

## Sculpture

How do artists use forms and materials to construct meaning?

How do writers use various techniques to construct a text?

### LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will look at sculpture and explore the materials artists use to create sculptures. They will learn that sculpture is meant to be viewed from all sides and that its forms change depending on the position of the viewer. Students will create a sculpture using paper and found objects.

**LENGTH OF LESSON:** Two 45-minute periods

### KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING

#### Visual Arts

- Sculpture is a three-dimensional work of art.
- Sculpture invites the viewer to engage from all sides.
- The meaning of a sculpture is constructed or interpreted based on the perspective of the viewer.
- Artists use a wide variety of materials to create sculpture.

#### Writing

- The meaning of a written text changes depending on the perspective of the writer.
- The meaning of a written text is constructed or interpreted based on the perspective of the reader.
- Writers use a variety of techniques such as traits, format, literary elements, and character development to add dimension to a written text.

### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

#### Visual Arts

- Identify sculpture as an artwork that is viewed from all sides
- Create a sculpture that is interesting from all sides
- Observe and discuss a variety of sculpture created from different materials

#### Writing (optional activities)

- Add text to a sculpture
- Rewrite a well-known story from a different perspective
- Given a scenario from a classroom, select a character or object to do a quick write

### FOR THE TEACHER

Sculpture is an art form that has three dimensions: height, width, and depth. It is usually meant to be viewed from all sides, and its meaning can be constructed and enhanced based on the perspective of the viewer. Sculptures can be created from almost anything—traditional materials, such as stone, wood, clay, and metal; other materials, such as plastic, paper; and found and recycled objects. The materials an artist chooses to create sculpture can help communicate the meaning of the artwork.



Some things to notice when looking at Frida Baranek's *Untitled*:

- **Shape and form:** The sculpture's dense central form is a circular mass of rusted iron wire. It is bisected with bent iron rods. The interweaving of wire and rods gives the sculpture a linear, drawn quality.
- **Materials:** Although *Untitled* looks like it could have been woven from sticks or grasses and might roll easily, it is actually made of iron wire and rods and weighs approximately 90 pounds. Baranek often uses industrial scrap, such as steel, wire, heavy metal sheets and tubes, and even airplane fuselage, to create delicate and organic nest-like objects.
- **Process:** The sculpture was created using an additive process. Baranek uses heavy tools and foundry equipment to transform industrial waste into sculptures that look light and airy. Her works illustrate the idea that everything, even trash, can have meaning if reused and remade into something else.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Read about [Frida Baranek](#) on the ABC website.

### SUPPLIES

- Student journals
- Paper bags filled with a variety of paper and found objects, one bag per student. Use the same objects in all bags to show how the same materials can be used differently by each student. Materials can include a variety of papers—construction, drawing, newspaper, and cardboard—and any assortment of found objects, such as candy wrappers, twist ties, popsicle sticks, straws, thread spools, foil, bottle caps, etc.
- Scissors
- Glue and tape

### VOCABULARY

**Sculpture** is an art form that has three dimensions: height, width, and depth.

**Two-dimensional** areas can be measured in only two ways: height and width.

**Three-dimensional** objects can be measured in three ways: height, width, and depth.

A **shape** is a flat, two-dimensional area that can only be measured by height and width.

A **form** is an element of art that has three-dimensions: height, width, and depth.

An **additive** sculpture is created by constructing, building, or fastening materials together.

A **subtractive** sculpture is created by carving, trimming, or removing material to reveal or render the desired form.

A **found object** is something in your home, school, or outside environment that can be used to create a work or art.

### INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN: OBSERVE, CREATE, AND REFLECT

#### Observe: Quick Write

Before beginning the lesson, show Baranek's *Untitled* to students. Give them a few minutes to respond to the image. Use any of the following prompts:

- What do you think about when you look at this sculpture?
- If this sculpture were alive, where would it live?
- If this sculpture made a noise, what would it sound like? →

### Introduction

Introduce sculpture to your students. Ask them if they have seen any sculptures before. If so, ask students to describe the sculptures and what it was like to see them. Tell them that sculpture is a three-dimensional art form that, unlike a painting or drawing, can be measured in three ways: height, width, and depth. It is meant to be seen from all sides and can usually be walked around. A sculpture's form changes depending on the position of the viewer. There are two ways to make sculpture: by building or constructing (additive sculpture) or by carving or removing (subtractive sculpture). Sculptures can be made from almost any material. The materials an artist chooses to create a sculpture can help communicate the meaning of the sculpture.

### Observe: Look and Discuss

Have students look carefully at Baranek's *Untitled* and begin to describe what they see. Introduce and define vocabulary words as you ask some of the following questions to focus your discussion:

- What do you see? What else do you see or notice about this sculpture?
- What are the main **forms** or **shapes** in this sculpture?
- What materials do you think the artist used to make the sculpture?
- How do you think it was created? Is it **additive** or **subtractive**? How can you tell?
- If you could touch the sculpture, what do you think it would feel like? What materials do you think were used to make the sculpture?
- What would it look like from another viewpoint, such as from the side or above?
- How big do you think it is? How heavy? Does it look easy to move?
- What do you think about when you look at this sculpture?
- Is this a realistic or abstract sculpture?
- What words would you use to describe this sculpture? What title would you give it?
- How is looking at sculpture different from looking at two-dimensional art, like paintings?

Now give students more information about the sculpture. Tell them that it is made from iron wire the artist salvaged from industrial scrap and that it is nearly four feet tall and more than six feet deep (43" x 39" x 75") and weighs almost 90 pounds. Ask students:

- Does this information change your interpretation of the sculpture? If so, how?
- What do you think the artist wants to communicate? How do the materials help convey the meaning of the sculpture?
- What do you think it would be like to see this sculpture in person?
- How would the sculpture's meaning change if it were carved from stone or made from a natural material, like grass, or a new material that the artist bought at a store?
- If you could add words to this sculpture, what words would you add? Where would you place them?
- Would adding words change the meaning of the art work? How?

### Create: Paper Sculpture

Download the [Paper Folding Techniques](#) worksheet and share it with students. Demonstrate various paper folding and cutting techniques to students so that they can manipulate and build forms with the paper in their bags. ➡

Have students create an additive sculpture using the paper, cardboard, and found objects in their bags. Tell students they can alter the materials in any way they like and can create any forms, but they must use all of the materials in the bag. Ideas for students to keep in mind:

- Sculpture is meant to be viewed from all sides.
- Their sculptures can be abstract or realistic.
- The materials in the bag may help shape and express the meaning of their sculptures.

### Reflect

When students have finished their sculptures, display them in the room. Give students a few minutes to walk around and look at each other's work. Give students, in groups of two, a few minutes to look closely at their partner's sculpture. Have students write down their observations. What do they see? What are the main forms? How does it look from different view points? What might it be about? Have students share their observations with each other. Have them write or sketch any new ideas from this exchange in their journals.

Students may also respond to any of the following prompts:

- What questions do you have about sculpture now that you didn't have before?
- What questions would you like to ask artist Frida Baranek?
- Sculpture is \_\_\_\_\_.

### LESSON EXTENSION: IDEAS FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO WRITE OR DRAW MORE

- Write about someone else's sculpture using art vocabulary words.
- Describe, by writing or drawing, how Frida Baranek's *Untitled* might look from another perspective, such as an ant's or a bird's point of view.
- Make a sketch or write a description for a new sculpture you would like to make.