

Luke Meeken - February 15, 2012
ARTE 510 Lesson Plan
Grade 3

Concept: You can find symmetry in nature.

National Content Standards: NA-VA.K-4.2: Students describe how different organizational principles cause different responses.

VA SOLs for Visual Arts: 3.4.4 The students will identify and use balance, symmetry.

Cultural Reference: Ernst Haeckel, 19th cent. German artist and scientist who published *Art Forms of Nature*, and Georgia O'Keefe, American artist whose subject matter included (among other things) flowers and natural forms native to the American Southwest.

Defined vocabulary:

Symmetry: A correspondence of form on opposite sides of a dividing line. "One half is the mirror-image of the other half."

Line of symmetry: The line dividing the two identical halves.

Balance: A harmonious relationship between different areas (or different sides) of an image. "When there's not *too much over here* or *too little over there* in image."

Affective objective: The student will express how symmetry can give balance and organization to a composition.

Cognitive objective: The student will recognize symmetry in natural forms and how artists can use principles of symmetry in representing them.

Psychomotor objective: The student will create a symmetrical image using a pastel transfer technique, and color the image using watercolors.

Instruction:

Volunteers match the halves on my visual aids. How did you know which half went with which? (They look the same/They go together.) In fact, both halves look *exactly the same*. Artists have a word for when both halves of something look exactly the same – have you ever heard it before? (Symmetry! Elicit answer, or provide it, if necessary.) What does symmetry mean? Do these images all have symmetry? (Yes.) Then we can say they're "symmetrical."

Ernst Haeckel was a scientist and artist who created a whole book filled with drawings of beautiful things from nature. He liked how organized nature was, and one way nature is organized is that most natural things have symmetry. Symmetry also lets us organize our images, and give them balance.

What does it mean when an image is "balanced"? (Harmony between different parts; not too much in one place). [Can relate to physical balance with gesture]. Symmetry is one way to make a balanced image.

Georgia O'Keefe was an American painter, and she also loved making images from nature. She made many paintings of flowers, and paintings of things around her home in New Mexico. Her paintings of flowers and skulls use the symmetry of these natural objects to balance her paintings.

Can you think of any other *natural* things that have symmetry (butterflies, faces, etc...)? [Can use this listing to check for understanding re: "natural" – elicit to board]

Demonstration:

- I take my paper, and fold it in half. I like to put it longways, lift up the bottom and slide it until it lines up with the other side.
- Then I flip it, and fold it again. This fold will be our line of symmetry.

- Keeping the paper folded, I will draw **one half** of my natural shape, touching the **folded side** (open to demonstrate this – make it very clear). I need to press hard with the pastel. (Is it okay if it breaks when you press down? Yes, then you just have two little pastels.)
- (Open the paper, show my half – image.) Now, we'll fold it closed, and rub the image onto the other side with a spoon. Make circular motions, and make sure you move all around your paper. It's all right if the spoon gets a little warm. That will help the pastel transfer. But keep moving all over the paper, so you don't burn it by making one spot too warm!
- (Open the image) A few parts didn't transfer all the way. What can I do? (Rub it more.) Good. It's better, but there are a few parts that are still too light for me. It's okay to touch up your lines and trace back over them.
- After my lines are done, I can color my image with the watercolors, and the pastels will still show through! Can anyone remind me – how do I get watercolors on my brush? And how do I clean my brush between colors?

Have students go through steps to check for understanding.

Artistic Activity: Symmetrical pastel-transfer image of a natural form/object.

List of materials: Pastels (1 apiece), paper (1 apiece – thin enough for transfer, thick enough for watercolor), spoons (1 apiece), watercolor (1 set per 2 sts.), brushes (a few apiece), water bowls (1 per 2 sts.), newspaper underneath, paper towels

Closure: How did we balance the images we made today? (With symmetry) And what is symmetry? (When both halves are identical and flipped/mirrored). Where can we see symmetry (Fishing for “In the natural world.” – Of course other right guesses and extrapolations are great, too!)

Assessment Rubric

	Excels	Satisfactory	Needs Work
Affective Objective: The student will express how symmetry can give balance and organization to a composition.	The student enthusiastically participates, and acknowledges how symmetry can balance a composition.	The student participates in the discussion, recognizes a visual difference between symmetric and asymmetric images.	Student makes no distinction between symmetric and asymmetric images.
Cognitive Objective: The student will recognize symmetry in natural forms and how artists can use principles of symmetry in representing them.	Student identifies symmetric and natural forms, and uses this new knowledge to suggest other forms which fit in these categories.	Student readily identifies and recognizes symmetry in natural forms.	Student does not acknowledge or recognize symmetry.
Psychomotor Objective: The student will create a symmetrical image using a pastel transfer technique, and color the image with watercolors.	The student creates a symmetrical image, taking care with each step of the drawing and transfer process to ensure a technically successful image.	The student creates a symmetrical image, following the steps in order.	The student's image has significant flaws stemming from lack of care in, or omissions of steps in the making process.