Expressing personality and identity through

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY
VICTORIA State Government

printmaking,

Levels 5 and 6

Visual Arts
Unit of work

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Expressing personality and identity through printmaking, Levels 5 and 6, Visual Arts

Disclaimer: It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking activities. In this unit of work, particular consideration should be given to the use of cutting tools.

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Introduction

Overview of the unit of work

Title:	Expressing personality and identity through printmaking
Timing (approximate):	8 × 60-minute lessons
Description:	Students explore the ideas and visual conventions of Ah Xian's ceramic sculptures. Students create a relief print in the style of Ah Xian's artwork that expresses or reflects their own identity and personality.
Overall learning intentions:	To understand Ah Xian's art practice and the concepts that he expresses in his artworks To use planning to create a design for a relief print that expresses their own personality and identity To understand and apply printmaking techniques to create a series of relief prints, using lino or printing foam board. To reflect on their own art practice and link their ideas to Ah Xian's work
Assessment:	Opportunities for assessment include:

- research notes in art journal (Learning activity 1)
- mind map for student's own artwork (Learning activity 2)
- preliminary drawings (Learning activity 3)
- signed and editioned prints (Learning activity 4)
- Written self-reflection (Learning activity 5)
- teacher notes from observations of students in class discussions and reflective conversations (all learning activities).

Links to the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Curriculum area and band:	Visual Arts, Levels 5 and 6
Content descriptions:	Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029) Select and apply visual conventions, materials, techniques, technologies and processes specific to different art forms when making artworks (VCAVAV030) Create and display artwork considering how ideas can be expressed to an audience (VCAVAP031) Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR032)
Relevant achievement standard:	By the end of Level 6, students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make and view. They demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas, themes and concepts in their artworks. Students describe the influences of artworks and practices places on their art making. They describe how artworks that they make and view can be displayed to express and enhance meaning. Students describe and identify how ideas are expressed in artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts.

Learning activities

Learning activity 1: Explore and Express Ideas – Researching Ah Xian's practice

Timing (approximate):	60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To understand the techniques and processes Ah Xian uses in his art practice and artworks To understand the ideas and concepts Ah Xian expresses in his artworks
Content descriptions:	Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029) Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR032)
Achievement standard extract:	… students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they … view … They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas … They describe how artworks that they … view can be displayed to express and enhance meaning. Students describe and identify how ideas are expressed in artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts.
Resources required:	A range of resources about Ah Xian, such as images and videos from the following web pages and websites: ● 'Ah Xian', Museum of Contemporary Art Australia ● 'Ah Xian, Artists', National Gallery of Victoria ● 'Ah Xian' video, National Gallery of Australia, YouTube ● 'Portrait story: Dr John Yu' video, National Portrait Gallery, YouTube Student art journals 'See / Think / Wonder' at Artful Thinking, Project Zero

1. Show students six images of Ah Xian's artworks. As a class discuss the artworks using the thinking routine See, Think, Wonder (see the resource in the list of resources above). Pose the following questions to facilitate students' thinking:

- What do you see when you look at Ah Xian's artworks? (students should refer to the visual conventions in their answer) (See)
- What do you notice about his artworks? (See)
- What do you think Ah Xian is trying to show you in his artworks? (Think)
- What do you think he is trying to express in his artworks? (Think)
- What questions or wonderings do have about his artwork? (Wonder)
- If you had an opportunity to meet Ah Xian, what would you ask him? (Wonder)

2. Write students' comments on the board. These comments will be used for further research and discussion later in the lesson.
1. Students watch the two videos listed above twice – 'Ah Xian' and 'Portrait Story: Dr John Yu'. The first time, ask students to just watch the video. The second time, ask students to watch again but also take notes in their art journal. They should record information from the video that relates to the comments, questions or wonderings previously discussed and written on the board.
3. As a class, discuss the information, ideas and wonderings from the videos. Students may write further comments and notes in their art journal. Explain to the students that all these ideas and observations will help them create their own artwork.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students discuss the techniques and processes used by Ah Xian.
- Students consider and discuss the ideas being expressed in Ah Xian's artworks.
- Students analyse the visual conventions used in Ah Xian's artworks.
- Students express their own views and opinions about Ah Xian's artwork.

Learning activity 2: Visual Arts Practices – Planning the artwork

Timing (approximate):	60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To brainstorm and record ideas for an artwork
Content descriptions:	Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029) Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR032)
Achievement standard extract:	… students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make … They demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas, themes and concepts in their artworks.
Resources required:	Student art journals Drawing materials

1. Introduce the inquiry question ‘If Ah Xian were to create a portrait of you, what would it look like?’
2. Discuss what ‘personality’ and ‘identity’ are. Prompts include:
    - Think about your cultural heritage or cultural background and describe its characteristics. What are the obvious things that show your culture?
    - Are you a quiet person who enjoys reading or are you an active person who enjoys running around outside?
3. Describe personality and identity as they link to Ah Xian’s work. Ask:
    - What are some of the images, patterns and symbols Ah Xian uses in his artworks to represent identity? How could you use similar ideas?
4. Demonstrate a worked example of a mind map for students. Students then create a mind map in their art journals that expresses their personality and identity. They include thumbnail sketches of patterns, symbols and images to help explain their thinking.

Tips:

- Encourage students to use symbols as metaphors to represent their personality and identity, but discourage them from using flags of countries as symbols – flags represent countries, not necessarily cultures.
- Encourage students to use abstract symbols and patterns and avoid being literal.

- Tell students not to reveal everything to the audience – they should leave something for the audience to think about.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students consider different ways to express their personality or identity in their own artwork.
- Students create thumbnail sketches as part of a mind map, to record ideas for their own artwork.
- Students make choices about the ideas they express in their artwork.
- Students make choices about the visual conventions they use in their artwork.
- Students use symbols and metaphor to give their artwork meaning.
- Students consider the audience when creating their artwork.

Learning activity 3: Visual Arts Practices – Designing and planning a print

Timing (approximate):	60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To create a design for a relief print that expresses their personality or identity by drawing a design in their art journal To use symbols and patterns to represent meaning and metaphor in their artwork To explore ways to communicate their personality and identity in an artwork by considering and selecting visual conventions suitable for their artwork To make aesthetic choices for their artwork To consider the limitations and characteristics of the materials and techniques they will use to create a relief print
Content descriptions:	Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029) Select and apply visual conventions, materials, techniques, technologies and processes specific to different art forms when making artworks (VCAVAV030)
Achievement standard extract:	… students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make … They demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas, themes and concepts in their artworks.
Resources required:	Student art journals Drawing materials

1. Explain to students they will be designing and creating a relief print using lino (or printing foam board). Students will need to consider the following when they are designing their print:
    - A relief print involves cutting away some of the lino (or printing foam) to create a printing plate. The area on the printing plate that is not cut away is inked for printing. When it is printed, the recessed areas that were cut way do not leave ink on the paper (i.e. these areas are the colour of the plain paper).
    - Achieving detail such as small shapes and fine lines may be difficult. Students should consider how their design will be transferred as a print and not make their design too intricate.
2. Ask students to draw their designs in their art journal. They should refer to their mind map for ideas. The following design steps can guide the students:
    - Draw a simple bust silhouette, similar to Ah Xian's bust.
    - Draw patterns and images in either the positive or negative space or both.

Tip: If students are struggling with a basic bust shape, they could trace around their hand.

3. Encourage students to create a second drawing and refine their design.
4. Once students have selected what they think is their 'best' design, they must discuss it with you. Ask students to explain the symbols, images or patterns used in the design and what they represent. Discuss any perceived difficulties they may encounter when cutting the lino.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students create a design for a relief print that expresses their personality or identity by drawing a design in their art journal.
- Students use symbols and patterns to represent meaning and metaphor in their artwork.
- Students explore ways to communicate their personality and identity in an artwork by considering and selecting visual conventions suitable for their artwork.
- Students make aesthetic choices for their artwork.
- Students consider the limitations and characteristics of the materials and techniques they will use to create a relief print.

Learning activity 4: Visual Arts Practices – Printmaking processes

Timing (approximate):	4 × 60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To be able to safely cut a printing plate using lino To be able to ink a printing plate and make a clear print To sign a print and edition it in the correct order
Content descriptions:	Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to create artworks that express different ideas and beliefs (VCAVAE029) Select and apply visual conventions, materials, techniques, technologies and processes specific to different art forms when making artworks (VCAVAV030)
Achievement standard extract:	[Students] demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas, themes and concepts in their artworks.
Resources required:	Teacher resource video on how to cut and print a linocut print: 'Linocut carving and printing - short film by Maarit Hanninen' video, YouTube Soft or easy-carve lino Lino cutting tools Rubber printing rollers Sheet of Perspex or an alternative Water-based ink Printing press or printing baren Paper

1. Students will create four prints – an AP (artist proof), and an edition of three (1/3, 2/3, 3/3). To transfer their design drawing onto the lino, get the students to either:
    - freehand copy the design straight onto the lino using greylead pencil
    - cover the back of their design drawing with 6B pencil, place their design drawing on top of the lino and trace over the drawing by pressing hard.
2. View the video on cutting lino that is listed above in the resources, and demonstrate the steps of how to cut and print a linocut print to students as they are ready to proceed, either as a class or individually.
3. Demonstrate safe cutting techniques. It is recommended that students use a soft or easy-carve lino that does not require heating before cutting. Ensure cutting tools are sharp and a variety of

shapes to create different lines and shapes. To prepare the students to carry out the activity safely offer the following tips:

- Keep your hand behind the cutting tool.
- Always cut away from your body.
- Always wear a leather glove on the hand that is holding the lino. It won't stop the blade but it will remind you to be careful.
- Have your lino on the table and don't work with anything under your lino (for example, your art journal).
- Sit comfortably on your seat and don't sit too close to other people.
- All cutting tools need to put away before packing up the rest of the art room.
- No one should be cutting when everyone is moving around packing up the art room, in case they get bumped.
- Carry the cutting tool with the blade pointing down.

4. Demonstrate how to cut the lino using the various cutting tools, and explain which tools give you a thick or thin line. Provide the students with the following instructions:
    - Do not dig too deep into the lino. Cut 1–2 millimetres deep.
    - The lino plate may need to be turned so you can cut away from your body.
5. Have a scrap sample piece of lino that students can practise on before starting. When students are confident and comfortable, they can start cutting out the pencil line they have drawn on the lino. Cutting into the lino will take several lessons.
6. Demonstrate how to ink the printing plate use water-based ink:
    - Use a rubber roller on a sheet of Perspex to apply an even layer of ink to the roller.
    - Apply a thin, even layer of ink to the printing plate. Roll over the printing plate in two directions.
    - Place the paper on the printing plate by rolling the paper on from one side to the other with the printing plate on the table.
    - Use either a baren or printing press to apply pressure to the paper, ensuring the printing plate is under the paper and the paper is on top.
    - To lift the paper off the printing plate, carefully lift from one edge in the same rolling motion as when the paper was placed on.
7. After each print is made, students should view the print and assess how successful it was. If the print is not clear, students should think about what they need to do to improve their printing technique so that they achieve a clear print.
8. As students lift their prints off their printing plate, they sign and edition the print by:
    - signing the bottom right-hand corner just under the image (not the corner of the paper)
    - writing the edition number at the bottom left-hand corner of the image (not the corner of the paper).

    To edition the print, get students to use the following notation:
    - first print – AP (artist proof)
    - second print – 1/3

- third print – 2/3
- fourth print – 3/3.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students are able to safely cut a printing plate using lino.
- Students are able to ink a printing plate and make a clear print.
- Students sign a print and edition it in the correct order.

Learning activity 5: Present and Perform – Preparing an exhibition

Timing (approximate):	60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To consider the presentation of their work for exhibition To reflect on the creative process and the challenges and successes that were met when creating their final artwork To reflect on the quality of their artwork To explain how their artwork relates to Ah Xian's artwork
Content descriptions:	Create and display artwork considering how ideas can be expressed to an audience (VCAVAP031) Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR032)
Achievement standard extract:	… students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make and view … Students describe the influences of artworks and practices places on their art making. They describe how artworks that they make and view can be displayed to express and enhance meaning. Students describe and identify how ideas are expressed in artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts.
Resources required:	Mounting board and tools for trimming Student art journals

1. Students lay out all four of their prints and select their clearest, most successful print for mounting. A successful print will have the following qualities:
    - the areas where the lino has been cut away should be free of ink
    - the coloured ink area should be even
    - the corners of the print should be clear.
2. Once students have selected their print for mounting, they need to trim the print so it has an even 3- to 4-centimetre border around it. Students need to ensure they don't cut off their edition number and signature: the lower border should be 4–5 centimetres to accommodate the edition and signature.
3. At the end of the project students complete a written self-reflection in their art journal. The prompts below can be used as a guide:
    - Describe your final artwork using the art elements (line, texture, shape, etc.).

- You used patterns and images to represent your personality. Explain what some of the patterns or images represent (that is, explain your thinking).
- Do you think your artwork was successful? Why or why not?
- This project had many stages. What did you learn during each stage? Write a sentence for each stage:

- Researching Ah Xian

- Designing your artwork

- Cutting the lino print

- Making a print on the printing press.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students evaluate their work considering effective use of materials, techniques and processes.
- Students evaluate the use of visual conventions to express ideas and subject matter.
- Students select their clearest print or the print most suitable for mounting for an exhibition.
- Students describe their artwork and the ideas being expressed in their artwork.
- Students compare their work to Ah Xian's prints, looking at techniques, processes, use of materials and visual conventions to express ideas.