

Shoe Project

For this project,
students followed the five main stages of the inquiry cycle
to learn more about one of everyone's favorite accessories...
shoes!

Slideshow tip: to change the speed of this slideshow, click on the cog, then click "Auto-advance" and choose your speed



Slide 1



INQUIRY STAGE # 1: EXPLORE CONCEPT

A week before we begin this inquiry trail, I ask students to bring a shoe/boot/sandal from home. We start the project by putting all the footwear on a table, then choosing one to paint realistically. Next, we make a concept web about shoes to dig up prior knowledge, interview the shoe to imaginatively gain two perspectives, and, finally, choose a creative strategy to create a second work of art.



Directions

Students have ~5 hours (with my schedule, that translates to up to a week) to paint their shoe realistically. During this time I give individual and whole-class mini-lessons on perspective, negative space, color-mixing, etc. as needed. I also encourage students periodically check in with one another to ask for advice.



Examples



INQUIRY STAGE # 2: RESEARCH

Ask others about it, Google it, read a book about it.

To learn more about shoes, we watch a movie about world-renowned shoe designer, Tinker Hatfield. You can learn more about Tinker by watching his segment on Netflix's Abstract series, or you can watch the segment [here on YouTube](#).



MORE INQUIRY STAGE #1 : EXPLORE CONCEPT

Harvest your knowledge and associations with an object or concept.



Directions for Option #1: Concept Map

As most students near completion with their painting, I tell them they are going to spend 25 minutes writing down words and phrases that come to mind when they look at their shoe. I show them several different examples of ways their concept web/ concept map can be organized and artistically designed.

The goal is to get students thinking deeply about everything they know about both the shoe in front of them, and shoes in general.

Why Concept-Map?

- Prompts thinking and learning
- Provides a broad foundation for inquiry by prompting background knowledge
- Makes thinking visible



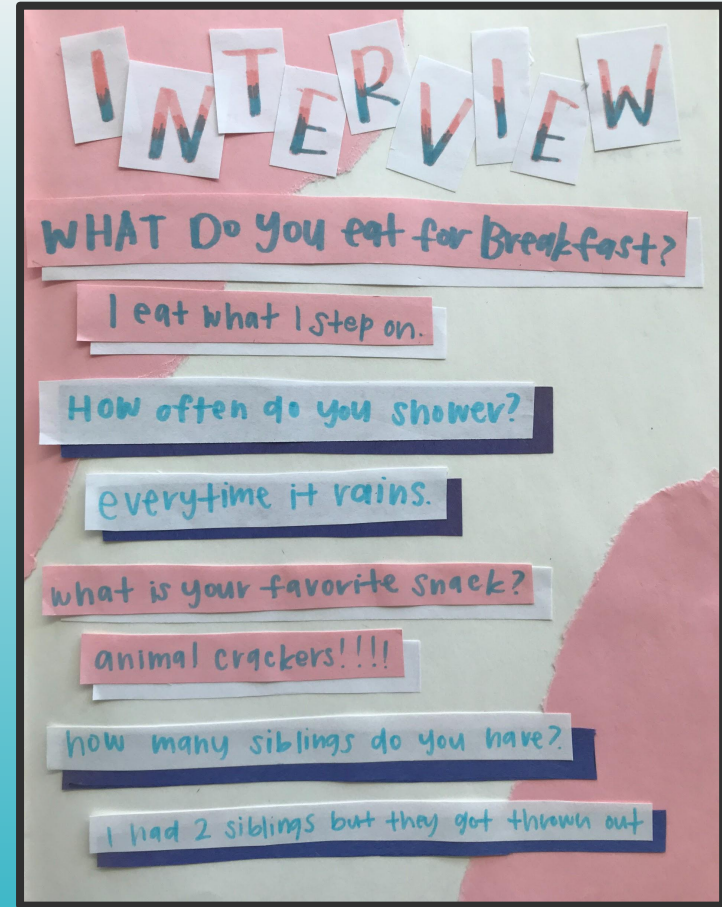
MORE INQUIRY STAGE # 1: EXPLORE CONCEPT

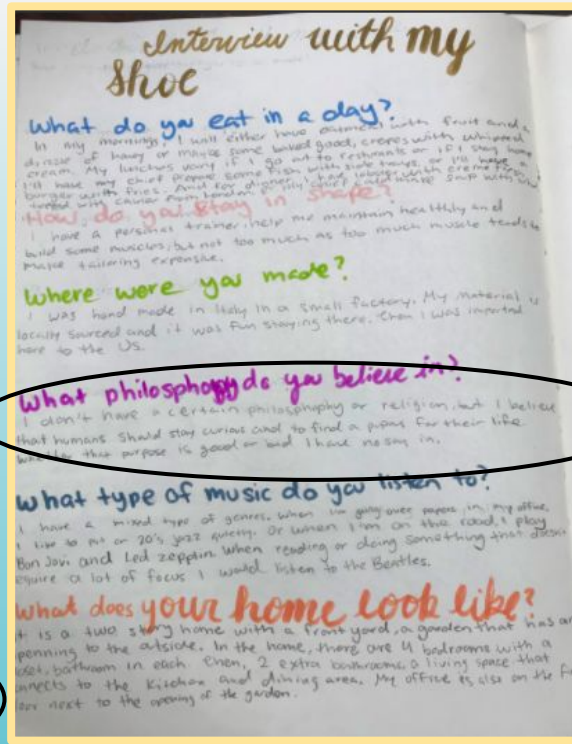
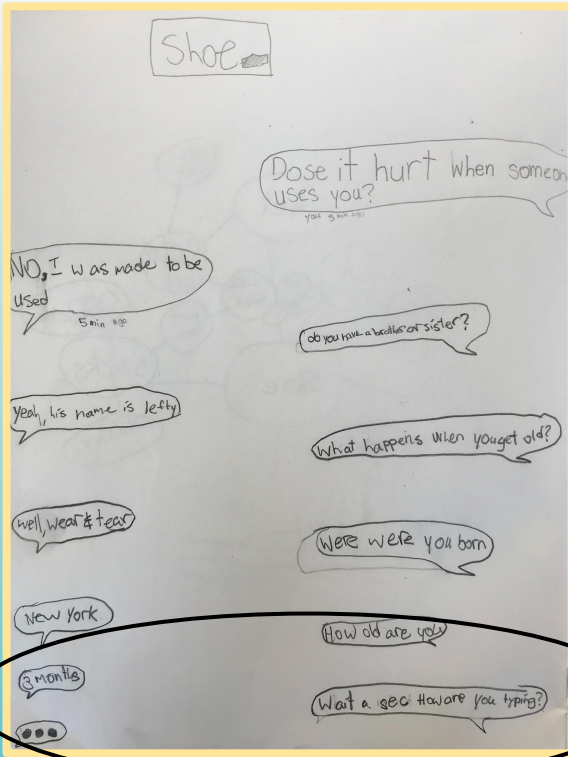
Harvest your knowledge and associations with an object or concept.

Directions for Option # 2: Concept Map

When most students are nearing completion with their painting, I tell them that they will now write five questions to ask their shoe.

I explain that questions should be meaningful and thoughtful, and result in a multi-word response from the shoe. As a class, we brainstorm a few thought-provoking and engaging questions, then they write their own.





“Creative inquiry... embraces the more adventuresome creativity of experimental and imaginative play with ideas and possibilities.”

- Julia Marshall, “Integrating the Visual Arts Across the Curriculum”

Student: “How old are you?”

Shoe: “3 months.”

Student: “Wait a sec. How are you typing?”

Shoe: “...”

Student: “What philosophy do you believe in?”

Shoe: “I don’t have a certain philosophy or religion, but I believe that humans should stay curious and to find a purpose for their life. Whether their purpose is good or bad I have no say in.”



Share Out!

Throughout the project, I encourage students to check in with those around them. After everyone has completed their interview questions, I give them one minute each to pass their journal clockwise around the table of four and silently read one another's' interview.

INQUIRY STAGE # 3: IDEATION

*Verbally brainstorm, write down, and/or sketch out ideas for making art about the concept.
Can include playing with creative strategies, materials and method*

Chose a Creative Strategy

- Give students many possibilities and ways to make meaning
- Move inquiry in unexpected directions
- Sustain and grow playfulness and creativity
- Give students a metacognitive vocabulary to describe what they do and reflect on what others do



Throughout the year, I teach creative strategies from contemporary art, two to three at a time. By the time we get to the shoe project, the students have practiced using about five strategies, including the ones below. We look back at artwork that exemplifies the strategies we've already learned, then I show them a few more. They may then choose any of the strategies to create an artwork with their shoe.



Transform



Hybridize



Personify

Creative Strategies Used in Contemporary Art

- **Hybridize:** Join parts of different things
- **Reformat:** Use a format from outside art
- **Project:** Imagine or envision what is not there or speculate on what could happen next.
- **Juxtapose:** Place contrasting images or objects in proximity to each other
- **Transform:** Morph or change something into something else
- **Personify:** Cast animals or inanimate objects as human
- **Change Scale:** Make an object larger or smaller relative to other things
- **Use Unusual or Metaphorical Materials:** Construct an object out of surprising materials and/or components
- **Categorize or Re-categorize:** Place something in its common category, a new category, or multiple categories
- **Layer:** Superimpose an image onto another image or form

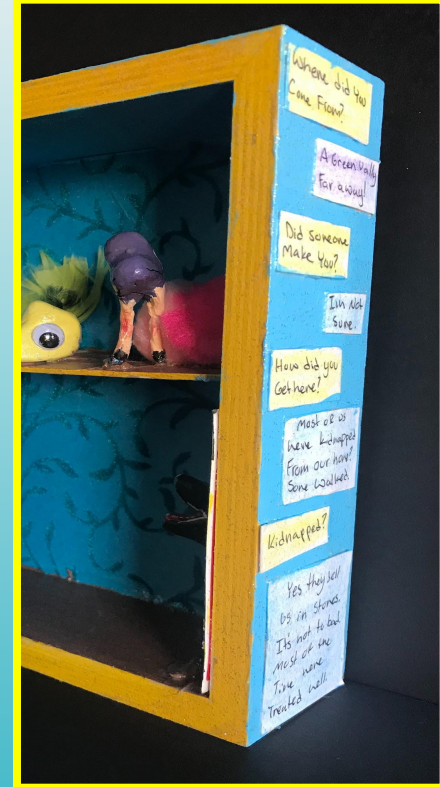
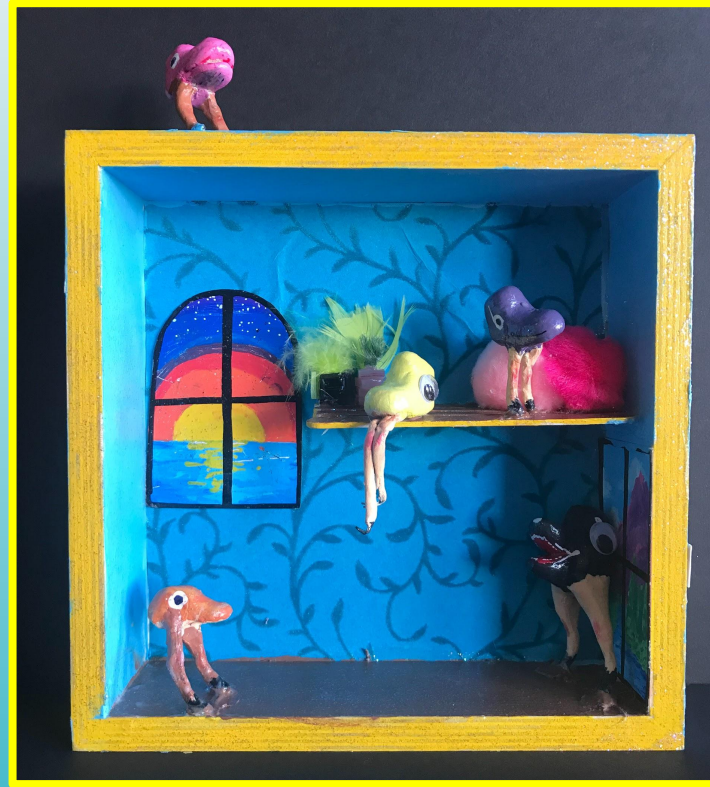
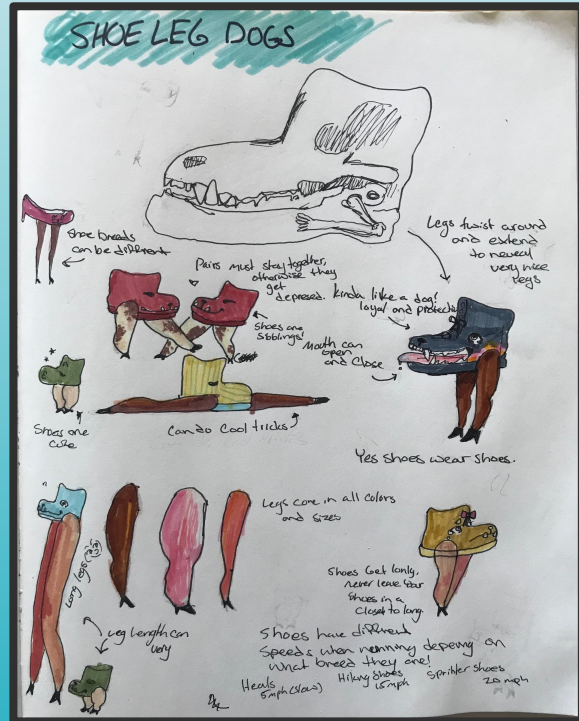
INQUIRY STAGE # 4: CONSTRUCTING ARTWORK

Make an artwork

Creative Strategy: Personify

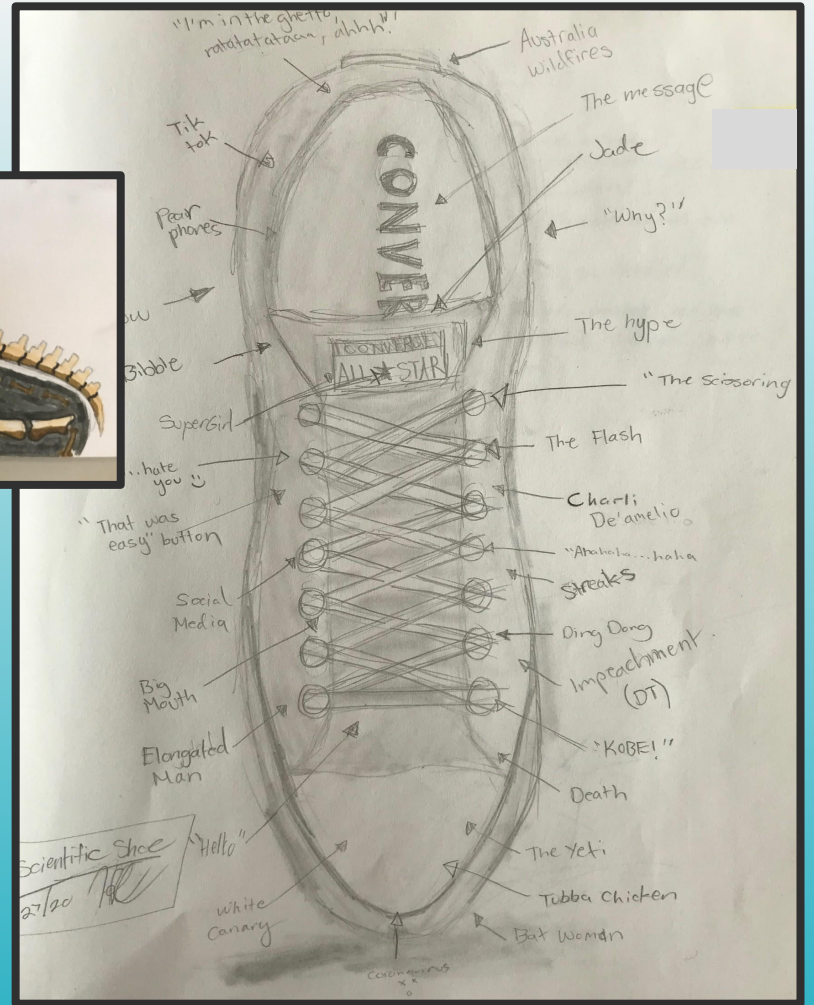
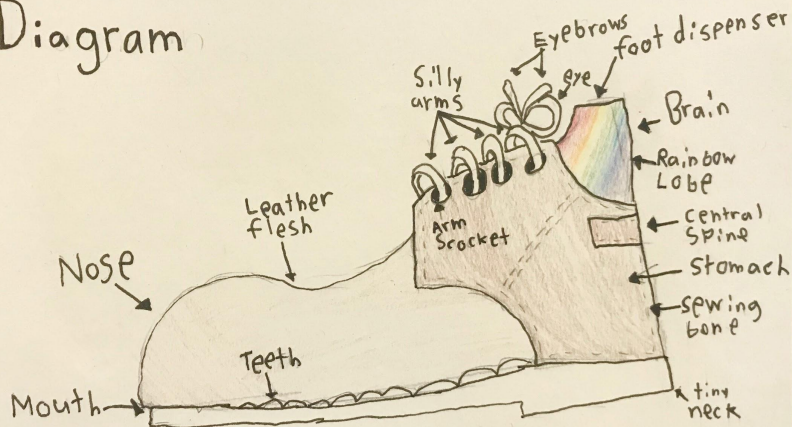


Creative Strategy: Personify



Creative Strategy: Reformat

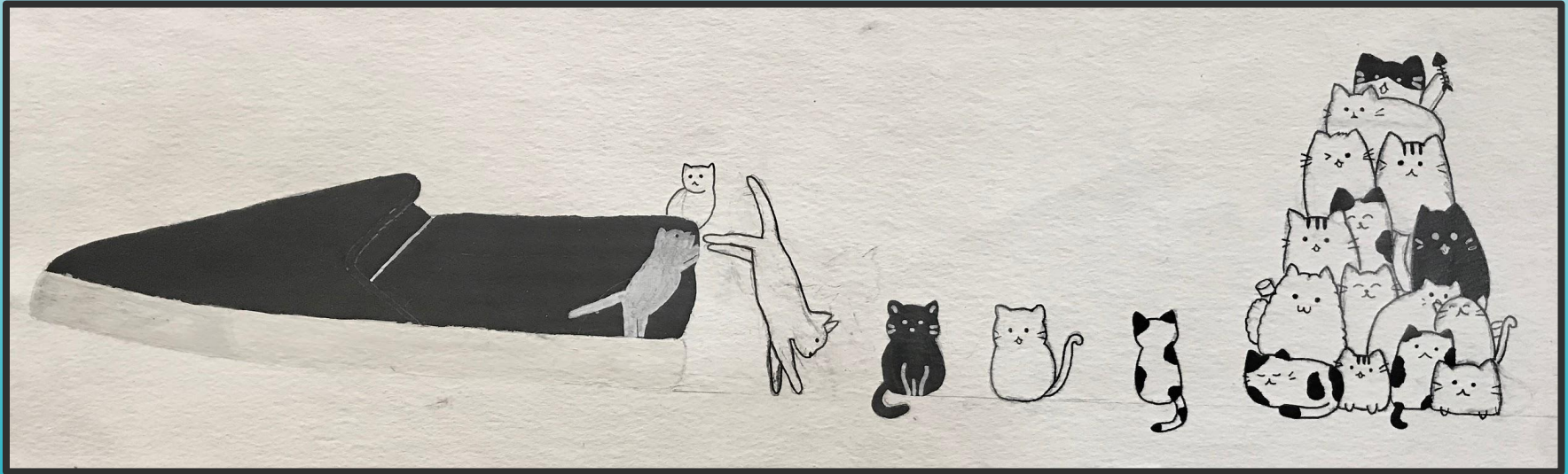
The Shoentific Diagram



Creative Strategy: Different Materials



Creative Strategy: Transform



Creative Strategies: Hybridize & Juxtapose



Creative Strategy: Hybridize



INQUIRY STAGE # 5: PRESENT & REFLECT

Make the artwork public in an online or classroom exhibit, reflect on what they have made, how they made it and what they learned. Can be an artist statement, reflection worksheet, and/or journal entry.



Name _____

Artwork Reflection - choose a piece of art that catches your eye & answer the following:

Artist's Name _____

Title of artwork _____

Why did this artwork catch my eye?

Something I particularly like about this artwork/ something that I would like to try in the future:

A drawing of the artwork:

Interview Reflection - choose a Q & A that you particularly like and copy it down:

Q: _____

A: _____

When everyone has had a comfortable amount of time to complete all 5 steps, we set up the classroom for an exhibit. Students set their artwork up and write an artist statement to go alongside it. After talking about how to politely and quietly walk around a gallery, I give the students clipboards and a reflection sheet to fill out about a work of art that catches their eye. Sometimes, we invite other classes and admin to visit our exhibits.

