Lesson Series: Artist Victoria Delgadillo  
Theme: Identity - Self Portrait mixed media painting  
Grades: 6th

Authors:
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Summary
This lesson series explores Victoria Delgadillo’s series of portraits on mercado bags and compares them to the self-portrait styles of other artists. Discussion is centered on how artists capture identity through the use of symbols. Students further engage and connect with the artwork by creating their own self portrait.

Artmaking Techniques
- Painting (proportional portraits)
- Basic sewing
- Sculpture

Students discuss the symbols that best represent their identity and paint a self-portrait on canvas. Students sew the self-portrait onto Mercado bags, and then make the bags three dimensional using modeling clay to create objects to go in the bag that further represent their identity.

Lesson Overview

Time needed
10-12 class periods (40-50 min each)

Background needed
Artist’s works of portraits and Self-portraits (Victoria Delgadillo)


Victoria Delgadillo was born in 1951 in California where she attended the University of California, San Diego. She is a multimedia artist that has worked with many art forms such as painting, print, digital art, mixed media and film, but her most important art practice is in engagement and collaboration. She values non-traditional art spaces and believes in making art accessibility to all. Much like the Chicano art scene, Delgadillo creates public awareness through her art. She uses art to express her cultural values and shows us every day social issues and struggles. Some issues that she as a Chicana artist focuses on is raising awareness and informing others about their history, social, political, cultural issues, equal opportunities and the many untold stories. In her work Laura Berenice (2003), she addresses the story of Laura Berenice who was 17 when she went missing; her murdered body was found in Lote Bravo, Juarez, Mexico. Victoria Delgadillo actively calls attention to the femicides of Juarez through her artwork as a way to protest and inform others.
Mercado bags are colorful mesh shopping bags that are very popular throughout Mexico. Hand woven bags in Mexico originate back to the pre-Hispanic era and during the colonial times the Spanish introduced new materials and techniques.

**Essential Questions**
- Who does Victoria Delgadillo paint portraits of?
- What is going on in history around Victoria Delgadillo’s Homemade series?
- Why does she include symbols in her portraits?
- The elements of identity/ What makes your identity?
- How is color scheme used to represent a person’s identity/personality?

**Enduring Understandings**
- A person’s identity can be represented using symbols and colors in a work of art.
- Understanding your own identity and how to express and represent them in a painting.

**Objectives**
- Students will learn about various portrait/self-portrait artists
- Students will learn about the artist Victoria Delgadillo
- Students will think about what is going on in history around Victoria Delgadillo’s portrait paintings
- Students will learn to look at and interpret an artist’s identity
- Students will learn to find identity symbols in works of art
- Students will look within themselves and write about their own identity using symbols
- Students will learn to draw facial features using correct proportions
- Students will learn to transfer a photo using carbon paper
- Students will learn to mix colors and choose a color scheme for their painting
- Students will learn to draw a self-portrait on canvas with various symbols that tell us about their identity
- Students will think about what they would put inside their bag to represent them.

**Key Vocabulary**
- Identity
- Symbols
- representation
- Culture
- Self-Portrait
- Portrait
- proportion
- Biography
- Elements of art
- History
- race
- ethnicity
- gender
- personality
- beliefs
- qualities
- Characteristics
Standard Connections
Common Core Standards
**Anchor Standards in Readings**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2
**Anchor Standards in Writing**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.A
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.D
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.D
**Anchor Standards in Speaking and Listening**
**Comprehension and Collaboration:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2
**Presentation and Knowledge of Ideas**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.5
**Visual Arts**
VA:Cr2.1.6
VA:Cr2.2.6
VA:Cr2.3.6
VA:Cr3.1.6
VA:Cr7.2.6
VA:Re8.1.6
VA:Cn11.1.6

**Materials-In the classroom**
Power point presentation of images with Victoria Delgadillo’s work, Frida Kahlo self-portraits, Amy Sherald's portrait paintings
Paper
folder
Carbon paper
Pencils
Canvas (7X7 inch)
Several size paint brushes
Scissors
Acrylic paint & acrylic markers
Mixing palettes
Paper towels
Mercado bags (amazon.com has many different colors and sizes)
Needles & Thread
Worksheet with face proportion
Identity Organizer Sheet

**Works of Art**
Victoria Delgadillo, Laura Berenice (2003) Acrylic on canvas and mixed media
Other resources
-Victoria Delgadillo, Homemade series installation work:
-Victoria Delgadillo, Homemade Juarez Keepsake, 2004
-Victoria Delgadillo, Homemade in America, 2004
-Victoria Delgadillo, Heartfelt & Homespun, 2004
-Frida Kahlo, Self Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird (1940)
-Frida Kahlo, The Frame (1938)
-Frida Kahlo, Me and My Parrots (1941)
-Frida Kahlo, Self Portrait with Cropped Hair (1940-1941)
-Amy Sherald, First Lady Michelle Obama (2018)
-Amy Sherald, She had an Inside and an Outside Now and Suddenly Knew How Not to Mix Them (2018)
-Amy Sherald, She Was Learning to Love Moments, To Love Moments for Themselves (2017)
-Amy Sherald, All the Unforgotten Bliss (The Early Bird) (2017)
-Kehinde Wiley, Randerson Romualdo Cordeiro (2008)

Lesson Steps-

Day 1. **View and discuss the works of art:**
Introduce the work of Victoria Delgadillo and other self-portrait/portrait artists.

Begin by showing students the Homemade series installation work by Victoria Delgadillo and background information about Delgadillo along with showing several images of self-portraits by Frida Kahlo, portraits by Amy Sherald and portrait paintings by Kehinde Wiley using the power point.

Use the following questions to guide a VTS class discussion while viewing the artist's works of art:
-What do you see in this painting? / What is going on in this painting?
-What do you see that makes you say that?
-What more can you tell me about this painting?

Continue to ask these questions for each painting and artist introduced.

Discuss what symbols are, and ask students why and how they are used to communicate.

-Ask students to discuss and identify the symbols that they see in these works of art.
-Introduce the elements of identity and what makes up our identity.
-Discuss how elements of identity are both changeable and stable aspects and influenced by both outside and inside factors. Use the power point to talk about the 3 basic elements of identity: Personal identity, Family identity and Social identity and how each of these elements are determined by individual circumstances.
-Distribute folders for students to keep their works inside along with the identity organizer sheet to begin to fill out.
-Have students continue with writing a list of symbols and drawing several symbols that represent their identity for the remainder of the class.
Day 2. Discuss and share what makes up their identity within their group:
- Remind students about the about the 4 artists that were presented to them in the previous class (Victoria Delgadillo, Frida Kahlo, Amy Sherald, Kehinde Wiley) while showing them the power point of images of their works.
- With a partner have students chose a painting of Victoria Delgadillo and take turns asking each other: What do you see or what is going on in this painting, what makes you say that? What more can you tell me about this painting?
- Have students take out their identity organizer sheets, blank sheets of paper and folders.
- Have students discuss what they believe makes up their individual identity and the symbols they can use to express their own identity within their group of 4.
- Tell students to draw several sketches of their individual identity symbols.
- Hand out worksheet on facial proportions.
- Demonstrate a step by step lesson on how to draw a proportioned face by splitting up the face in half vertically and horizontally
- Show different techniques on drawing eyes, nose and mouth.
Have students continue practicing drawing a proportioned self-portrait on their own.

Day 3. Have students begin drawing self-portrait sketches with identity symbols:
- Hand out folders and pencils
- Have students do a 5-minute exercise where they sketch a proportioned face reminding them of the techniques they learned in the previous class.
- Tell students to take another 15 minutes in drawing symbols that represent them within and around their drawing.
- Have the power point with artist's portraits (Delgadillo, Kahlo, Sherald, Wiley) running in the background to inspire the students.
- During this time take a photograph of each student while the rest of the students continue to work on their drawing.
- Have students share their drawings with a partner asking the following questions:
Guiding Questions to ask partner:
- What is going on in this drawing?
- What symbols do you see?
- What do you think the meaning behind that symbol could be?
- What makes you say that?
- Is there anything else you notice about the drawing?

- Before the next class print the photograph to the size of the canvas 7x7.

Day 4: Have students take a look back at Victoria Delgadillo’s Homemade series works of art and discuss whether their interpretation of her works and symbols have changed and why?
Show students Victoria Delgadillo’s Homemade series and ask the following questions.

Guiding Questions:
- What do you notice now that you didn’t before?
- What symbols do you see?
- Are these symbols clear?
- What do these symbols tell us about her identity?
- Do these symbols help you understand the work of art?
**Give instructions on how to use carbon paper:**
In order to transfer their photograph, you must first place the canvas down on the desk, place carbon paper with the black charcoal facing down onto the canvas (You will be looking at the back of the carbon paper) and place the photograph on top.
- Use a paper clip or tape to hold the 3 layers (canvas, carbon paper, photograph) all together.
- Have students transfer their image onto the canvas by drawing on top of the lines in the photograph (trace the entire photograph).
- Have students then remove the photograph and carbon paper once it is all traced and draw their background using their symbols onto the canvas.

**Day 5. Discuss color theory and the feelings that go into colors:**
- Pass out folders with blank paper and pencils.
- Have students look back at the power point of artist’s portraits/ self-portraits
- Ask students why did these artists like Victoria Delgadillo chose certain colors in her Homemade series?
  Have students describe the colors in the works of art.

  - Explain color theory: the science and art of using color. It explains how we perceive color and the effects on how colors mix. Colors are grouped together in 3 categories in a color wheel which are primary colors (red, blue, yellow), secondary colors (green, orange, purple) and tertiary colors (magenta, vermillion, violet, amber, teal, chartreuse). By mixing a pair of the primary colors you get the secondary colors. By mixing equal parts of one primary color and one secondary color you get a tertiary color.

  **Guiding Questions:**
  - What colors do you see?
  - Do you get a certain feeling (sad, mad, happy) when looking at these works of art?
  - What emotions do you notice from the artwork?
  - How do you think the artist was feeling when they created the painting?
  - What do the colors that you use tell others about yourself?

- Have students get a palette with primary colors (red, blue, yellow) of acrylic paint, a brush, water cup, paper and paper towels.
- Have students practice mixing colors into secondary colors (green, purple, orange) and remind them to think about the color scheme they will choose for their painting.

**Day 6. Mixing colors and deciding color scheme:**
- Pass out folders with sketches and handouts
- Discuss how to mix colors: What are primary colors and how do you make the secondary colors?
- Have students get a palette with acrylic paint, a brush, water cup, paper and paper towels.
- Have students paint a color scheme on paper and once finished have them ask a partner to interpret their feeling by the colors they are choosing to use.

  **Guiding questions to partner:**
  - Describe the colors in this painting.
  - How do they make you feel?
  - What makes you say that?

- Have students finalize their color scheme and have a clear idea of what colors they will be using when they paint on canvas.
Day 7. Have students paint on canvas:
- Pass out student folders with sketches, handouts and color scheme.
- Have students look over their notes and color scheme idea.
- Have students collect the material needed to paint on canvas. (Acrylic paint, palette, paint brush, paper towels, water cup, canvas).
- Once they are finished with their paintings have students place them on a table to dry and have them write about their self-portrait painting using the guiding questions to discuss their work of art.

Guiding Questions:
- What does this painting tell the viewer?
- What story am I trying to tell?
- If this painting could talk what would it say?
- What do the symbols represent?
- What are the colors you used?
- What is the feeling you want people to feel?
- How was this artwork made?
- What material did you use?
- How did you proportion the painting?
- What would the title be to this painting?

Day 8. Have students learn to sew their canvas on a Mercado bag:
- Demonstrate Victoria Delgadillo’s paintings sewn onto Mercado bags.
- Hand out painted canvas with their mercado bag, pencil, needle and thread.
- Give instructions to students to first begin with marking dots spaced apart 1 inch around the entire canvas.
- Show students how to use their needle & thread to poke through the dot and pull through the canvas.
- Have students try this step and continue until they finish sewing the canvas all the way around the Mercado bag.
- Help those who are having trouble with the sewing steps.
- Lastly, demonstrate how to loop the thread to tie a knot and cut over the knot.

Day 9. Making 3D symbols out of modeling air drying clay:
- Have students look back at their sketches and final painting and decide what 2 symbols they didn’t get to include in their painting and want to make into a 3D symbol.
- Show different ways that model magic air-drying clay can be used to create a symbol.
- Have students explore and practice with the clay and begin sculpting their symbol.
- Allow time for students to sculpt about 2-inch by 2-inch symbols out of the clay and leave to dry for the following class.

Day 10. Painting 3D symbols and share final art:
- Hand out student’s folder and their dried 3D sculpted symbol.
- Have students use acrylic markers and acrylic paint to paint their 3D symbols.
- Have students volunteer to show & discuss their final work of art to their class and along with their written piece about their work of art.
- Have students give feedback and do any final adjustments.
Day 10. Painting 3D symbols and share final art:
- Hand out student’s folder and their dried 3D sculpted symbol.
- Have students use acrylic markers and acrylic paint to paint their 3D symbols.
- Have students volunteer to show & discuss their final work of art to their class and along with their written piece about their work of art.
- Have students give feedback and do any final adjustments.

Guiding Questions for students while talking about their artwork:
- What is the title of your work?
- What is your color scheme and why did you choose it?
- What are your symbols and what is the meaning behind them?
- Describe the steps of how your work was made.
- Why did you choose those symbols to make into 3D?
- What message do you hope to tell others about yourself and your identity through this painting?

Additional Resources
- artsland.com/victoriadelgadillo
- www.victoriadelgadillo.com
- amysherald.com
- kehindewiley.com