



Human/Animal/Machine (Part 1 of 2) LESSON PLAN

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GOALS

Thrive Collective provides project-based learning that teaches both art and life skills. To the extent possible, every lesson plan provides three clear goals—artistic learning, project participation and applicable life lesson. For this project, the goals include the following:

1. Artistic learning - This class will give students multiple opportunities to stretch their imagination by asking them to reach beyond their initial thoughts/ideas to explore more of what is available to them in storytelling and image making.
2. Project Participation - By the end of the class, students will have a pitch for an image/story that communicates unusual relationships, as well as a process for creative ideation that helps them to arrive at surprising outcomes.
3. Applicable life lesson - Students will learn to understand new and effective ways at breaking down chunks of information/data and analyze them before processing them into decisions. These actions will help students become more adaptable at creative problem solving skills.

MATERIALS

Paper

Pencil

Media of their choice (Students can cut out images from magazines, use paint, markers, pencils, photos, or any other visual materials)

EXPECTATIONS

This lesson encourages group engagement for developing a list of elements, as well as creating thumbnails for group consideration and conversation. Students will learn how to plan compositional elements with some research, if necessary. Finished projects can possibly be paired with a written/storytelling component that could help aid students in the creative ideation process or used in tandem with a writing assignment for another class.



WHAT TO SHOW

The following are examples of art that include the combination of human/animal/machine in the piece. These works should serve to inspire creativity in students as well as get them excited about the project. Encourage students not to copy the art but use it as a place to start for ideas.

Step 1 links:

[Blue Dino - Shaun Tan](#)

[Lion Tamer](#)

[Snail - Shaun Tan](#)

[Steampunk Angler Fish - François Delarozière](#)

[Late for school again - Shaun Tan](#)

[Fisherman and Goldfish](#)

[Megaphone Bird](#)

[Fishing for Birds](#)

[Flamingo Bath](#)

[Polar Bear Unicycle](#)

Step 3 links:

[Ramen Bowl](#)

[Lemonade](#)

[Everyday Life](#)

[Faces](#)

[Cellphones](#)

[Shoes](#)

[Elephant Man](#)

[Eagle Logo](#)

Not every student identifies as an artist or enthusiastically embraces an art project. You should not feel frustrated if students choose not to engage with a particular lesson. Hopefully, in time, you will be able to present less interested students with various opportunities to engage with the process and add value with their creative input. Many students will need a boost in confidence to feel like they have the ability to be creative and successful in conveying their thoughts through art. Showing a masterpiece beyond their skill level can be discouraging and convey the message that this level of finish is to be expected. Using simple drawings and shapes within their skill level to demonstrate work will benefit them more. Similarly, using examples that are too simple will fail to engage the student and result in losing their interest. Choose age-appropriate examples and demonstrations to use that meet them at their level.

WHAT TO TELL

This project focuses on thoughtfully choosing three subjects - a human, an animal and a machine - by creating a piece that shows them interacting with each other. At one time or another, everyone has had a hard time coming up with creative thoughts. While some students are really good at having ideas pop into their heads, learning valuable tools can help students get past being stuck, or figure out more interesting or exciting ways to engage with art. Students will explore the different ways subjects can manifest, as well as how to look at clues to give more choices about the stories. By learning how to notice details, students will craft new and more interesting narratives.



CLASS OUTLINE (30-50 Minutes)

PROJECT: Human/Animal/Machine - Concept Development

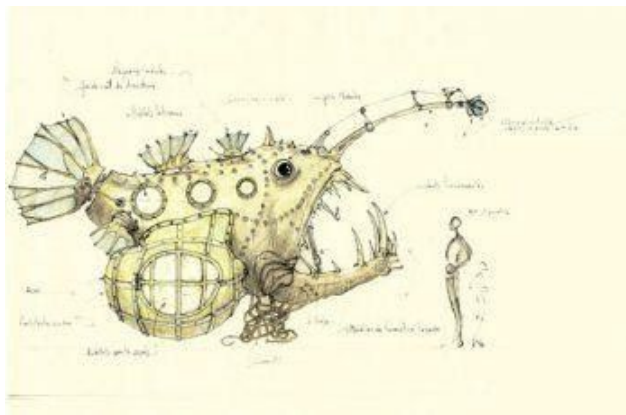
OBJECTIVE

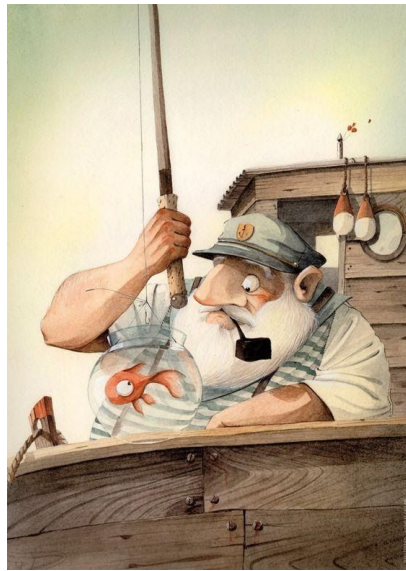
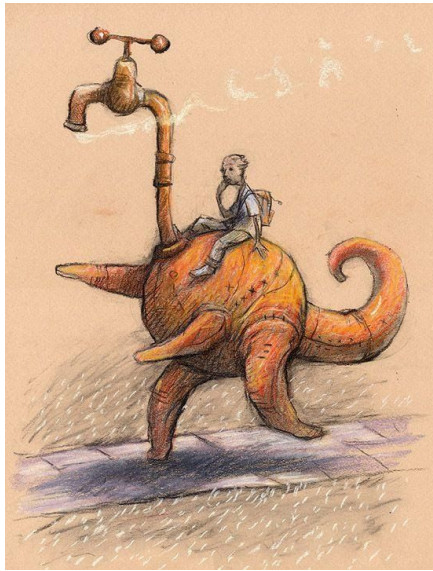
- Define as a group what counts as Human/Animal/Machine
- Explore how researching characters can be used to develop relationship narratives
- Develop a series of thumbnails combining the three chosen elements to introduce some more space and play into composing an image in order to create beyond the first idea or attempt
- Research and Thumbnailing help set up an intellectual rigor/process that can be applied in different contexts so focus on this is foundational to the outcome
- Group conversation/critique of thumbnails reinforces the value of sharing ideas even when they are unfinished, and to see how others respond to the different ways of interpreting the information and expectations of the assignment. Critiques can be hard, so it is important to facilitate a safe space and help students understand the value of positive input in order to learn and grow. This helps students adapt to positively accepting critiques, suggestions and ideas in other environments.

STEP 1: INTRODUCTION (10-20 minutes)

DEMO

Begin by showing students the below images to give them a visual guide for this project.





After students view the artwork, share the following definitions to help focus key characters for the list:

Human - relating to or characteristic of people or human beings

- cowboy, opera singer, mechanic, dog walker, artist, gardner, sister, stranger, Rapunzel, Anansi, Zeus, Viking, astronaut, sailor, grandmother, surfer, Rosie the Riveter

Animal - a living organism characterized by voluntary movement

- python, spider, Great Heron, alligator, llama, butterfly, bull, Chinese Zodiac characters, constellations like the big and little bear, Manticore, Jormungandr – Norse serpent who circles the world, dinosaur, poodle



- *animal kingdom* - taxonomic kingdom comprising all living or extinct animals
- *beast* - an animal, especially a large or dangerous four-footed one
- *brute* - a savagely violent person or animal
- *creepy-crawly* - an animal that creeps or crawls (such as worms or spiders or insects)
- *critter* - a regional term for creature (especially for domestic animals)
- *fauna* - the animals of a particular region, habitat, or geological period
- *domesticated animal* - any animal that has been tamed
- *giant* - any creature of exceptional size
- *herbivore* - any animal that feeds chiefly on grass and other plants
- *migrator* - an animal (especially birds and fish) that travels between different habitats at particular times of the year
- *molter* - an animal (especially birds and arthropods and reptiles) that periodically shed their outer layer (feathers or cuticle or skin or hair)
- *mutant* - an animal that has undergone mutation
- *pest* - any unwanted and destructive insect or other animal that attacks food or crops or livestock
- *pet* - a domesticated animal kept for companionship or amusement
- *range animal* - any animal that lives and grazes in the grassy open land of western North America (especially horses, cattle, sheep)
- *scavenger* - any animal that feeds on refuse and other decaying organic matter
- *sea creature* - any of numerous animals inhabiting the sea including fishes and molluscs and many mammals
- *tracking* - the pursuit (of a person or animal) by following tracks or marks they left behind
- *varmint* - any usually predatory wild animal considered undesirable; e.g., coyote
- *work animal* - an animal trained for and used for heavy labor
- *young, offspring* - an animal's child

Machine - an assembly of interconnected components arranged to transmit or modify force in order to perform useful work

- bulldozer, coffee maker, power tool, bicycle, unicycle, fire truck, record player, stove, windmill, clock, electric fan, hair dryer, headphones, ice cream cart, bus, subway/train, robot, skateboard, sewing machine, loom, camera, bubble maker, claw machine, microphone, roller skates

CLASS WORK

Have students compile a list of different things that fit into each category of Human/Animal/Machine. Encourage them to think of items that they find creepy, interesting, fun, beautiful, exciting, etc. After having a conversation about each category, have students write down all the items that come to mind for each subject. Then instruct students to circle which one in each category they plan to work with for their drawing.



GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

Encourage students to share their combination choice with the class. If students are struggling with ideas, there are several different ways to encourage their creativity. Suggest putting words on paper and drawing them out of a hat/basket/bowl. Group dynamics could be explored by forming small teams to work together to collaborate on each person's choices.

Note: Please remember that the value of this project is engaging with research and creative exploration. Move slowly and focus on reinforcing their thinking as well as play within the constraints and expectations in order to help students develop tools for encountering those things in other areas of their lives.

STEP 2: PROJECT (10-20 minutes)

DEMO

The words human, animal and machine have so many cultural implications and visceral realities that can be used to derive a context or sense of character. These clues give us access to deeper potential narratives and more nuanced character development. Share the following examples with students:

Human

Cowboy: cowboy hat/boots, horse, spurs, herding cattle, fences, countryside, guitar, campfire, wild west, farm life, old timey stuff, Native Americans, dust, frontier

Astronaut: planets, spaceship, exploring, stars, tiny earth, technology, aliens, galaxies, leaving home, no gravity, floating stuff, alone, thoughtful, missing home, new frontier/modern cowboy

Animal

Spider: silent like a shadow, building webs, eating mosquitos, weaving messages, catching things with the web, webs as a powerful bandage, gossamer bridges, web which look like a dreamcatcher, driven by instinct to be masterful weavers

Alligator: bayou, dinosaur skin, lots of teeth, eyes that shine in the dark, rivers, swamps, fish, sawgrass, boats, Cajun food, kayaks on Ichetucknee River, sleeping with mouth open on banks of Lake Alice, sneaky, camouflaged

Machine

Bulldozer: construction, digging, dirt, construction signs, public service, demolition, changing/making something new, really big metal hand/arm (like part of a large machine being controlled by a human), toy for a kid to play with

Robot: automaton, humanoid, extending our body to explore beyond where we can – underwater/in space/dangerous structures/caves, autonomous vacuum, assembly line



CLASS WORK

Once students create a comprehensive list and choose their three subjects, then the next task is for them to explore/research each of them. Have students generate a relationship narrative, one or two phrases/sentences that include the connection between their chosen subjects.

GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

Depending on the class size, either choose a few students or have everyone give you their subjects. Ask questions (use the examples below as reference) about their list to draw out ideas with the class offering any suggestions. Once a couple of students have shared their concepts, all students should be ready to start putting their ideas in verbal or sketch form.

The following questions are examples to help students explore their subjects:

Human Questions:

What makes a cowboy a cowboy—his surroundings or maybe his outfit? How do you communicate in a picture that someone is a sister or a grandmother? What kind of clues need to be presented to know who and what someone is? How can we use those clues to help communicate those roles/relationships? If the person was not included in the picture, but the evidence or suggestion of them were - what might be present to tell the audience who the picture is about?

Animal Questions:

What are the distinct markings or behaviors of the animals? For example, spiders make webs to catch things, bears hibernate, and flamingos stand on one leg. How do animals behave and look in ways that are specific? What is the difference between the characteristics of a peacock and an owl that makes them unique? What kind of environments does that animal normally have as their habitat? When is it valuable for storytelling purposes to leave a penguin in Antarctica for the picture or to put one on a beach in the Bahamas? Or if magpies make nests out of found material, how many different things can be suggested by using that behavior— like showing nests made of garbage, or of bricks with windows, stairs and a tiny picket fence?

Machine Questions:

Are there any memories that can serve as inspiration? Suggest experiences like learning to ride a bike, watching a family member work on an old car, helping do laundry, watching an eclipse through a telescope of a science teacher/neighbor/family member, etc. How can a human and animal be brought together with a machine into a relationship that is meaningful or interesting? For example, using grandmother/spider/sewing machine could be a starting point for a story.



Note: Try to make space for there to be no wrong answers. The combinations do not need to make logical sense but rather encourage students to think through creative ways to develop details.

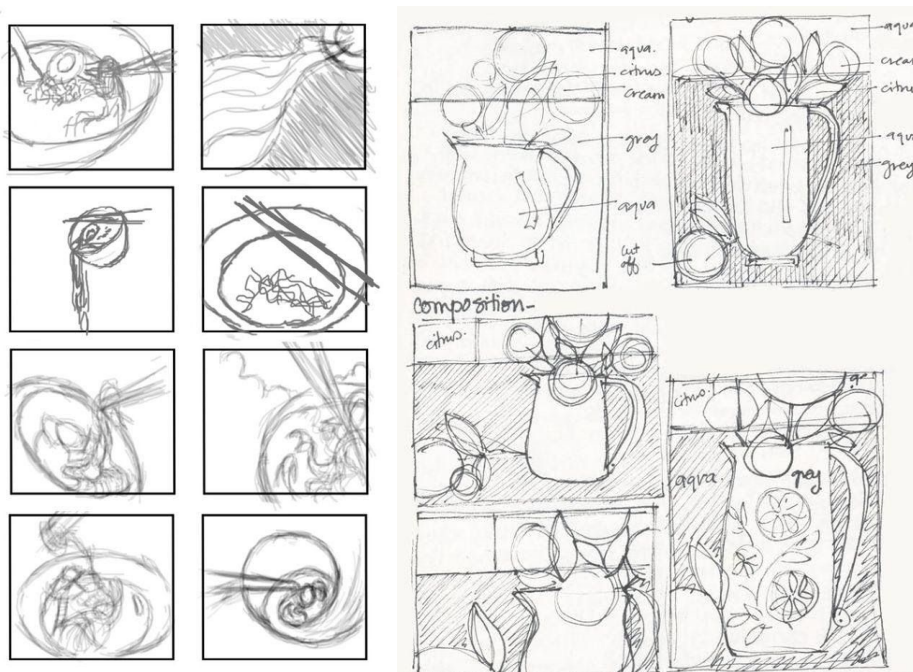
STEP 3: CONCLUSION (10 minutes)

DEMO

Using the words grandmother/spider/sewing machine, the following are three thumbnails that could be drawn:

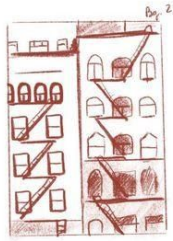
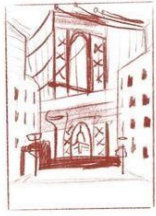
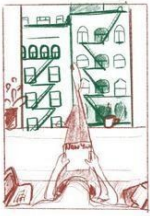
- (1) Grandmother teaching a spider how to use the sewing machine.
- (2) Spider making a quilt like a web while Grandmother marvels at its beauty.
- (3) Grandmother's presence is obvious in worn grooves and personal items, like a wayward pair of glasses. A spider has woven its web in the space inside of the sewing machine, insinuating loss and passing of time. Maybe there is a subtle message in the web as if the spider were communicating to Grandmother.

If time permits, show the images below which will also be shared at the beginning of Human/Animal/Machine Part 2. These examples show drawing an image multiple times in order to arrive at a finished draft. Encourage students to keep sketching new drafts instead of erasing the image.

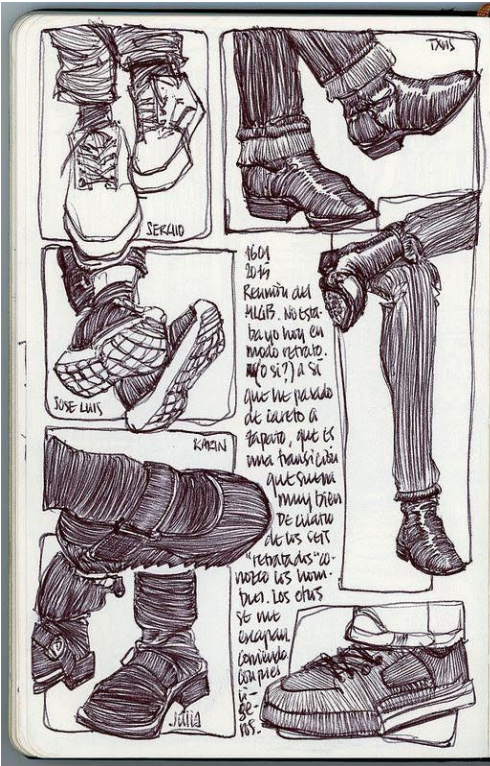
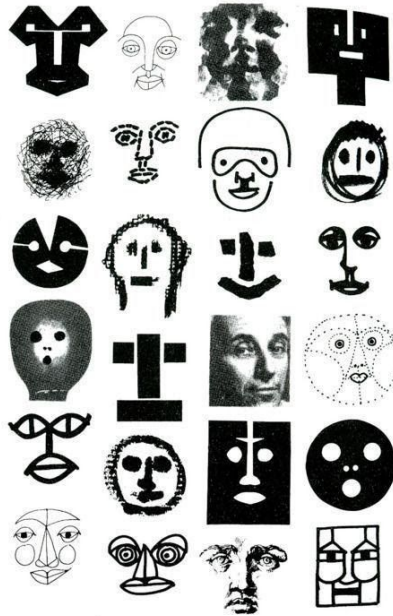




Every Day Life



- fog on top from coffee (for table)
- less space on the bottom
- go simple
- get inspired by Tomer Hanuka







CLASS WORK

Using a template for anywhere from two to five thumbnails, take the three subjects chosen and explore different ways for them to interact. Boxes can also be drawn by hand or ignored altogether, with the focus on the ideas being the important part.

GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

With the last few minutes of class facilitate a critique in which students discuss each other's page of thumbnails. Use the following questions for guided discussion and positive input:

- What do you notice?
- How do you feel about your piece?
- What do you think is the most successful part?
- What feels like it needs more work?
- Was there anything surprising in this process?
- What about this process feels valuable, or like something you might use again?
- Does anyone else want to talk about what they feel or notice about this work?

Remind students that this is not about producing a “good” work, but rather it is a culmination of their explorations and ideas. The emphasis should be on questions that lead back to what they are curious about or looking to explore instead of telling anyone how to do something or what it should look like. Create a safe space to be vigilant about critiquing in terms of value judgments. Conclude by reinforcing the idea to students that creatively connecting images helps them develop storytelling and problem solving in other areas of life.

Note: With the time allowed, students may not finish all of the thumbnails. Have them keep the drawings to work on for the next class - Human/Animal/Machine Part 2.