

Anne Frank: Tiles - Discrimination Themes in Art Products

Summary

Quotation:

'Our many Jewish friends are being taken away by the dozen. These people are treated by the Gestapo without a shred of decency, being loaded into cattle trucks and sent to Westerbork, the big Jewish camp in Drenthe. Westerbork sounds terrible...'

-- Anne Frank (October 9, 1942)

'Who has inflicted this upon us? Who has made us Jews different from all other people? Who has allowed us to suffer so terribly up till now?'

-- Anne Frank (April 11, 1944)

Materials

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

Plain paper for picture drafts

White ceramic tiles (4'x4' or 5'x5') -one tile per student

Permanent markers in assorted colors

Clear finish to set pictures on tiles

Optional: Computer hardware and software for graphic design

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine/identify attitudes toward discrimination.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material from 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 - 1945 Teacher Workbook.'

Students will have read or be reading 'Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.' Ask them to recall Anne's descriptions of acts of discrimination - actual discrimination by the Germans or Dutch against the Jews and perceived discrimination by Margot or her parents against Anne or by residents of the Secret Annex against each other. Anne used her writing skills to express her feelings about discrimination and other topics in her diary. In this lesson, students will use artistic expression to project feelings onto a visual medium.

Have students brainstorm a list of past or present acts of discrimination of which they are aware - acts such as forcing Jews to wear yellow Stars of David, denying people access to hotels or restaurants based on the color of their skin, using sacred images such as the eagle feather in sports team logos or costumes. List these on a board or an overhead transparency. Ask students, individually or in pairs, to think about feelings of the victims of these acts. How might those feelings look in graphic form?

Have each student choose one example from the list or, perhaps another personal example that she/he didn't share yet. Have them jot down a few words about the feelings that accompany the acts of discrimination and/or sketch pictures that reflect those feelings. Once students are satisfied with their sketches, distribute the ceramic tiles. Have students transfer the final draft to the tile using markers. Spray tiles to set the pictures.

Convene the class in a large group to discuss the activity. Have students present their tiles to the class and explain the significance of each drawing.

After the presentations, ask students to plan a display for the tiles. Will all be part of a large mosaic? Are there natural groupings of small numbers of tiles? What tile(s) could be given to the display(s)? Once these decisions have been made, set up the display in the classroom and celebrate the students' accomplishments. Closure: Display the tiles outside the classroom: In the hallway, in the

library or main office, in a public library or office building, or at a mall. Have students offer 'tours' of the display or publish a 'catalog' of the exhibit.

Create a picture record of the tiles, either in booklet format or as a slide show. Design a second set of tiles reflecting the positive feeling Anne expressed in her diary or that students feel when they are most optimistic about the world.

Extensions

Use computers to generate the designs and create identifying signs (tile, labels, etc.)

If some students would rather write than draw, pair a writer with an artist and have them produce a tile and explanatory paragraph together.

Instead of tiles, have students produce 8.5'x11' felt squares decorated with fabric and other trimmings. These could be sewn into one or more quilts to hang on the wall in the classroom, school, or community. Instead of illustrations that depict feelings, the squares could memorialize a person who struggled against discrimination (Anne Frank, Jane Pittman, Cesar Chavez, Ryan White, and others).

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