

Graffiti Fun Art

Students may know what graffiti is, but they may not know that graffiti has existed since ancient times, or that lettering is a genuine form of art. Sometimes graffiti is employed to communicate social and political messages. To some, it is an art form worthy of display in galleries and exhibitions.

Encourage students to design a personal and stylized signature or “tag.” The tag can be a given name, a nickname or something they’ve made up to represent themselves. This school version of graffiti shows students that lettering is not only important in communicating, but that it can also be an artistic expression.

Grade Levels K-6

Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cut 12" x 18" drawing paper sheets into 6" x 6" squares. Each student will need up to six paper squares

Process

1. Students select a “tag” consisting of four to six letters.
2. Provide each student with the appropriate number of 6" x 6" paper squares; one for each letter of their “tag” name.
3. With a pencil, draw a “bubble” letter within each paper square. For those students who need help with bubble letters, a good way to start is to begin by drawing a small letter near the center of the paper. Mimic the smaller letter with a larger letter and draw a line connecting the ends. Draw lightly so any mistakes can be easily erased.
4. Fill in each letter with colored pencil. Experiment with shading to give the letters the appearance of dimension. Colors can be overlapped to create a mixed color effect. Each letter should be created and colored in the same style to give the final “tag” an integrated look.
5. When all the letters are complete, cut around the edge so the paper is in the shape of the letter.
6. Arrange the letters on a sheet of 12" x 18" paper so they are overlapping and then glue them in place. They can be placed unevenly to create the illusion of movement.



Materials

Paper Mate® Earth Write® Pencils, package of 10 (20337-7010); one pencil per student

Sargent® Art Colored Pencils, set of 50 (22046-1050); share two sets across class

Blick® White Sulphite Drawing Paper, 12" x 18", 500-sheet package (10209-1076); share one package across class

Snippy® Scissors, pointed, package of 12 (57040-2009); need one per student

Elmer's® Washable School Glue, 4-oz bottle (23810-1204); share one among three students

Optional Materials

Elmer's® Tack Putty, Blue, 2-oz (23839-4862)

Process, continued

7. When the glue is dry, draw a border around the outer edge of the “tag.” The border should follow the shapes of the letters to give the tag a bubble effect. Cut this out as one piece and color it with the colored pencils.

Options

- Decorate a 12" x 18" sheet of paper with colored pencils or paints to use as a background for the “tag.” Glue it in place.
- Use a sheet of 18" x 24" newsprint or printed newspaper as a background for the “tag.”
- Use Tack Putty to stick finished pieces to a wall to give the appearance of a graffitied wall

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

K-4 Students describe how different expressive features and organizational principles cause different responses.

5-8 Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas.

Content Standard #5 Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

K-4 Students describe how people’s experiences influence the development of specific artworks.

5-8 Students analyze contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks through cultural and aesthetic inquiry.

