

Empathy in the Art Room



“The study and practice of art can become a site for students to experience differences on a personal and critical level, in order to accept alternate realities and develop ethical choices---to imagine new communities and ways of being together”

(Riddett-Moore, 2015, p. 73).

Empathy

To recognize and feel the emotions of others.

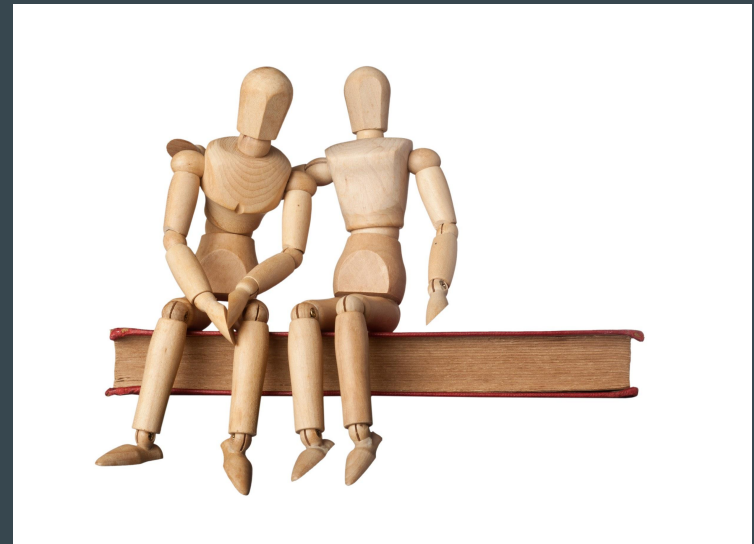


"The gentle and sensitive companionship of an empathic stance... provides illumination and healing. In such situations, deep understanding is, I believe, the most precious gift one can give to another." — Carl R. Rogers



A lack of empathy is found to be a common thread in violence of all forms. Bullying, prejudice, racism, sexism, and other persistent social illnesses also benefit from empathic connection.

The Need for Empathy



“Persons from various sectors of the behavioral sciences and the medical humanities have proposed that engagement with the arts can develop empathy” (Peloquin, 1995, p. 655).

Art
+
Empathy



“Caring must be experienced in its many forms in order to be learned and nurtured. It is not a virtue to be obtained through exemplars or behavior codes. Caring is an experience, or rather, a relational experience dependent on perception, reception, and *empathy*” (Riddet-Moore, 2015, p. 58).

Sample Lesson

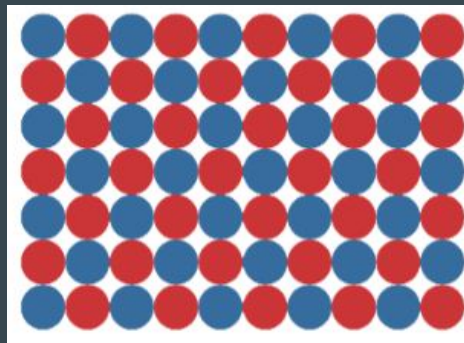
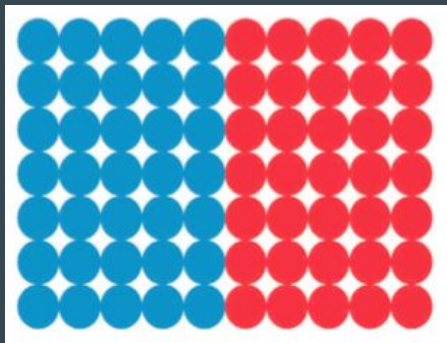


Purple Empathy

Art teacher realized she was doing a disservice to her students by avoiding to talk about the controversial 2016 presidential election.

“I decided the best way to create spaces for bipartisan discourse would be by focusing on the visual imagery and graphic nature of the election that has become a catalyst for civil discourse across the political divide...

Purple empathy was an optical blending of blue and red students coming together to engage in civil bipartisan discourse” (Nelson, 2017, p. 63).



My Independent Artwork



Clay is malleable, visceral, and easily lends itself to the idea of creation and connection. As an example, fingerprints on Rodin's sculptures enable one to strongly identify with the emotion of his work. Clay has the ability to represent the messiness, and possibility, of the empathic individual. Humans are a work in progress.

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