

“Blue Dog Days of Summer...”



A St. Joseph School Summer Art Experience
Exploring the Art of George Rodrigue

Lesson Plan
(Elementary/Middle Grades)
Meets Content Standards NAEA
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**This lesson was
inspired by the
“Flat Stanley”
project... only jazzed
up with BLUE!**

Lesson Overview:

A great summer project for students and their families exploring the art of American artist, George Rodrigue.

Lesson Implementation

Introduction

Familiarize Student with the works of George Rodrigue.

Text: “Blue Dog Man” by George Rodrigue. Open Discussion with students.

Utilizing [Blue Dog Coloring Pages](#) (from artist website) students will study the contour lines of the drawing.

Students will recreate a contour sketch of Blue Dog with pencil and then outline with Sharpie markers and apply color using Cray-Pas Oil Pastels. (Drawings were done on a heavy card stock)

I encouraged students to stay true to the likeness of Rodrigue’s Blue Dog. Students used three shades of blues and black and performed blending techniques to re-create the look of Rodrigue’s paintings.

Once images were completed students cut out their dogs and I laminated the dogs using a heavy mil laminate pouch and trimmed back to the shape of the dog. This is the most-labor intensive part of the project but it is well worth it because the dogs are very substantial and will hold up well for the duration of the project.

Once each student has a Blue Dog we discuss “foreground” and “background”. We practice placing the Blue Dog in various settings and we take several photographs using a digital camera.

Assignment

Challenge each student to create interesting backgrounds for their Blue Dog. “Where will Blue Dog go?” “What will Blue Dog do this summer?” “Who will Blue Dog meet?” Each student will become a photo journalist capturing the travels and activities of Blue Dog throughout the summer. I encourage them to be creative. Blue Dog may only travel as far as their own backyards, but find interesting things for him to do!

Before I “unleashed” the dogs we created “dog house” envelopes in which to keep their Blue Dogs and I sent an information and idea sheet home to the parents explaining all the details. (Sample Attached). My last words for the students were to spend the summer thinking about, “Why is Blue Dog blue?” .

Blue Dog Lesson P. 2

Student Performance/Evaluation:

Students began e-mailing photos and details of their Blue Dog adventures as soon as their summer began. The excitement and enthusiasm which they displayed for this assignment was overwhelming. Parents were amazed at the progression of their child's photography skills from the beginning of the summer to fall. Parents also expressed their appreciation for a fun activity in which the entire family could participate and enjoy.

Once we returned to school the students began bringing in their photos. We placed a global map in the main hallway of the school and begin using Blue Dog paw prints to map all the travels of Blue Dog. We created a border around the map with the photos.

September 21, 2008 (The official Last Day of Summer) was deemed, "Blue Dog Day" at St. Joseph School. The Pre-K, Kindergarten and First thru Third Grades were included in the festivities. Each class was read the book, "Why is Blue Dog Blue?" By George Rodrigue and they prepared Blue Dog masks to wear. (Mask Pattern from artist website).

Our cafeteria staff prepared a "Blue Dog Lunch" with corn "pups", slices of "waggermelon" and Blue Dog jello. The entire school was treated to "pup cakes". The staff and administrators all wore Blue Dog Masks and it was a great way to wrap up the summer project.

Conclusion:

The goals of this lesson are... to expose the student to the art of George Rodrigue; to provide the student with basic photography experience; to familiarize student with concepts of "foreground" and "background"; to engage student in a lifelong appreciation of art "all around us".

Assessment:

The "Blue Dog Wall" is a tell-tale (tail!) Confirmation that the goals of this lesson have been met.

Blue Dog Across The Curriculum Jump Starts:

English/Grammar

Create a Blue Dog Journal

Poetry/Essay: What is your favorite Blue Dog Adventure and Why?

Show and Tell/Share Experiences with Class

Geography/Social Studies

Utilizing the Blue Dog Map Identify all the Continents/Countries/States/Cities Blue Dog Visited

How Many Miles Did Blue Dog Travel?

What is the Coldest/Warmest Climate Blue Dog Visited?

What state was Blue Dog in when he was in Fairbanks?

Create a "Pawspport" and pawprint stamp all the places Blue Dog traveled this summer

Math

Calculate Distances Traveled/Mileage

“Blue Dog Days of Summer...”



Welcome to the “Blue Dog” Days of Summer!
St. Joseph School Students Grades 4-8
are invited to participate in this fun and
creative art experience! All that is required is
a great imagination (got that!)
a custom-created Blue Dog (made that!)
a camera (digital, disposable, Polaroid, etc.)
and a hard copy of the photos (no limit on # of images).

Each student (siblings may work together if they wish) will then spend the summer with their own Blue Dog, creating ever-changing backgrounds and capturing the scenes in photos. Images can then be printed or developed and the student can select their favorite shots. I recommend you print/develop as you go in order to help the student improve in their photography skills. They can look at the pictures and make adjustments in their alignment and perspective, etc.

When the students return to school in August, we will be creating murals, maps, scrapbooks and some spectacular surprises based on the travels and adventures of Blue Dog.

It is my hope that this is fun for the entire family.
Blue Dog doesn't require food,
veterinary visits or baths. He won't attract fleas or
make a mess on the rug. If
he wanders off or becomes lost he can be replaced
with a quick mix of paper,
pencil and a blue crayon.
Have a blast with Blue Dog this summer.

I hope your summer is happy & safe and I am
so excited about another school year with your children.

It is a privilege to be their art teacher!

Mrs. Sharp

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For a brief overview
of the art of George Rodrigue
and The Blue Dog...check out
You Tube's feature from the
CBS Sunday Morning News or
go to georgerodrigue.com



Blue Dog Visits the
Knoxville Museum of Art
and the Sunsphere...





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The fun has only begun...
here are some fetching
ideas for more
activities with Blue Dog...



-  Create accessories for Blue Dog (sunglasses, hats, shoes, etc. If he is at the pool he may need some goggles or a snorkel for the ocean!)
-  Make Blue Dog a Pawsport (A passport!) And give him a paw print stamp for all the places he travels!
-  Using a cigar box or shoe box, create a suitcase or travel trunk for Blue Dog. Create and Paste travel stickers to decorate the case.
-  Write stories or create cartoons or perhaps a comic book about the adventures of Blue Dog.
-  Keep a Blue Dog Journal or Diary!

Sample of "Dog House" cover
for Blue Dog Envelope.



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