



## AFK ArtReach Video “Paths” Abstract Painting

### Activity:

Create a mixed media painting that tells a story of how you arrived to class today. In this video an AFK art educator shares ideas for using **painting, text, collage** and **intuitive mark making** to show gesture, depth and mood in an **abstract artwork**. This lesson is based on work by artist **Russna Kaur**.

### Inquiry Questions:

What are some ways we can interpret the idea of “paths”?

How can we use intuitive mark making to create a sense of mood in a non-representational artwork?

How can abstract shapes and symbols add to the psychological depth of an image?

### First Peoples Principles of Learning:

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational

Learning is embedded in memory, history and story

Learning requires exploration of one's identity

### Big Ideas:

Visual arts reflect the interconnectedness of the individual, community, history, and society.

(Art Studio 11)

Artistic expression is an artist's physical and cognitive articulation of our humanity. (Art Studio 11)

### Pre-Class Preparation:

The teacher will need to prepare the following materials prior to the activity:

- Computer and projector to display video in class
- 12" x 12" gessoed wood panels (or canvas)
- Graphite
- 2 12" x 12" pieces of thick white paper (preferably opaque vellum) per student
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brush
- Water pot
- A variety of dry materials including art sticks, pencil crayons, wax crayons
- Acrylic medium (to be used as adhesive)

## **Curricular Competencies: What students will DO**

**Students will be able to use the following creative process(es):**

Create a mixed media abstract painting using sensory inspiration, imagination, and inquiry (Arts Education)

Explore artistic possibilities using a range of materials, processes, and technologies (Arts Education)

Intentionally select and combine materials, processes, and technologies to convey ideas (Arts Education)

Take creative risks to express thoughts and emotions through artistic works (Art Studio 11)

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and place through art making (Art Studio 11)

Create artistic works to reflect personal voice, story, and values (Art Studio 11)

## **Concepts and Content: What students will KNOW**

**Students will know the following concepts and content:**

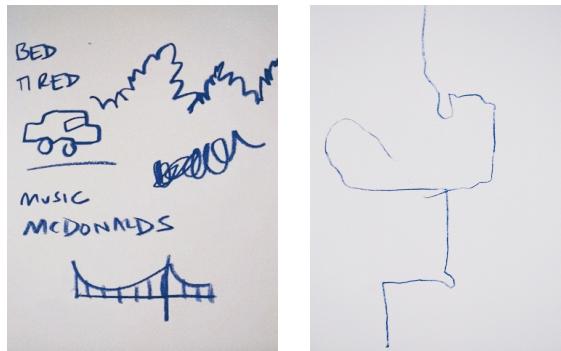
- Elements and principles of art and design including line, space, texture, variety and movement.
- Processes, materials, and techniques needed to draw and paint a mixed media abstract artwork.
- Image development strategies involving symbols, metaphors, gesture and abstraction.

## **Core Competencies (suggested questions for reflection)**

- COMMUNICATION: What stands out the most to you about Russna Kaur's work, and why do you think that is? What elements of Russna Kaur's work did you incorporate into your own painting?
- THINKING: What does it mean to create a mood in an artwork? How do you define "gesture" in art? How did you use this in your painting? What are some of the ways you created depth in your compositions?
- PERSONAL AND SOCIAL: What differences and similarities did you observe between the paintings that you and your classmates created? What connections did you notice in choices of colour, shape, text and mark making within the group?

## Lesson Guide

Begin with sketchbooks or scrap paper – students will make written and visual notes referencing paths, thoughts, sights, sounds and moods they encountered on their way to class. Include keywords, simplified shapes and intuitive marks or squiggles. OPTIONAL: Students can close their eyes and draw the line of their route.



Students can prepare a gessoed panel or canvas (or any stiff surface you'd like) by choosing one or two acrylic colours and creating a simple, rough wash for background. (It should not cover the whole surface evenly)



Using at least two (2) sheets of opaque vellum or another heavy paper, students will develop collaging surfaces to be cut out and arranged on their canvas or panel. Students are encouraged to use pencil crayons, wax crayons, graphite, art sticks and watered-down acrylic to depict lines and marks that demonstrate mood, emotion and memory without directly representing a recognizable image.

If students use text in their surface development, they should distort, separate and flip letters to maintain a sense of abstraction.



Lines, marks, symbols and shapes should overlap to add depth to the collage materials.

Once the surfaces feel complete, the students can begin cutting and arranging their collage pieces to a desired effect on their canvas. **HINT:** Think about repetition of shapes – echo drawn lines with cut lines, etc.! Consider the play of negative space as the composition is arranged.



Adhere collages to the final surface with acrylic medium (matte).



Once dry, use acrylic paint and graphite to add marks that will **unify** the whole image. Here we should be thinking about principles of design! **HINT:** Flip your painting around! See how it changes to work into it from a variety of angles.

Voila! Students should have an intuitive, abstract “map” of their journey to class.

## Assessment Ideas

FORMATIVE: Exit slip for each student:

“How do you define “**gesture**” and “**abstraction**”?

“What do you think makes these concepts useful when making or interpreting art?”

Use a Word Cloud generator to ask the group “What is uncomfortable about this exercise?”

Do a gallery walk with the group. Ask students to compare colours, shapes and marks they use.

Have students pair up with their finished pieces. Each student will pick three (3) marks or shapes from the other's work and give their impressions of what those might represent.

SUMMATIVE:

The piece clearly demonstrates personal voice

The process is informed by an awareness of place

The student has taken creative risks in combining materials and technologies to express their aesthetic point of view.