

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Story Theme: The Grey Eminences
Subject: David Ireland
Discipline: Visual Art (Conceptual)

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Artist David Ireland beside the entrance to his retrospective exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum.
Still image from SPARK story, 2004.

SECTION I - OVERVIEW

EPISODE THEME

The Grey Eminences

SUBJECT

David Ireland

GRADE RANGES

K-12 & Post-secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Visual Art

OBJECTIVE

To introduce students to Conceptual Art through the work of one of the field's most accomplished and well-known artists, David Ireland, including a survey of some of his works considered in the context of Conceptual Art production.

STORY SYNOPSIS

"You can't make art by making art" has been a guiding principle in the work of David Ireland, one of California's most important and critically acclaimed artists working in the challenging arena of Conceptual and installation art. SPARK is at the The Oakland Museum of California as they work with the artist on a major retrospective of his 30-year career to create an innovative exhibit that functions both as comprehensive survey *and* a work of art.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Individual and group research
Individual and group exercises
Written research materials
Group discussions

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

To introduce Conceptual Art as a genre of artistic production
To highlight the diversity of Conceptual Art through showcasing different artworks

To learn to "read" Conceptual Artworks and understand how they communicate

To help students think conceptually by looking at, talking about and making conceptual art

To introduce students to creative ideation by beginning instead of materials

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

SPARK story about David Ireland on DVD or VHS and related equipment

Computer with Internet access, navigation software, speakers and a sounds card, and color printer

Audio recording and playback device (cassette player, CD player, computer audio program, etc.)

MATERIALS NEEDED

Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of periodicals, books, and research papers

Pencils, pens, and paper

Access to different types of utilitarian and non-utilitarian objects, such as household items, containers, cleaning implements, etc.

Materials to unite objects, including adhesives, tape (Duct tape is best), rubber bands, wire, etc.

Images of Conceptual artwork (see Conceptual Artist list in this Guide)

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED

Bodily-Kinesthetic - control of one's own body, control in handling objects

Interpersonal - awareness of others' feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Intrapersonal - awareness of one's own feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Spatial - ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems

Logical-Mathematical - ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, think logically



See more information on [Multiple Intelligences](http://www.kqed.org/spark/education) at www.kqed.org/spark/education.

SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT

CONTENT OVERVIEW

“The Way Things Are,” the title of internationally renowned Bay Area artist David Ireland’s new retrospective at the Oakland Museum of California, cuts straight to the heart of Ireland’s work. Instead of manipulating materials in order to create pleasing images and objects, Ireland’s drawings, prints, sculptures, assemblages, and environments draw attention to the beauty and poetry of everyday things, inviting his viewers to look more carefully at the world around them. While Ireland has sought to redefine the way that his audiences look at art, his art in turn has managed to alter the way that we perceive the objects in our daily lives that we normally take for granted.



David Ireland talks with staff of the Oakland Museum about his upcoming exhibition “The Way Things Are” over a scale model. Still image from SPARK episode, 2004.

The SPARK story “Riding the Rhino” looks back at Ireland’s career as the Oakland Museum mounts a thirty-year retrospective of the artist’s work. Viewers are offered a rare glimpse into Ireland’s home and studio at 500 Capp Street in San Francisco, where the artist has transformed a rundown 1886 Victorian into what he calls an “environmental-sculpture-in-progress.” When Ireland bought the building in 1975 it had been poorly cared for and as he endeavored to

organize the house, he began to collect the remnants of its previous owner. At some point, Ireland began to understand that his actions – the collecting of evidence of the past owner – were not only serving a particular function, but in a sense they had taken on new ritual or symbolic meanings as an integral part of his daily life--something like meditation or prayer. He began to think of this activity as art and recorded his work by preserving this “evidence” into jars, as one might with scientific specimens, and under layers of clear varnish, as one would a painting. Eventually, Ireland applied the same process of collecting to the traces of his own existence, collecting fingernails clippings, hair, toilet paper rolls, and more, and rolling them into balls or collecting them in jars, unearthing the aesthetic beauty in the most mundane of objects.

Later, he became interested in the “bones” of the building and began removing the plaster and moldings that surrounded the windows and walls. By revealing the way the house was built, he became more aware of the structure he was living and working in. He finally decided to “exhibit” his work in progress, and for a time opened his home to the public, in an effort to heighten others’ awareness of the environment that surrounds them.

THE BIG PICTURE

Conceptual Art is a term that encompasses a broad range of artistic activities sharing a common belief that the idea behind a work of art takes precedence over an art object. For Conceptual Artists, any material artwork is merely the result of the art, not the art itself. This is not to say that Conceptual Artists do not make objects, as is popularly believed. In fact, a single idea may produce many objects, whether in the form of the result of a set of instructions, or in materials related to the planning and documentation of a performance or action. But

for Conceptual Artists, these materials are less important than the ideas that produced them.

Though the term “Conceptual Art” wasn’t used until the 1960s, the movement began in 1917 with a single work of art by French artist Marcel Duchamp. Already well established in Europe and the United States as a painter and sculptor, Duchamp submitted a work to the annual high profile New York Armory Show. Rather than make a work of art through traditional means, Duchamp purchased a mass produced urinal, turned it upside down and called it Fountain (see photo). So as not to be recognized by the exhibition officials, he signed the work “R. Mutt,” a comical reference to the then popular “Mutt and Jeff” daily cartoon. The signature, visible on the lower left hand side, is the only modification Duchamp made to the urinal, which is otherwise, an object out of the context in which it is used and placed into a fine art context (an exhibition).



Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917, replica 1964. Porcelain; unconfirmed: 360 x 480 x 610 mm sculpture. Purchased with assistance from the Friends of the Tate Gallery, 1999. Tate Gallery of Art, London.

Duchamp’s submission and the ensuing scandal sparked a passionate conversation that still continues today - what makes something art? How can an object be called a work of art? Is it something inherent to the object? Is it when an artist declares it as art? Is art defined by an object’s placement in a collection or institution, like a gallery or museum? More than 50 years later, we are still asking these questions. Several artists and critics associated with Conceptual Art have said that at some level, Conceptual Art always questions the nature of art itself.

In the early 1960s, many artists became frustrated with the way that art had become a commodity to be bought and sold. They rejected traditional forms of art like painting and sculpture, and, thinking back to Duchamp’s Fountain, produced their own “concept” or “idea art.” A group of artists, including George Maciunas, Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik,

and composer John Cage, helped to form the international Conceptual Art collective Fluxus. Drawing on ideas first expressed in the work of Duchamp and others, Fluxus art was sometimes absurd, provocative, temporary and often very funny. Fluxus artists worked in a variety of media and modes, including performance, video art, Happenings, and poetry. Yet despite this heterogeneity of means, all the artists associated with Fluxus playfully flouted artistic conventions and traditional expectations.

Conceptual Art came to be recognized as a coherent movement in the late-1960s primarily through the work of a group of New York-based artists, including Joseph Kosuth, Sol Lewitt, and Lawrence Weiner. Lewitt, for example, began producing instructions for wall drawings that would then be carried out by assistants or volunteers. Lewitt argued that the instructions themselves were the real artwork, while the drawings were only a secondary result of the original creative concept. In his 1967 “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art” Lewitt claimed that “in Conceptual Art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. All planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes the machine that makes the art.”¹

On the West Coast, however, Conceptual Art took on other meanings. Art world notions imported from New York and Europe mixed with ideas from Zen and other Eastern philosophies brought to Northern California with local Asian communities, and popularized by the Beat writers and artists of the 1950s and 60s.

RESOURCES – TEXTS

Alberro, Alexander and Blake Stimson, eds. Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999.

Brommer, G. F. (ed.). Discovering Art History. Worcester, Mass.: Davis. 1988.

¹ Sol LeWitt, “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art,” Artforum 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967), 79-83.

Corris, Michael, ed. Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, and Practice. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2004.

Foley, Suzanne. Space, Time, Sound: Conceptual Art in the San Francisco Bay Area, the 1970s. San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. 1981.

Godfrey, Tony. Conceptual Art. London: Phaidon Press. 1998.

Halliwell, Sarah. The 20th Century: Post-1945. Raintree/Steck Vaughn, 1998. – For young adults.

Harrison, Charles. Conceptual Art and Painting: Further Essays on Art & Language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

Mason, Antony. In the Time of Warhol: The Development of Contemporary Art (Art Around the World). Copper Beech Press, 2002. – For young readers ages 4-8.

Fred W. McDarrah and Timothy S. McDarrah, eds. Kerouac and Friends: A Beat Generation Album. Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003.

Meyer, Ursula. Conceptual Art. New York: Dutton. 1972.

Morgan, Robert C. Art into Ideas: Essays on Conceptual Art. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Oliver, Clare and Jackie Gaff. 20th Century Art. Gareth Stevens, 2002. – A 6-volume set of books designed to introduce young readers ages 9-13 to major artists and concepts of the 20th century, including modernism, and pop and Conceptual Art.

Paoletti, John T. From Minimal to Conceptual Art: Works from the Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1994.

Steele, Margaret and Cindy Estes. The Art of Shapes: For Children and Adults. Fotofolio, 1997.

Tsujimoto, Karen. The Art of David Ireland: The Way Things Are. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Wood, Paul. Conceptual Art. New York: Delano Greenidge, 2002.

RESOURCES – WEBSITES

Alan Watts – A Web site dedicated the writer and thinker Alan Watts, who helped popularize Zen philosophy in California and elsewhere. Conceptual Art (particularly Minimalism) shares beliefs and ideas with Zen and other Eastern philosophies. - <http://www.alanwatts.com/>

Alt-X Network – On-line cultural experience Web site about artists, writers, and current events, including writings by artists, such as Conceptual Artist Sol Lewitt's "Sentences on Conceptual Art." - <http://www.altx.com/vizarts/Conceptual.html>

ArtLex - Useful Web page about Conceptual Art that includes definitions, examples and history - <http://www.artlex.com/ArtLex/c/Conceptualart.html>

Egg: The Arts Show: Yoko Ono – A short television story and related Web materials about conceptual Fluxus artist Yoko Ono. - <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/egg/209/ono/index.html>

Fluxus – A Web site dedicated to the Conceptual Art collective Fluxus, including many links to helpful Fluxus pages. - <http://www.fluxus.org/>

Guggenheim Museum, The - Educational Web pages dedicated the Conceptual Art in the Guggenheim Museum collection, including works by Marcel Duchamp. - http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/movement_works_Conceptualart_0.html.

Marcel Duchamp - http://www.guggenheimcollection.org/site/artist_works_43_0.html

Lisson Gallery – Gallery Web page on the British Conceptual Art collective "Art & Language." - <http://www.lisongallery.com/theArtists/Art&Language/artlanguage.html>

Oakland Museum of California – See specifically the Web pages on the David Ireland's exhibition "The

Way Things Are.” -
http://www.museumca.org/exhibit/exhibit_ireland.html

Tate Gallery - Web page from the Tate Gallery in London about Conceptual Art -
http://www.tate.org.uk/archive/journeys/reisehtml/mov_Conceptual.htm

The Global Virtual Museum of Contemporary Art -
<http://www.art-life.com/MOCA/>

RESOURCES – VIDEO

“Mel Bochner: Language is Not Transparent” (VHS) 36 minutes. Blackwood Films, 1997. – Retrospective exhibition of the early site-specific installations of artist Mel Bochner toured by the artist, exhibition curator, and an art historian, as they discuss the artist’s ideas, specific works, and his contribution to Conceptual Art.

“Make Me Think: Bruce Nauman” (VHS) 55 minutes. Arts Council of England, 1997. – Film about Conceptual Artist Bruce Nauman who uses film, video, neon, sculpture and performance to create works that reflect on love, violence, art, and the art viewer.

The following video resources about David Ireland and his work were produced by Bay Area artist Tony Labat and comprise the only documentation of Ireland’s 500 Capp Street building. The videos are available for rent or purchase through Electronic Arts Intermix, 535 West 22nd Street, New York, New York, 10011, phone 212/337.0680, email info@eai.org, and Web site <http://www.eai.org>. Contact – Sabrina Gschwandtner.

“David Ireland’s House.” Tony Labat, 1977-78.

“David Ireland’s House: Outside.” Tony Labat. 1979.

“Lunch with Mr. Gordon.” Tony Labat. 1979.

A number of different films about Conceptual Artist Christo are available in the collections of the San Francisco, Berkeley, San Mateo, and other Bay Area public libraries. Check your local library.

“Christo in Paris” (VHS) 58 minutes. Maysles Film, 1990. - Documentary about the planning and wrapping of the Pont Neuf (the oldest bridge in Paris) by Conceptual Artist Christo. (Available through <http://www.amazon.com>.)

“Running Fence” (VHS) 58 minutes. Maysles Films 1990. - A documentary on the creation of the 24½ mile-long, 18-foot high fence of white fabric designed by the artist Christo to stretch across the hills of Northern California.

BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
The SFMoMA has a large permanent collection as well as continuing visiting exhibitions featuring works of Conceptual Art.
SFMOMA
151 Third Street (btwn Harrison & Mission Sts) San Francisco, CA 94103
<http://www.sfmoma.org>

San Jose Museum of Art
The SJMoMA has a permanent collection as well as continuing visiting exhibitions featuring works of Conceptual Art.
San Jose Museum of Art
110 South Market Street
San Jose, CA 95113, 408/271-6840
24-hour Recorded Info – 408/294-2787
<http://www.sjmusart.org>

San Francisco State University
Conceptual/Information Art Program
The Conceptual/Information Art Program at SFSU has speakers and exhibitions on an annual basis, many open to the public. For more information call the Art Dept. at 415/338-2176 or visit the Web site. -
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~infoarts>

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Contemporary art exhibitions, films, and performances.
Galleries - 701 Mission Street (@ Third St.)
Theatre - 700 Howard Street (@ Third St.)
San Francisco, 94103
<http://www.yerbabuenaarts.org>

San Francisco Art Institute
The SFAI's Walter and McBean Galleries and the
McBean Distinguished Lecture Series regularly
feature Conceptual Artists and topics and are open to
the public.

San Francisco Art Institute
800 Chestnut Street, (btwn Leavenworth & Jones Sts)
San Francisco, CA 94133
415/771-7020
Email: sfaiinfo@sfa.edu
<http://www.sanfranciscoart.edu/database/pubprog.htm>

Berkeley Art Museum
Features exhibitions of Conceptual Art; was the
creator of the *Paul Kos: Everything Matters, A
Retrospective* exhibition – a major exhibition of
another significant Bay Area Conceptual Artist.
2626 Bancroft Way
2621 Durant Avenue
(btwn College and Telegraph)
Berkeley, CA
(510) 642-0808
<http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu>

Brian Gross Fine Art
Gallery specializes in abstract and reductive painting,
provocative exhibitions of sculpture, multi-media
installations and Conceptual work
49 Geary Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
415/788.1050
gallery@briangrossfineart.com

Gallery Paule Anglim
A long-time SF institution features contemporary
paintings, works on paper, sculpture including
Conceptual Art
14 Geary Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
415.433.2710
<http://www.gallerypauleanglim.com>

Catharine Clark Gallery
The gallery generally specializes in emerging Bay
Area artists, many of whom make Conceptual work
49 Geary Street, 2nd Floor (Geary @ Market)
San Francisco, CA 94108
415/399.1439
<http://www.cclarkgallery.com>

SELECTED CONCEPTUAL ARTISTS

NOTE: Be sure to review each artist's work before sharing it with students. Not all artworks are appropriate for all students. Use discretion when

assembling a range of works, and try to include works of different media (materials) and cultural significance by male and female artists from different cultures and backgrounds.

Ad Reinhardt
Adam Chodzko
Agnes Martin
Agostino Bonalumi
Alice Aycock
Ameli Tancica
Anna Mendiata
Andy Goldsworthy
Barbara Kruger
Barnett Newman
Brice Marden
Bruce Nauman
Cy Twombly
Daniel Buren
Dennis Oppenheim
Enrico Castellani
Joseph Cornell
Eric Orr
Eve Andree Laramée

Fred Lewis
Fred Wilson
Gerald de Jong
Gordon Matta Clark
Guerrilla Girls
Hans Haacke
Jack Ox
James Turrell
Jan Dibbets
Jana Sterbak
Jeff Koons
Jenny Holzer
Jørgen Rømer
Joseph Beuys
John Cage
Joseph Kosuth
Laurie Simmons
Lawrence Weiner
Louise Bourgeois

Lucio Fontana
Felix Gonzalez-Torres
Man Ray
Marcel Duchamp
Maria Lewis
Mark Bohlen
Mel Bochner
On Kawara
Panamarenko
Piero Manzoni
Richard Serra
Robert Ryman
Robert Smithson
Rosemarie Trockel
Sol Lewitt
Tatsuo Miyajima
Wolfgang Laib
Yves Klein

SECTION III – VOCABULARY

DISCIPLINE-BASED VOCABULARY AND WORDS AND CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Barrier

A boundary or limit

Casein

A protein derived from milk that is used in making plastics and adhesives

Conceptual Art

Art that is intended to convey an idea or concept to the perceiver and need not involve the creation or appreciation of a traditional art object such as a painting or sculpture

Debris

The scattered remains of something broken or destroyed; rubble or wreckage

Environmental Art

Art concerned with creating an entire setting for the beholder rather than a single object

Fanfare

A loud flourish of brass instruments, especially trumpets, usually played during a public entrance

Installation Art

Art that is created for a specific site, often incorporating materials or physical features of the site

Intuitive

Knowing, or perceiving, by intuition; capable of knowing without deduction or reasoning

Metaphor

A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison

Molding

An embellishment in strip form, usually made of wood or plaster, that is used to decorate or finish a surface, such as the wall of a room or building or the surface of a door or piece of furniture

Retrospective

An exhibition of a representative selection of an artist's life work

Safari

An overland expedition, especially one for hunting or exploring in eastern Africa

Unconventional

Not conforming to accepted rules or standards

SECTION IV – ENGAGING WITH SPARK

STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION POINTS

Engaging with Conceptual Art

Ask students to make notes on the following questions and then discuss their ideas as a class.

- *What makes something a work of art?*
- *What is the purpose of art (if there is one)?*
- *What effect(s) should it have on viewers?*

Invite students to name some of their favorite artists and to describe what makes their artwork interesting. Ask students to address how the artwork makes them feel or what it makes them think about?

Ask students to bring in an everyday object that they find interesting or inspiring. It could be an ornament, a candle, a household object or appliance (such as a broom), but it should be a physically tangible object.

Working in small groups, invite each student to present their object to the other members of the group. Ask students to respond to the following:

- Think about and describe the object verbally in as much detail as you can.
- What interests or inspires you about this object? Why?
- Does the object make you feel a certain emotion?
- Does the object remind you of something? What does it make you think about?
- Do you associate it with other objects or ideas? Why?

Invite students to share their responses with each other. Consider the similarities and differences of opinion.

For older students, invite them to assemble the objects into a Conceptual artwork, making a number of the objects they selected work together. Then, ask the group to describe the reason(s) for their choices. This can also be done with multiple groups, each with a number of objects. At the end of the activity, invite students to compare their solutions.

RELATED STANDARDS VISUAL ARTS

Grade 7

CONNECTIONS, RELATIONS & APPLICATIONS

5.4 Identify professions in or related to the visual arts and some of the specific skills needed for those professions.

Grades 9-12 Proficient

CONNECTIONS, RELATIONS & APPLICATIONS

5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the various skills of an artist, art critic, art historian, art collector, art gallery owner, and philosopher of art (aesthete).

Grades 9-12 Advanced

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

3.4 Research the methods art historians use to determine the time, place, context, value, and culture that produced a given work of art.

CAREER AND CAREER-RELATED SKILLS

5.4 Investigate and report on the essential features of modern or emerging technologies that affect or will affect visual artists and the definition of the visual arts.

Responding To Art – Taste and Pleasure

Show slides or pictures of a range of different types of Western artwork from different time periods, including allegorical painting, landscapes, figurative imagery, religious icons, portraits, still lives, Surrealist art, Pop art, as well as an example of modern/contemporary Conceptual Art. Choose works by well-known artists such as Rosa Bonheur (European landscape), Paul Cezanne (European landscape/portraits), Hieronymous Bosch (Medieval allegories), Pablo Picasso (Modern European figurative painter), Rene Magritte (Conceptual painter), and Frida Khalo (Mexican Surrealist painter). Then, show works by other Conceptual artists (see Conceptual Artist List in this Guide). One work of each type is sufficient, and work from different historical periods will be helpful.

Ask students to think about the way they view each work of art. Working in small groups, have students describe each piece of artwork in detail and then list the factors that influence the way they view and respond to art. Give students sufficient time to fully engage with this activity. Invite each group to share their ideas with the whole group and then discuss the factors they have identified. Address personal and social influences as well as factors such as knowledge of artistic conventions and form, familiarity with tradition, cultural context, historical period etc. Guide the discussion on the way these factors inform aesthetic response using the following questions as prompts.

- Is it important to have this kind of knowledge?
- Does social background influence the way art is viewed?
- Does one have pre-conceptions about what constitutes “art”?
- How does Conceptual Art fit into this framework?

Conclude by introducing the notion of pleasure and art appreciation. Do students enjoy viewing art and is the idea of aesthetic beauty important? Show a small selection of slides of sculptural pieces from diverse cultures and periods in history. Include, for example, famous pieces from Michelangelo, Rodin, Giacometti, Picasso, Moore as well as African and Asian sculptural forms.

*What informs the appreciation of a piece of artwork?
Does culture shape the way art is ascribed meaning?
Are there accepted notions of beauty in art?
Should art be aesthetically pleasing? Why?
Are there other objectives? What might they be?
Is aesthetic pleasure a personal response?
Does Conceptual Art depart from traditional ideas of beauty? How?*

Invite students to think about these issues which are fundamental to aesthetics and notions of pleasure.

The Conceptual Art Movement of the 1960s & 1970s

Introduce the ideas underpinning the Conceptual Art movement of the 1960s and 1970s, such as the premise that art should be about ideas rather than about objects, and that artists should focus on what they *think*, not on how things *look*. Conceptual artists usually set aside the traditional processes of art like

painting or carving and their work can confuse because it does not necessarily fit conventional definitions of what art is and the spaces we associate with viewing art, such as galleries or museums. It can be more an attitude toward art making than a movement defined by a single style and can be applied to many artists and approaches.

Invite students to choose one artist from this period, both to research and present to the group. It is helpful if slides are available or web pages can be projected to illustrate the presentations.

Suggest that students choose well known artists or artists whose work is often shown, such as Marcel Duchamp, Rene Magritte, Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Bourgeois, Ed Ruscha, Gerard Richter, etc. (Refer to the Conceptual Artists List in this Guide).

As a basis for the presentations, ask students to write 500 words about their chosen artist including: an overview of the artist’s life

*a summary of his/her most important art works,
an in depth description of one piece of work that they find particularly interesting.
a concluding personal response that addresses the appeal of the work. For example, do they find the work witty? Challenging? Thought provoking? Evocative? Disturbing?*

Allow sufficient time for the presentations, so that students will engage with each artist discussed.

RELATED STANDARDS

VISUAL ARTS

Grade 7

CONNECTIONS, RELATIONS & APPLICATIONS

5.4 Identify professions in or related to the visual arts and some of the specific skills needed for those professions.

Grades 9-12 Proficient

CONNECTIONS, RELATIONS & APPLICATIONS

5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the various skills of an artist, art critic, art historian, art collector, art gallery owner, and philosopher of art (aesthetician).

Grades 9-12 Advanced

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

3.4 Research the methods art historians use to determine the time, place, context, value, and culture that produced a given work of art.

CAREER AND CAREER-RELATED SKILLS

5.4 Investigate and report on the essential features of modern or emerging technologies that affect or will affect visual artists and the definition of the visual arts.

SPARKLERS:

* Compare Conceptual artists, allowing students to choose their pair, or assigning them. One interesting comparative pair would be Marcel Duchamp and Paul Kos, two artists working at in different time periods, making different statements and using differing materials and cultural referents.

* To view work by Conceptual artists, visit a gallery or museum, such as the San Francisco and San Jose Museums of Modern Art, New Langton Arts, Capp Street Project, Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive, Sonoma Museum, Luther Burbank Center, and the New Leaf Gallery. Suggest students visit a gallery or an exhibition in small groups or in pairs, and that they report on what they have seen, providing detailed physical descriptions of the artwork along with their responses.

Talking About David Ireland

David Ireland's work is generally very philosophical although also very simple, creating works with concentrated, focused messages, using found objects and common everyday materials in unexpected juxtaposition and arrangements.

Invite students to choose one of the pieces shown in the SPARK story and to discuss it as a group. Consider the following questions to help students get started:

- Describe the piece, including identifying the different materials and technologies.
- Describe your response to the piece.
- What deeper levels of meaning are suggested?
- What might the artist be saying?
- How does s/he say it?
- Does the work belong in an art gallery?
- What is your emotional response to the piece?
- Does it sustain your interest – will it have staying power?
- What does the title have to do with the meaning of the piece?

Allow sufficient discussion time for students to share their responses and fully engage with the artist's work.

RELATED STANDARDS

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language, reading, writing, and verbal presentation of writing can be an integral part of Conceptual Art, such as in David Ireland's artwork. Students can also use Conceptual Art as a jumping off point for exploration of creative writing, review writing, and the study of language, words, and meaning.

Grade 5

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

2.3 Write research reports about important ideas, issues, or events by using the following guidelines:

- a. Frame questions that direct the investigation.
- b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
- c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.

Grade 11

Writing Strategies - Organization & Focus

1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them with precise and relevant examples.