

# Howard Finster's Coca-Cola Bottles

*Grade level: 8th*

*Estimated Time: 5-7 class periods*

## Resources/Materials:

- 20 ounce soda bottles
- Access to technology
- Acrylic paint (various colors)
- Clear coat spray paint
- Pencils
- Paint brushes
- Permanent markers
- Primer spray paint
- Scratch paper

## National Core Visual Arts Standards and Essential Questions:

### **Creating**

*VA:Cr1.1.8a* Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.

*EQs:* What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking?  
What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risk?  
How does collaboration expand the creative process?

*VA:Cr2.1.8a* Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risk to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of art-making and designing.

*EQs:* How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective?  
How do artists and designers learn from trial and error?

*VA:Cr2.2.8a* Demonstrate awareness of practices, issues, and ethics of appropriation, fair use, copyright, open source, and creative commons as they apply to creating works of art and design.

*EQs:* What responsibilities come with the freedom to create?

*VA:Cr2.3.8a* Select, organize, and design images and words to make visually clear and compelling presentations.

*EQs:* How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

*VA:Cr3.1.8a* Apply relevant criteria to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions, for a work of art or design in progress.

*EQs:* What role does persistence play in revising, refining, and developing work?  
How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely?

### **Presenting**

*VA:Pr4.1.1a* Develop and apply criteria for evaluating a collection or artwork for presentation.

*EQs:* What criteria, methods, and processes are used to select work for preservation or presentation?

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Why do people value objects, artifacts, and artworks, and select them for presentation?

*VA:Pr5.1.8a* Collectively prepare and present select theme-based artwork for display, and formulate exhibition narratives for the viewer.

*EQs:* What criteria are considered when selecting work for presentation, a portfolio, or a collection?

*VA:Pr6.1.8a* Analyze why and how an exhibition or collection may influence ideas, beliefs, and experiences.

*EQs:* How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences?

How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented cultivate appreciation and understanding?

### **Responding**

*VA:Re.7.1.8a* Explain how a person's aesthetic choices are influenced by culture and environment and impact the visual image that one conveys to others.

*EQs:* How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art?

What can we learn from our responses to art?

*VA:Re8.1.8a* Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches, and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed.

*EQs:* How can the viewer "read" a work of art as text?

How does knowing and using visual art vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

### **Connecting**

*VA:Cn10.1.8a* Make art collaboratively to reflect on and reinforce aspects of group identity.

*EQs:* How does engaging in creating art enrich people's lives?

How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through art-making?

### **Objectives:**

- The students will discover the life, work, and influences of Howard Finster using available technology.
- The students will collaboratively plan, revise, reflect, and prepare a chosen theme-based artwork relevant to all small group members.
- The students will collaboratively select, organize, and design images and words that clearly convey their chosen theme.
- The students will collaboratively transfer their plan onto a 20 ounce plastic soda bottle using pencil, paint, and permanent marker.
- The students will collaboratively formulate a narrative of their artwork for the viewer.
- The students will create an exhibition of their artworks using relevant criteria and narratives in a space appropriate for others to view.

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### Terms:

- Appropriation — to take without permission or consent
- Collaborate — to work, one with another, to cooperate
- Criteria — a rule or principle for evaluating something
- Fair use — reasonable and limited use of copyrighted material as to not infringe on copyright
- Folk art — artistic work created by untrained artists often having such attributes as highly decorative design, bright bold colors, flattened perspective, simplified forms, and obvious meaning
- Copyright — the exclusive right to reproduce an artwork for the lifetime of the creator plus another 70 years.
- Open-source — Freely accessible to the public
- Creative commons — Copyright remains but certain groups or individuals are granted use

### Mini Lesson:

- The teacher will lead students through discovery of the life, work, and influences of Howard Finster using technology appropriate to their situation.
- <http://paradisegardenfoundation.org/>
- <http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/howard-finster-and-the-art-of-the-coke-bottle>
- <https://www.high.org/highlights/howard-finster/>
- The teacher will explain, demonstrate, and show examples of the project.

### Activating Thinking Strategies:

- The students will discuss essential questions daily appropriate to class pacing.
- The teacher will provide students with a daily agenda appropriate to class pacing.

### Instructional Activities:

*(Soda bottles should be donated by students. Although this is a collaborative project using one bottle per small group, the extras allow for students who forgot or need to restart. The bottles should be cleaned with labels removed and primed before beginning the lesson.)*

- The teacher will divide students into small groups.
- The students will discuss and choose a theme that is important to all group members.
- The students will individually sketch images and choose text appropriate to the chosen theme.
- The students will discuss how to combine their individual ideas into one consolidated work of art and revise as necessary.
- The students will transfer their ideas in pencil onto the primed soda bottles making sure that each group member's ideas are represented.
- The students will paint the drawn images with acrylic paint.
- Once dry, the students will use permanent marker to add details and text to the images.
- The students will spray the bottles with a clear coat spray paint to seal the artwork.
- The students will collaboratively create a narrative about the meaning behind their artwork for future viewers.

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### **Summarizing Closing Strategies:**

- As a whole group, the students will establish criteria for the presentation of their artworks based on what they want their potential audience to take away from the experience.
- The students will set up the art exhibit according to the established criteria.
- The students will invite school faculty, staff, and students, as well as family members, to visit the exhibit during a certain time period enabling the artists to interact with the visitors. (The media center or cafeteria would be ideal exhibition spaces due to the high level of traffic.)

### **Assignment Assessment:**

- Formative assessment will occur through teacher observation and discussion with students. Summative assessment will occur through creation of an artwork in the style of Howard Finster, group display and discussion of finished work, as well as a written narrative.
  - The students demonstrate awareness of practices, issues, and ethics of appropriation, fair use, copyright, open source, and creative commons.
  - The students create artwork containing images and words to convey an intended personal meaning.
  - The students work collaboratively to evaluate and revise their artwork.
  - The students collaboratively present their theme-based artwork for display.
  - The students collaboratively write exhibition narratives of their artwork explaining their choice of images and text in support of the theme.