

GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATION: 4-6
RECYCLED MATERIALS AS ART
CONTENT AREA: VISUAL ARTS

LESSON TIME:
2 class periods

MATERIALS:
1. Pictures of art made from recycled bicycles

TAKE HOME:
Art project

OBJECTIVE:
To identify artists who use recycled materials in their art. To learn why artists would use recycled materials.

BACKGROUND: Mark Grieve and Ilana Spector create artwork from discarded bicycle parts. Their “Bicycle Arch” was created to provide an entryway into a bicycle parking area.

Carolina Fontoura Alzaga is another artist who used bicycle parts in her work. “Connect” is a series of chandeliers made from old bike parts, mostly chains. “Brake Lotus” is a sculpture made from the brake levers of bicycles. She describes her work as “repurposing castoff materials.”

The bicycle, because of its perception as an eco-friendly object, is particularly suited for art with an ecology theme.

4TH GRADE STANDARD

CONTENT AREA: Visual Arts

3. Invent and Discover to Create

2. Use media to express and communicate ideas about an issue of personal interest

5TH GRADE STANDARD

CONTENT AREA: Visual Arts

1. Observe and Learn to Comprehend

2. Visual arts communicate the human experience

6TH GRADE STANDARD

CONTENT AREA: Visual Arts

4: Relate and Connect to Transfer

3. Eco-art is a contemporary response to environmental issues.

PROCEDURE:

Discuss with the students what motivates artists to use recycled or reclaimed items in their art.

Discuss what other items they have seen at home or in their neighborhoods that could be used in art projects.

Discuss where they have seen recycled materials used in artwork.

Discuss how artists recycle materials to make their artwork and why they choose the materials they use.

ACTIVITY 1:

GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATION: 4-6
RECYCLED MATERIALS AS ART
CONTENT AREA: VISUAL ARTS

Have students create a work of art from reclaimed or recycled materials. This could be either a sculpture or materials pasted to a canvas. Students should be encouraged to use materials that represent their specific interests. For example, an equestrian could use an old tack and harness; someone who likes video games could use old game cartridges or controllers.

For this activity restrictions will need to be placed on the types of materials used in the art projects, for example no knives, weapons, drug paraphernalia, alcohol related or tobacco related objects should be used. If it is impractical for the art project to be transported to the school, a series of photos documenting the construction process and the final work could be presented in a poster format instead.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY:

Have students create and draw a concept for a work of art made from recycled bicycle parts.