**

Have students create Hard Working symbolism illustrations: tell students to look at their writings. Have them create a graphic organizer that can help them collect important information that will allow them to gather information for their illustrations. Explain that the graphic organizer will help them gather symbols to be used in their final illustration.

Have students create images that were gathered from their graphic organizer on separate drawing paper. These drawings will be helpful for their final illustration. Students create their own illustration with a focus on a person who works hard in their family. Teacher asks students to choose a person from their family to use as an example of a hard-working person. The teacher directs students to remember techniques used by Oscar Moya to create emphasis through the use of shapes, lines and space (foreground, middle ground and background) to highlight and celebrate the individual being celebrated through this illustration. Encourage students to consider the following:

• How can you draw attention to the person who works hard?
• How will you present the person in your illustration? Is the person standing, sitting or moving?
• What shapes, symbols can you use to bring attention and emphasis to the main figure in your illustration?
• What colors would you use to create a mood in the illustration?

Have students write artist statements: Ask students to write a statement that explains the significance and importance of their illustration of a hard-working family member and how it reflects their identity. The artist statement should include specific decisions they used regarding the selection of symbols, color, line, shape, emphasize, space etc.
Lesson Day 5

Share Hard Work Illustrations: Invite students to share their illustrations with the class and explain who they chose and why. Remind the class that understanding other people’s life experiences not only informs, but enriches our understanding of people’s identities, values, beliefs and over-all life experiences.

• Teacher passes out writing paper and ask students to write their own artist statement related to their family member used to inspire their illustration.

• Ask students to evaluate their writing along with drawings. Teacher will ask students to write a self-reflection that describes what changes they would make for improving both their description and illustration.

• Teacher will create a classroom exhibit and have students display their finished pieces of art work, along with their written description and invite other classrooms to visit and enjoy.

Additional Resources

Inter-University Program for Latino Research, Chicago Latino Artchive, a Century of Chicago Latino Art

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Teacher Resource Color Theory Website: https://color.adobe.com/create