

ART IN THE COMMUNITY

# THE FRAME PROJECT



AN EDUCATION GUIDE

by  
Kaleta Doolin  
Larry Estes  
Paddy Bowman

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## FOREWORD

As a teacher of both Talented and Gifted students and the Fine Arts, I forged an easy relationship with Kaleta Doolin's educational mission, which is the great need to promote aesthetic education for all children and especially the children of low-income families. In fact, her mission for Art in the Community programs reflects my own personal approach to teaching, connecting the Fine Arts to as many academic areas of learning as possible. Aesthetic training for all children is really the only affordable, practical way that the public schools can increase children's ability to improve their problem-solving and other higher-order thinking skills.

The Fine Arts provide the major keys that teachers have at hand to help children open their minds to methods of teaching that encourage the higher-order thinking skills that go beyond general knowledge and practical understanding. Do not misunderstand me: General knowledge and practical understanding are very important and must be sustained and nurtured throughout the human life span, but to solve problems creatively and independently, children need to deepen their thinking and analysis. Aesthetic training through mentorship has proven to be the most successful approach for young and older learners alike.

My experience with Kaleta Doolin and The Frame Project, first as a student and then as a teacher, has given me rich and rewarding memories. There are many steps along the learning and teaching road. We take them, small and big. We go back and re-experience those we need to see again. The result: *I can teach The Frame Project now.*

Larry Estes  
TAG Teacher  
Dallas Independent School District





# INTRODUCTION

The Frame Project was the result of brainstorming on a long road trip. I have been an advocate for Fine Arts education since the Dallas public schools almost eliminated it from the elementary curriculum some years ago. I am a three-dimensional artist. I make sculpture, book arts, videos, and installations. Because of these interests, I wanted to bring three-dimensional art lessons to a young audience. This guide shares my brainstorm with educators and young people in 4th through 8th grades. It is a tool to encourage meaningful, high-quality art composition, self-discovery, exploration of cultural diversity, and critical problem-solving and thinking skills.

Framing artwork and ideas employs integral aesthetic considerations that receive too little emphasis in many art classrooms. It is easy to unify framing with composition and color as part of an artwork. The Frame Project encourages students to work out this important artistic integration.

The Frame Project also exposes students to the work of culturally diverse contemporary artists. Over the years, I have collected slides of the work of important artists who integrate the frame into their art. Using these slides as examples, I have tried to inspire students to use a wide range of techniques in making their own art and to explore their own cultural heritage.

The Frame Project Education Guide is a culmination of these efforts. It is intended both for teachers and students in the school classroom and in special Frame Project workshops. It is also designed to help students meet education standards in Visual Art and English Language Arts. I believe teachers and students will enjoy their journey together through The Frame Project.

Kaleta Doolin, Director  
*Contemporary Culture, Inc.*  
*Dallas, Texas*





## FRAMING THE PROJECT

Welcome to an exciting art education project that students and teachers love. First developed by the artist Kaleta Doolin of Contemporary Culture, Inc., as a workshop for Dallas public schools and a community center in an ethnically and economically diverse neighborhood, The Frame Project has matured as a model that works in any classroom or recreation center and in many other settings representing a variety of age groups. This guide outlines The Frame Project and provides extension activities and preparation for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills [TAKS]. A teacher may work alone or invite a local artist and neighborhood mentors to collaborate. This is a good way to expose students to culturally diverse instructors and to start thinking about their own cultural heritage, a vital goal of The Frame Project. Workshop instructors and mentors should mirror the cultural mix of the community.

Students begin with an orientation on ground rules. The students and teachers follow and discuss a CD-Rom slide show of work by culturally diverse contemporary artists and by their instructors and local artists. As they move to making their own art, they must reflect on what is important to them, their own cultural heritage, cultural diversity, the concept of found objects, and how to plan a composition. Students' artwork will be a collage assemblage integrated into a frame, including their own drawing, painting, three-dimensional constructions, two-dimensional additions such as magazine clippings or photos, and found objects that express or affirm a personal theme important to them. Students will also observe, discuss, and write about their own and other students' artwork. Ideally, the project ends with an exhibit of all the students' compositions, with students acting as docents and inviting other students, teachers, staff, and family members to the opening of the exhibit.

Students' themes and artwork have led to interdisciplinary extensions of The Frame Project with classroom teachers of all subjects. Students have tackled topics such as the relationship of color and tradition. Examples of cultural influence include making African, Chinese and Mexican home altars (triptychs), and using the influences of cultural patterns to create their own artworks and writings.

By exploring their own cultural heritage as well as others' identities, making and assembling an array of two- and three-dimensional objects, locating "found objects," and developing a personal theme within an integrated frame, students find real-life meaning and authentic aesthetic experiences in The Frame Project. Their task is to produce an artwork with its frame as part of the theme, unifying the subject matter and its boundary, the frame. The subject matter—self-discovery—engages children and relates to other disciplines such as English Language Arts and Math. This art-making process helps students to express themselves creatively, to think abstractly, and to use various media.





# THE FRAME PROJECT

## Objective Overview:

### **STUDENTS WILL . . .**

- Create three-dimensional artworks that reflect their own cultural heritage
- Study the work of selected culturally diverse contemporary artists
- Explore their instructors' artwork as statements of who they are and how they work
- Brainstorm and choose personal themes for their own artwork
- Explore their own cultural heritage and those of others.
- Examine the concept of "found object" and collect found objects that relate to their personal themes
- Make three-dimensional objects and choose two-dimensional images that express their personal themes
- Consider frames as physical and metaphorical borders and find frames in their own lives
- Apply higher-order thinking skills to analyze tasks and plan their compositions
- Follow their plans to assemble drawings and paintings, using two- and three-dimensional objects within a frame to express their personal themes
- Think about and discuss how they made their artwork and how it shows cultural diversity.
- Create a class exhibit of their artwork and invite other classes to visit the exhibit
- Assess their own work and what they have learned about themselves, their cultural heritage, and their aesthetics

### **TARGETED CURRICULUM AREAS:**



#### **AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE**

- Visual Arts
- English Language Arts



#### **GRADE LEVEL**

- K – 12



#### **TIME**

- Two 2-hour sessions



#### **STANDARDS**

The Frame Project helps students prepare for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

# APPROACH TO AN INTEGRATED ART/LANGUAGE ARTS AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE

As you implement The Frame Project with students, you will explore your own identity and cultural heritage to create your own artwork as a model for students. You may identify a local artist and enlist the aid of culturally diverse mentors from the community or from among older students who have already mastered The Frame Project workshop to help you work with students. You may choose to have students interview mentors or family members about their cultural heritage. You and your students will learn a lot about each other. Try to plan an exhibit of students' final compositions and invite school and community leaders, mentors, family members, and other students to the opening. Your students can act as docents for their own and their classmates' artwork. Students can design invitations and posters announcing the exhibit. They can help plan how to arrange the artwork and create text for exhibit labels. The Frame Project brings people and cultures together, while creating an authentic VISUAL ART/LANGUAGE ARTS experience.

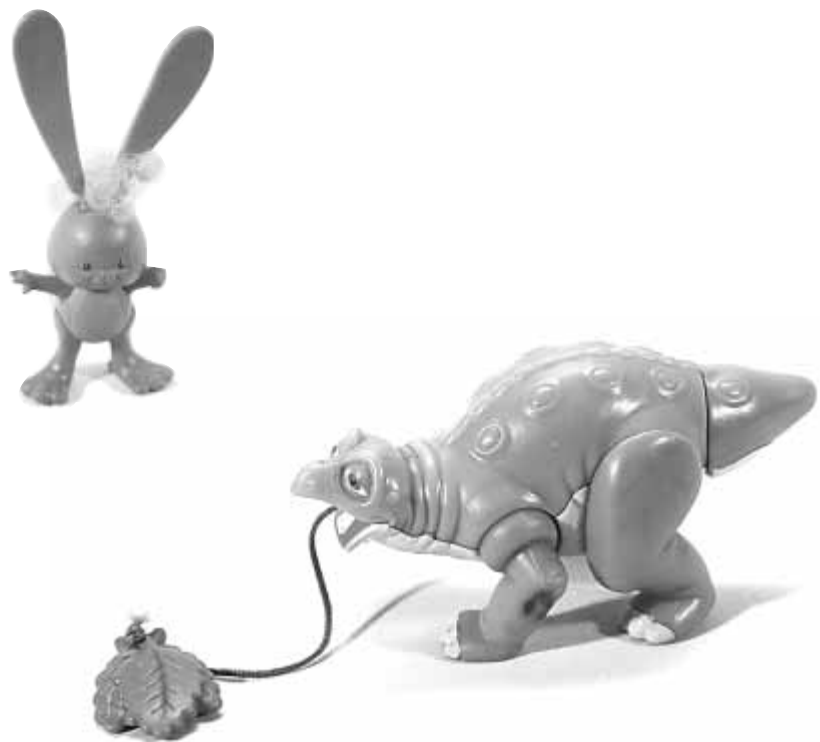




## PREPARATION:



- Accumulate materials (see list on next page).
- Prepare a workspace for students.
- Review this educator guide, the student Task Analysis Guide, and the steps of The Frame Project.
- Copy a Task Analysis Guide for each student and yourself.
- Complete your own Task Analysis Guide and create a framed composition that expresses a personal theme to share with students. Make a label for the back of your artwork as well as an exhibit text label if you plan a student exhibit.
- Read the Artist Slide Show Script.
- Prepare a personal statement about your own artwork and pull together slides or samples of your work and/or that of a local or regional artist to show students. Make arrangements to show slides.
- You may choose to identify a local artist and culturally diverse mentors to help you with The Frame Project. Brief these adults and make sure they have directions. **Note:** *Mentors and adults will not make artwork.*
- Photocopy a Student Checklist for each student to use as a rubric and a Task Checklist to guide them through making their artwork.
- Copy the Rules We Live and Work By on a board or hand out copies.
- Cut Masonite panels to fit each frame (or buy pre-cut panels), and secure panels in the frames with glazier's points.
- Older students can prime their own Masonite panels. Younger students will need the help of a teacher or mentor.
- Check your computer to make sure The Frame Project CD-Rom runs properly.
- Study the information about the artists on the CD-Rom.
- Plan where, when, and how to mount an exhibit of students' compositions.



# THE FRAME PROJECT

## MATERIALS LIST

- Frames of all sizes and shapes from yard sales, thrift stores, and family junk rooms
- A primed, fitted Masonite panel for each student. Masonite panels have to be cut to fit in frames.
- Parents should provide a smock or appropriate work clothes for their children.
- Three-dimensional “found objects” such as broken toys, beads, jewelry parts, fabric scraps, shells, buttons, keys, feathers, ribbon, wood scraps, small stones and so on. Two-dimensional found objects, such as magazines, newspapers, old calendars, greeting cards and photos
- White glue, glue sticks or rubber cement
- Super Glue (optional, for older students)
- Glue gun (optional, for older students)
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Acrylic paints
- Overlining paint (optional)
- Brushes
- White self-drying clay (first session only)
- Labels for finished artwork and exhibit text labels  
(See templates in the Task Analysis Guide)
- Paper bags for each student’s objects
- Eye-hooks and wire for hanging artwork when finished
- Drill and small pilot-hole drill bits



## PROCESS: Suggested Teaching Steps

### Day One

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#### Orientation

- Introduce The Frame Project, yourself, and other instructors and mentors.
- Introduce and distribute the Task Analysis Guide. Explain that students must complete each component, and go over the Student Checklist.
- Go over the Rules We Live and Work By.
- Show the first slide show of the works of contemporary artists. Tell students they must take notes and make sketches in their Task Analysis Guides.
- Discuss what students saw in the slide show and how the artists used frames.
- Show the second slide show or a display of images of your own work and/or that of a local or regional artist. Take no more than five minutes. Then discuss how the work says, "This is who I am and this is what I do."
- Have students fill out the "Brainstorm and Theme Sheet" provided in the Task Analysis Guide answering the questions of: "WHO AM I?"

#### Getting Started

- Review with the students the Task Checklist to help them follow the steps to make their artwork.
- Instruct students to brainstorm their own personal themes using the sheet in the Task Analysis Guide. They may use the questions on the sheet as prompts and should end up with a main idea.
- Introduce the concept of "found objects" and share the accumulated found objects. Ask students to brainstorm objects that would express their personal themes. They should use the list in the Task Analysis Guide and may confer with Frame Project instructors and mentors. Their homework is to look for other found objects and bring them to the next class and to discuss their personal themes and cultural heritage at home or with mentors.
- Ask students to cut out collage materials such as images and text from old magazines, newspapers, calendars, and greeting cards and photos for their compositions and discuss how these are two-dimensional.
- Optionally, students can use white self-drying clay to create three-dimensional objects that relate to their personal themes. They should use paper bags to keep their objects separate for the Day 2 Class. They should be able to glue these objects onto their canvases or frames.
- Older students should prime their canvases. They should be primed for younger students.

## Day Two

### Composition

- Studying all the objects they have accumulated, students should sketch composition plans with pencils in their Task Analysis Guides. They should include forms they saw in the first slide show and theme concepts.
- Evaluate students' progress (theme, composition, form, spelling, suggestions of new ideas or directions) in their Task Analysis Guides. When students read your comments, they may write their responses.
- As students view the slide show of contemporary artists' work a second time, ask them to "take a closer look" as they learn the names of the artists and their history, media, and methods. Share the information from the CD-Rom about these artists.
- After this second slide show, ask students to discuss their composition plans as a group.
- Now it is time for students to assemble their various objects into framed collage assemblages. If working in teams, older students may help younger students. Tell students to follow the steps on the Task Checklist.
- Tell students to place their found objects and two- and three-dimensional objects on their canvases and move them around, like a puzzle, to create forms and shapes pleasing to them. They **SHOULD NOT** glue anything yet. Students can then remove objects to draw around or trace. The new arrangement could become the new plan.
- Ask students to return to their original composition plans in their Task Analysis Guides and lightly transfer the plans onto their canvases using pencils.
- Tell students to place all their objects onto their canvases a second time, again working them like puzzle pieces. When pleased with the arrangement, they may start to glue the objects into place. Objects may be glued onto the canvas as well as the frame. Students may play with empty space and create three-dimensional extensions reaching from the canvas into space.
- Next students should add details by painting and drawing on their compositions using pencils, or acrylic pre-mixed colors.
- After consulting with instructors, students may choose to paint or repaint any part of their compositions with the help of an instructor. They should unify canvas and frame. Careful use of overlining paint is one way to help unify the compositions.
- The final step is for students to complete a blank label form and paste it on the back of their compositions using white glue, glue stick or rubber cement.

## Exhibition & Reflection

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- If a formal exhibit is not possible, arrange students' final compositions by leaning them against a wall. Ask students to choose another student's work and reflect on it using the prompts in the Response Journal in their Task Analysis Guides to answer questions or share interpretations.
- Workshop leaders and classroom teachers can collaborate and extend The Frame Project with interdisciplinary activities described in Extensions.
- If an exhibit is possible, students may design invitations for mentors, staff, family members, and other students as well as posters advertising the exhibit. Students should assume the role of docents during the exhibit opening, leading visitors through the gallery or standing by individual compositions and explaining the process and the themes students have chosen. They can write exhibit text describing themes and what they have learned about their own and others' cultural heritage during The Frame Project.
- Students can document their work by photographing their compositions for a group slide show or Power Point presentation.
- Ask students to complete the Student Checklist in their Task Analysis Guides. Instructors should do the same for each student.

## Assessment

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Use students' Task Analysis Guides as a portfolio to assess their learning as they go through The Frame Project. There is a page for Teacher Comments and Students' Responses. The Student Checklist and Task Checklist provide a step-by-step method to help students plan and complete their compositions and to help teachers assess their work. Students' writing provides another assessment tool.



## Extensions

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**English Language Arts** — *Corridos* and ballads are songs that tell a story. People living in the Texas-Mexico border region have written and sung many *corridos* for generations. Write a *corrido* or ballad about yourself.

**English Language Arts** — Write a poem about yourself, your neighborhood, or your cultural heritage. Choose some words to create a frame around your poem, or place words from your poem on the frame.

**Math** — Measure each object in a final composition and make a list of objects and measurements, including three-dimensional measurements and the composition itself. How many kinds of angles do you see in your finished composition?

**Social Studies** — We may not be aware of all the borders that frame objects and ideas in our lives, but frames are very important. How else do we know where something begins and ends—the edges of paper, a chalkboard, or a schoolyard, for example? How many frames and borders can you list? Choose five and measure them.

**Theater** — Act out a scene about your own composition. Write the scene into a mini-play. Present the mini-play to classmates.

**Media** — Study the web site *Borders & Identity* by the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. The site is about life, culture, and history on the Texas-Mexico border. Go to: [www.folklife.si.edu/vfest/frontera/start.htm](http://www.folklife.si.edu/vfest/frontera/start.htm)

**Visual Arts and Media** — Use a search engine to study more about an artist from the slide show whose work intrigues you. If you find a reproduction of an artwork that you like, use it as a model to draw or paint from. Write what you learn in a short essay. For example, you might study Jacob Lawrence at [www.jacoblawrence.org](http://www.jacoblawrence.org) or Robert Rauschenberg on the PBS American Masters web site: [www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rauschenberg\\_r.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rauschenberg_r.html) See what you can find on your own.

**Maps** — Brainstorm about boundaries that mark your neighborhood or school. Draw a map that shows the boundaries, or frames, of a place in your community, state, nation, or world.

## ARTIST SLIDE SHOW SCRIPT

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The Frame Project begins with a slide show on a CD-Rom to introduce students to works by a wide range of culturally diverse artists. Students will view this slide show twice. Try to prepare a slide show of your own work and that of a local artist as well. Artists include famous and lesser known artists.

**Hannah Hoch** made collages based on human anatomy but out of scale, producing very humorous subjects with transposed eyes, mouths, heads, feet, and ears.

**Jean Dubuffet** was inspired by "therapy art" of the mentally ill. He tried to forget the accepted conventions of "normal" proportions that he learned in art school to return to childlike naiveté. Dubuffet's heavy outlines give his paintings a puzzle-like appearance.

**Hundertvasser** favors doodles and mazes such as phone pad and classroom doodles made by young people everywhere. His use of primary colors reflects another element of his childlike schema, reflected in his use of the poster paint palette.

**Louise Nevelson** uses the texture of objects without regard to their original purpose and often paints them all one color. Found objects are an essential component of The Frame Project. Viewers often see something new whenever they see one of Nevelson's works.

**Robert Rauschenberg**, a Texan, became famous in the "pop art" period when artists were using images from popular culture such as advertising and television. He is masterful at adding many different kinds of three-dimensional objects to canvas.

**Louise Bourgeois** uses unusual objects and media besides canvas for her works. For example, she sewed chicken bones to represent the skeleton of a female body onto a handkerchief instead of a canvas.

**Elijah Pierce, Bill Traylor and Clementine Hunter** are folk artists, not fine artists. This means they learned on their own, not in an art school. All three build their work from storytelling concepts.

**Jun Chu** is an Asian artist who often uses shaped canvases in the form of clothing or people.

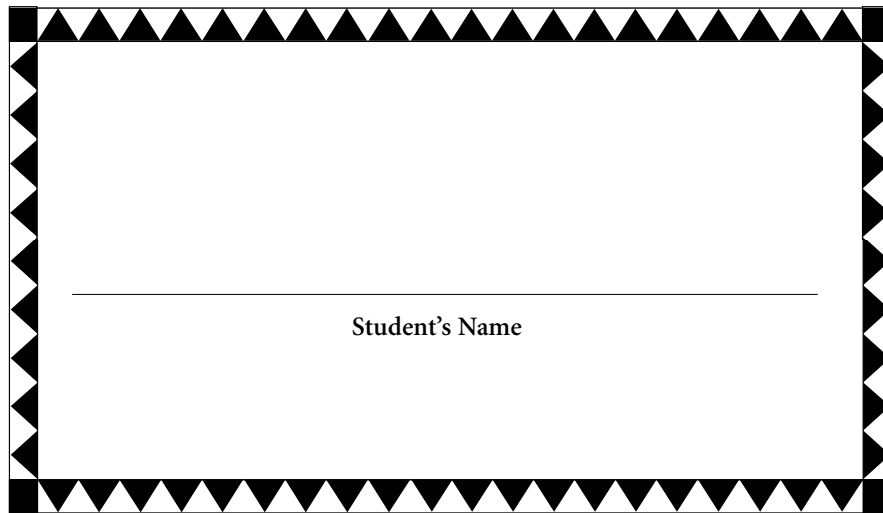
**Enrico Baj** uses outlines and faces somewhat as an adolescent would, filling up his canvas.

**David McManaway** is from the Dallas area. His art transforms ordinary objects into new inventions of creativity.

**Jacob Lawrence** was among painters of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, but he kept painting for many, many years. Students might be familiar with some of his works used in picture books. He painted blocks of bright, solid color and often made a series of paintings that told a story, such as the Great Migration of African Americans from the Deep South to find work and a better life in northern cities.

# THE FRAME PROJECT

## TASK ANALYSIS GUIDE



Student's Name

# THE FRAME PROJECT

## Sign-In Sheet

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Sketches & Notes

[illegible]

# BRAINSTORM

## Personal Themes

Think about these questions as you brainstorm a personal theme for your Frame Project. Remember, you want to express something about yourself and about your cultural heritage. When finished, write your main idea for your personal theme at the bottom of this page.

- What are three things that you really like?

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- Whom do you admire?

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- Who has taught you something?

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- What colors do you like most?

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- What music do you listen to, sing, and play?

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- What is important to you? Your family? Your neighbors?

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- What celebrations do you, your family, and your friends enjoy?

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- What boundaries or borders frame your life?

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MY PERSONAL THEME:

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# THE FRAME PROJECT

## Brainstorm and Theme Sheet: Day One

WHO AM I?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## BRAINSTORM

## Found Objects

List below all the objects that you can think of that remind you of your theme. Look for these things among the "found objects" your teacher provides and at home tonight. Bring your found objects to the next class, when you will finish your composition.

## Manufactured Objects

[illegible]

## Natural Objects

[illegible]



## My Composition Plan

Consider your heritage, the work of contemporary artists and the artwork from the slide shows. Remember to use form, lines, colors, and spaces.

Use a pencil to plan your composition. Show how you want to use paint, found objects, two-dimensional images, three-dimensional objects, and your frame.

FINAL TITLE OF MY COMPOSITION:

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## Teacher Comments

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## My Responses

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## Response Journal

As you look at another student's artwork, what do you think?

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Composition \_\_\_\_\_

I noticed ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I like the way ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I really can't understand ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I know the feeling ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I was surprised ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I thought ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If I had been ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT CHECKLIST

**TASK:** Choose a theme and make a three-dimensional artwork reflecting something about yourself and your personal theme or cultural heritage.

**DIRECTIONS:** Listed below are some quality features that will assure that your Frame Project will be complete.

Make an X to show that you have accomplished a task.  
First use this checklist to assess your own performance.  
Your teacher will assess your performance when you have finished.

QUALITY FEATURES	SELF	TEACHER
1. I paid attention to the slides of artists' work and made notes and sketches.	_____	_____
2. I brainstormed to choose a theme.	_____	_____
3. I made a list of found objects to collect.	_____	_____
4. I collected enough objects for my project.	_____	_____
5. I made three-dimensional objects for my project.	_____	_____
6. I cut out pictures and used other two-dimensional objects.	_____	_____
7. I planned how to assemble my project.	_____	_____
8. I completed each page of the Task Analysis Guide.	_____	_____
9. I followed all the rules of the class.	_____	_____
10. I followed my composition plan.	_____	_____
11. I wrote responses to another student's project.	_____	_____
12. My art helped observers understand me and my personal theme.	_____	_____

You completed \_\_\_\_\_ of the 12 items successfully.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

# RULES

## We Live & Work By

1.  
No Running!  
Concentrate on the artwork you are making.
2.  
Do not go outside without adult supervision.
3.  
No painting on the walls, floors, tables, or workbenches.
4.  
Follow instructions and listen carefully.  
The instructors are here to help you.  
Ask questions.  
Write down important answers  
and things you learn in your Task Analysis Guide.
5.  
Use the studio sink for cleaning palettes and brushes.
6.  
Use only the materials provided for The Frame Project.  
Wear smocks to protect your clothes.  
Shelves and bins and other materials  
in the studio are off-limits.
7.  
Clean up your own mess and help others.
8.  
Leave your finished artwork for a group exhibition.

*Arrange with your teacher to pick up your artwork.*

# TASK CHECKLIST

Use Sign-In Sheet As Students Enter Class.

1. Observe the "Rules We Live and Work By."
2. Brainstorm and then develop a personal theme that becomes the subject of your artwork. Some ideas include: a self-portrait, your neighborhood, your cultural heritage, a family member or mentor, a favorite pet, things that you like to do.
3. Make your artwork three-dimensional. It can extend out of the frame above, below, or to the side.
4. White glue needs time to dry flat. *Use Super Glue and glue gun only with adult supervision.*
5. Divide your Masonite into different areas as you make your Composition Plan. Think of it as a puzzle or a landscape, for example.
6. Cut out pictures and words from old magazines and papers to make collages to use as two-dimensional objects in your artwork.
7. Use found objects. Some are provided, but you must look for others that relate to your personal theme. Look for natural objects such as small stones or shells as well as manufactured objects. Bring them to the second class.
8. Use white fast-drying clay to make three-dimensional objects to add to your artwork.
9. Use pre-mixed colors of acrylic paint on your primed Masonite.
10. Take your time as you work. Do not do drip painting. Let layers dry.
11. Unify your painting surface and frame. Cover white areas with objects and paint. You may use overlining paint as a way of unifying objects and images.
12. Use materials effectively. Each student may have only one frame.  
No adults except the teacher may have a frame.
13. Do not take any supplies or objects home.
14. When your composition is complete and dry, make a label with your name and the title of your artwork and glue it onto the back using white glue.  
You may use the label from your Task Analysis Guide or make your own.
15. If your class is having a Frame Project exhibit, make an exhibit text label to tell about yourself, making your Frame Project, and your personal theme.  
Use the label from this guide or make your own. Print neatly or use a word processor.

COMPOSITION TITLE

ARTIST

COMPOSITION TITLE

ARTIST

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

ABOUT THE ARTWORK:

COMPOSITION TITLE

ARTIST

COMPOSITION TITLE

ARTIST

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

ABOUT THE ARTWORK:



ART IN THE COMMUNITY  
**THE FRAME PROJECT**

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