

Creating A Public Mural Lesson

Public murals can be a source of pride for any community. Public murals can memorialize local heroes, important events or general themes with which everyone can relate. Public murals can brighten up a run down part of town or an industrial area. Public murals can become the focal point of a city park or popular area within a community. Students can create a mural to be displayed temporarily or permanently within their school community or even the greater community in which they live.

Procedures:

1. First students should see a variety of examples of public murals from around the world and from their local community. (Teacher can make a slideshow to share or have the students do the research depending on time, resources and the age of the students.)
2. The next step is to pick a location for the mural. A location within the school is most likely achievable (wall of the school library, entrance of the school, the cafeteria, the gym). A public location has more kinks to iron out, such as student transportation to the location, permission from the owner if the spot is on private property or from the city if it is a public spot. Some possibilities are: a local park, a mall, or a public library.
3. Students should next decide on a theme for their mural (a local hero or famous citizen, a positive message such as tolerance, fairness, recycling, art advocacy, etc.) The teacher can guide the students, but the students should ultimately decide on the theme for best student engagement. Students must consider who the main viewers of the mural will be and connect the theme to the audience. For example, a library mural could have a theme of literacy.
4. Students will now need to sketch ideas and brainstorm images they can include in the mural. Once a variety of images are created, students should vote on their favorites or for best student engagement, find a way to include at least something from each student's sketch. The final design should be agreed on by the whole group.
5. The next step is to pick a format and materials and divide up the work. Students can divide the final image using a grid so that each student or pair of students becomes responsible for a "square" of the grid. Students could also pick general areas to work on or even divide the project into jobs, such as painter, brush cleaner, paint pourer, water bucket helper, etc. and rotate jobs each day so that each student gets to participate in each role.

Not all murals need to be painted directly on the wall or even need to be created with paint! Here are some great ideas:

<http://chumleyartroom.blogspot.com/2013/09/mural-paintin.html>

Cardboard box mural can be transported and set up in various places and both sides can be painted for a freestanding wall.



Masking tape or painters tape can create exciting temporary murals!



<https://www.pinterest.com/superdarling/masking-tape-murals/>



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/231372499577934503/>



<https://petersansom.wordpress.com/2016/05/16/street-art-in-the-classroom-or-just-outside-it/>

PBS has a mural lesson online as well! <https://www.pbs.org/americanfamily/teacher2.html>