

Lesson Plan: Aesthetics

Goal/Overarching Theme:

- Students will be able to examine their beliefs on beauty
- Students will be able to identify and understand reasons why we find things beautiful
- Students will interrogate the meaning that beauty contributes to our lives.

Materials:

- 10 images total: 2 examples of architecture, 2 examples of painting, 2 examples of sculpture,

I. Opening Activity: Ranking Beauty

Lay out 10 different pictures of artworks, give the students 10 minutes to rank the images from “least to most beautiful,” goal is to get the students to come to some sort of consensus

- Bring in different images of different types of art:
 - -Painting (2)
 - -Architecture (2)
 - -Post-Modern art (2)
 - -Religious art (2)
 - -Sculpture (2)

II. Post-Activity Discussion

- Out of these artworks, which is the most beautiful and why?
- Which is the least beautiful and why?
- What different purpose do each of these artworks serve?
 - Does the purpose make it more beautiful?
 - What is the purpose/function of beauty? Does something (say a building) being beautiful make it better? (Does form affect function?)

III. Apollonian vs. Dionysian Art

-In some old school Aesthetics writings, there are 2 categories of art: Apollonian and Dionysian

-Apollo representing order, logic, and reason

-Dionysis representing irrationality, chaos, emotion, and instinct

- Basically, there is art that appeals to our sense of order and there is art that appeals to our sense of chaos

-Out of the images we brought to you, which would you classify as Apollonian and which would you classify as Dionysian?

- Why did you make the classifications that you did?
- Corresponding to the previous ranking, do you tend to favor Apollonian or Dionysian art?

IV. Emotion

- How does beautiful art make us react? Do we cry or smile? How do we “feel” art?
- Does art have to make you feel something to be beautiful?
- Is there a compromise between Apollonian and Dionysian?
 - For instance, something emotional and political
 - Can we think of examples?

V. Personal Appearance

- How do aesthetics influence our perception of others?
 - Who is “beautiful” and how? Does this truly matter?
 - Beauty being “skin deep”

VI. Closing Activity

-Give us a recommendation!

-Write down an artwork (song, movie, etc.) you find beautiful, tell us why you think it’s beautiful and share it with us if you feel comfortable!

- Write down five things in your philosophy journal that are beautiful. Think about why you see them as “beautiful.”
 - If time permits and students are comfortable, share and discuss