



Expressing emotions in artworks using art elements





and principles,

Levels 1 and 2

Visual Arts
Unit of work

Expressing emotions in artworks using art elements and principles, Levels 1 and 2, Visual Arts

Authorised and published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
Level 7, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

© Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2019

No part of this publication may be reproduced except as specified under the *Copyright Act 1968* or by permission from the VCAA. Excepting third-party elements, schools may use this resource in accordance with the [VCAA educational allowance](#). For more information go to: <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Copyright.aspx>.

The VCAA provides the only official, up-to-date versions of VCAA publications. Details of updates can be found on the VCAA website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au.

This publication may contain copyright material belonging to a third party. Every effort has been made to contact all copyright owners. If you believe that material in this publication is an infringement of your copyright, please email the Copyright Officer: vcaa.copyright@edumail.vic.gov.au

Copyright in materials appearing at any sites linked to this document rests with the copyright owner/s of those materials, subject to the Copyright Act. The VCAA recommends you refer to copyright statements at linked sites before using such materials.

At the time of publication the hyperlinked URLs (website addresses) in this document were checked for accuracy and appropriateness of content; however, due to the transient nature of material placed on the web, their continuing accuracy cannot be verified.

The VCAA logo is a registered trademark of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Introduction

Overview of the unit of work

Title:	Expressing emotions in artworks using art elements and principles
Timing (approximate):	1 × 30-minute lesson, 6 or 7 × 60-minute lessons
Description:	Students explore how emotions can be expressed in an artwork using a range of visual conventions (art elements and principles) and drawing materials. They explore how other artists have used materials, techniques and visual conventions to represent an emotional response to subject matter. Students explore these ideas and create artworks of a tree, using different materials and techniques to express their emotions about the tree.
Overall learning intentions:	To express ideas, observation and imagination through an exploration of subject matter To describe subject matter and ideas expressed in artworks To create drawings from imagination and observation To describe and evaluate their use of visual conventions to express ideas
Assessment:	Opportunities for assessment include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">analysis activity (Learning activity 1B)mind map (Learning activity 2)preliminary drawings (Learning activity 3)final artwork (Learning activity 4)reflection (Learning activity 5)teacher notes from class discussions and reflective conversations (all learning activities).

Links to the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Curriculum area and band:	Visual Arts, Levels 1 and 2
Content descriptions:	<p>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021)</p> <p>Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)</p> <p>Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience (VCAVAP023)</p> <p>Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas (VCAVAR024)</p>
Relevant achievement standard:	<p>By the end of Level 2, students make artworks using different materials, techniques and processes to express their ideas, observations and imagination.</p> <p>Students describe artworks they make and view, including where and why artworks are made and viewed.</p>

Learning activities

Learning activity 1: **Explore and Express Ideas – Identifying and analysing visual conventions in artworks**

Timing (approximate): 60 minutes

Learning intentions: To express ideas, observation and imagination through the exploration of subject matter

To describe artworks they view by identifying the visual conventions used

To describe the subject matter and ideas in an artwork

To explain how artists express emotions in artworks

Content descriptions: Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create ([VCAVAE021](#))

Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas ([VCAVAR024](#))

Achievement standard extract: ... students make artworks ... to express their ideas, observations and imagination.

Students describe artworks they make and view, including where and why artworks are made and viewed

Resources required: [‘Thinking Palette’](#), Artful Thinking, by Harvard University, Project Zero, is a useful resource to refer to when developing learning activities 1A and 1B.

A range of artworks that represent trees in both abstract and realistic ways, such as artworks by Van Gogh, Escher, Hundertwasser, Klimt, Mondrian, Hokusai (**tip:** search using the word ‘tree’ at [WikiArt, Visual Art Encyclopedia](#))

Student art journals

Coloured and greylead pencils

Part A: Whole class discussion

1. As a class, discuss the focus question 'How can I express emotions in an artwork using a tree as a metaphor?' The following questions can be used to expand on the focus question. Write student responses on the board.
 - What are some different emotions or feelings?
 - What colours match these emotions?
2. Show students a variety of images of trees by different artists from different cultures and periods. Ask students to identify the visual conventions in each artwork (see the tip box). Ask students to describe the feelings or emotions expressed in the artwork and explain why they think that. Some suggested questions include:
 - What feelings or emotions do you think the artwork expresses?
 - What colours/shapes/lines has the artist used in this artwork?
 - What emotions or feelings do you think the artist is trying to express in this artwork?
3. Ask students to explain and give evidence for their responses by asking 'What makes you say that?'

Tip: Visual conventions may include combinations of the:

- conventions such as composition and style, the art elements of line, shape, colour, tone, texture, form, sound, light and time
- art principles of emphasis, movement, rhythm, unity, variety, space, repetition, balance, contrast and scale.

Part B: Analysis activity

1. Choose one of the activities described below and demonstrate it for the class.
2. Ask students to work as individuals or in pairs.

Compare and contrast activity

Students select a colour copy of two of the artworks viewed during the class discussion and identify the lines, shapes or colours used in each artwork. They draw up a table of three columns, with the columns labelled (from left to right) 'Artwork 1', 'Both artworks', 'Artwork 2'. Students fill in the left and right columns of the table by drawing the shapes, lines and swatches of colour that they identify in each artwork. They also write the emotions or draw an emoji face to describe the emotions expressed in each artwork. Students then fill in the centre column with the elements and emotions that are common to both artworks.

Sorting activity

Students write two emotions as two headings in their art journal. Allow students to choose their own two emotions. Using thumbnail colour copies of the artworks from the class discussion, ask students to sort the artworks into the two different emotions. Students cut out and paste the images under the appropriate heading.

Lines, shapes and colours activity

Students select a colour copy of an artwork from the class discussion, and then cut and paste it onto one side of a double page in their art journal. On the facing page, students write the headings ‘Lines’, ‘Shapes’, ‘Colours’ and ‘Emotions’ down the page, with space between for writing or drawing. Students identify the lines, shapes and colours in the artwork and draw them under the appropriate heading. Under the heading ‘Emotions’, students write the emotions expressed in the artwork.

Tip: Students with low literacy skills could draw an emoji rather than write the emotion.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students describe the subject matter and ideas in artworks.
- Students describe how emotions can be expressed through colour, line and shape.
- Students look at a range of artworks and describe the visual conventions used.
- Students look at a range of artworks and describe their interpretation of the subject matter.

Learning activity 2: Explore and Express Ideas – Exploring emotions with art elements

Timing (approximate):	30 minutes
Learning intentions:	To express ideas, observation and imagination through the exploration of subject matter To brainstorm ideas for an artwork by creating a mind map
Content descriptions:	Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021) Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
Achievement standard extract:	... students make artworks using different materials, techniques and processes to express their ideas, observations and imagination.
Resources required:	Student art journals Coloured and grey lead pencils

1. Demonstrate how to create a mind map with a focus concept. Show students how they could set it out in their art journals, with the focus concept at the centre.
2. Students create a mind map with a focus such as 'Trees in art' or 'Emotions in art'.
3. Students write on the mind map three emotions they wish to explore in their own artwork. Students write 'lines', 'shapes' and 'colours' under each emotion. Students draw lines, shapes, and swatches of colour that express that emotion.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students describe the visual conventions they want to use in their artwork.
- Students describe the ideas and subject matter for an artwork.
- Students explore and experiment with their ideas for an artwork.

Learning activity 3: Explore and Express Ideas –Developing art ideas

Timing (approximate):	2 × 60 minutes
Learning intentions:	To explore possibilities for an artwork by creating preliminary drawings To create drawings from their imagination after viewing different artworks To create drawings from observation, to express an idea
Content descriptions:	Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create (VCAVAE021) Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms (VCAVAV022)
Achievement standard extract:	... students make artworks using different materials, techniques and processes to express their ideas, observations and imagination. Students describe artworks they make and view, including where and why artworks are made and viewed.
Resources required:	Student art journals Pencils, paint, collage materials

Part A: Preliminary drawings

1. In their art journal, students create three preliminary drawings for each idea on their mind map (see Learning activity 2). Students are not limited to the visual conventions listed on the mind map, but a link between the mind map and the design needs to be evident. Ask students to draw trees from their imagination, inspired by the artworks they viewed in the previous lessons. Trees drawings could be abstract or realistic. Through discussing the visual conventions used by different artists in their artworks, student should have enough reference material to spark their own imagination, but if students are struggling to imagine a tree, get them to look at a tree in the schoolyard.
2. Advise students to complete one drawing per page. At the top of each drawing, ask them to write the emotion being expressed in the artwork.
3. Ask students to annotate their drawings by writing a reflective comment for each drawing. To prompt them, write sentences starters or questions such as below on the board:
 - What worked well?
 - What would you change or do differently next time?

Tip: For students with low literacy skills, ask them to verbally explain their preliminary drawing. Write their comments in their art journal.

Part B: Gallery walk

Halfway through the lesson, ask students to go for a gallery walk (two to three minutes only). This is where students leave their artwork at their table and walk around so they can view other students' work. This is an opportunity to share ideas and see the effort and standard of work being created by the class.

Encourage students to discuss the work as they walk around. Remind students to think about their own work and what they can do to improve or refine their work to make it more interesting or expressive.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students trial variations of their artworks and explain their intention.
- Students discuss the qualities of a range of materials available to them to use for their artworks.
- Students select the materials appropriate for their artworks.
- Students make artworks using different materials to express ideas.
- Students describe the artworks they view and make with their peers and the teachers.
- Students describe the ideas in their artworks and consider the ideas in the artworks of their peers.

Learning activity 4: Visual Arts Practices – Final artwork

Timing (approximate): 2 or 3 × 60 minutes

Learning intentions: To experiment with visual conventions, materials and techniques

To express ideas using materials, techniques and visual conventions

Content descriptions: Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create ([VCAVAE021](#))

Experiment with different materials, techniques and processes to make artworks in a range of art forms ([VCAAV022](#))

Achievement standard extract: ... students make artworks using different materials, techniques and processes to express their ideas, observations and imagination.

Students describe artworks they make ... including where and why artworks are made ...

Resources required: Student art journals

Pencils, paint, crayons, felt-tip markers (textas), collage materials

1. As a class, discuss the limitations and benefits of different materials and how they could be used in students' artworks. Possible comments from class discussion include:

- Texta is good for colour and for drawing detail such as patterns. It is not so good for colouring in large areas.
- Crayon is good for colouring large areas. It is maybe not suitable for drawing small shapes and patterns.
- Paint is good for blending colours, but it may be difficult to paint small areas.
- Pencils are good for small detailed areas, but they are not so good for large areas.
- Texta and paint can't be used together because the texta will run. (Discuss the reasons why crayon and paint work well and why crayon and felt-tip markers/textas don't work well.)

2. Ask students to think about their design when selecting the materials they will use to create their final artwork. They should consider:

- if the artwork will be detailed
- if it will have large areas of flat colour
- the intensity of colour (do they want bright or dark colours?)
- the number of colours that are needed to create the artwork.

3. Ask students to select their favourite drawing, or their most successful design, from their preliminary drawings. They also select the materials they will use, and they create their final artwork.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students select a design and suitable materials for a final artwork.
- Students use different materials and processes to create an artwork.
- Students create an artwork that expresses an idea.

Learning activity 5: **Respond and Interpret – Gallery walk and reflection**

Timing (approximate): 60 minutes

Learning intentions: To reflect on their art-making process
To evaluate their response to an artwork by another artist
To describe the subject matter, ideas and visual conventions used in their own artwork and the artwork of their peers

Content description: Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas ([VCAVAR024](#))

Achievement standard extract: Students describe artworks they make and view including where and why artworks are made ...

Resources required: Student art journals
A range of artworks representing trees (from Learning activity 1)

1. In their art journal, ask students to write one sentence responding to each of the following questions, reflecting on their artwork:

- What materials did you use?
- Were the materials you used a good choice? Why or why not?
- What was successful or what do you like about your artwork?
- What was challenging or what would you do differently next time?

Tip: Students with low literacy skills could list words that describe the materials they used or words that describe their emotions.

2. Ask students to lay out their final artwork on a table with a colour copy of the artwork they used to inspire them or the artwork that best reflects their own artwork.
3. As a class, discuss why students selected that particular artwork for inspiration or to represent their own artwork. Encourage students to refer to the visual conventions they used to express emotions in the artworks, and facilitate the discussion by encouraging students to address the questions they responded to in their written reflection. The following could be used as prompts:

- Can you work out the emotion being expressed in the artwork? What colours or patterns has the artist used to express that emotion?
- Find someone's artwork that you really like. Why do you like it? What have they done or used that you like?
- Explain your artwork to a friend. Explain what you like about your artwork and what you found challenging. Ask your friend to describe their artwork to you.

Assessment

Evidence in practice includes:

- Students write a self-reflection to evaluate their creative process and final artwork and the connections to the work of another artist.
- Students describe the ideas and visual conventions used in their artwork to their peers.
- Students describe the ideas and visual conventions in an artwork created by their peers to fellow peers.
- Students discuss the ideas and subject matter in their own artwork and describe it to their peers.