

Public Art Educator Lesson Plans – Utility Box Art in the North West San Fernando Valley

Background: Per Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals (NCCAS 2014, 10) cited in the 2019 published [California Arts Standards for PK-12](#), artistically literate citizens are defined as those who "seek artistic experiences and support the arts in their local, state, national, and global communities" and who "find joy, inspiration, peace, intellectual stimulation, meaning, and other life-enhancing qualities through participation in all of the arts." Our lesson plans aim to support students and their families achieve these lifelong goals.

Specific standards for PK-12 students:

- Connecting—Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and Relate Knowledge and Personal Experiences to Make Art
- Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding

Lesson Plan Objectives

The objective of the Public Art Lesson Plan is to expose children to art in their community. By discovering and exploring art in their surrounding neighborhood, children will have the opportunity to see how art is integrated into their daily lives, gain an appreciation of the role art plays in our social culture, and learn how art can bring people together.

Public Art can be a voice of the community. It contributes to a community's identity, fosters community pride and a sense of belonging, and enhances the quality of life for its residents.

The Public Art Lessons below will help give children a better understanding of public art and the important role it plays in a community.

Lesson Plan 1 (K – 3rd Grade)

Description:

Exploring the Utility Box Artwork in our neighborhood.

The Northwest San Fernando is now home to 20 hand-painted Utility Boxes, thanks to the Neighborhood Councils, Councilman Lee's Office and the Department of Cultural Affairs. Kids can take a tour of the boxes, either virtually or physically, to discover these masterpieces and talk about why they are so special.

Activities:

Virtual Tour

- Take a virtual tour of the Utility Box art by clicking on the links below. You can do this either as a class or ask the kids to do it with their parents. Consider breaking the tour into 3 different sections to allow ample time.
 - Northridge – 7 boxes. <https://www.streetboxart.com/northridge>
 - Porter Ranch – 7 boxes <https://www.streetboxart.com/porterranch>
 - Chatsworth – 6 boxes. <https://www.streetboxart.com/chatsworth>

- Each box shows the artwork, the artist, and a short biography of the artist with a description of the artwork.
- Children can be rewarded for each box they visit (digital sticker)
- Ask the children to give their favorite box and describe why they like it

Physical Tour

- Consider doing a physical tour where the entire family can participate. (Almost like a car rally / scavenger hunt). The virtual map can help them identify the individual locations.
 - Ask the kids to take a picture of each box or take a picture of their favorite box with them in front of it.
- Ask the children to give their favorite box and describe why they like it

Samples of the Utility Box Art in Northridge, Chatsworth and Porter Ranch



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Lesson Plan 2 (4th – 5th Grade)

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Exploring the Utility Box Artwork in our neighborhood.

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Physical Tour

- Consider doing a physical tour where the entire family can participate. (Almost like a car rally / scavenger hunt). The virtual map can help them identify the individual locations.
 - Ask the kids to take a picture of each box or take a picture of their favorite box with them in front of it.
- Ask the children to give their favorite box and describe why they like it

Activity 2:

- Students would be asked to create their own Utility Box design / artwork
 - Select a theme. Why did you pick this theme? Why is it important to you?
 - Using a provided template (11:11), design your box
 - Present your theme and art to the class
 - Submit the designs to **XYZ** for posting to community social platforms (see list)

- Kids can check out their work and other children’s artwork on the Utility Box Artwork Board.

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Lesson Plan 3 (6th – 8th Grade)

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Exploring the Utility Box Artwork in our neighborhood.

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Activity 1:

Virtual Tour

- Take a virtual tour of the Utility Box art by clicking on the links below. You can do this either as a class or ask the kids to do it with their parents. Consider breaking the tour into 3 different sections to allow ample time.
 - Northridge – 7 boxes. <https://www.streetboxart.com/northridge>
 - Porter Ranch – 7 boxes <https://www.streetboxart.com/porterranch>
 - Chatsworth – 6 boxes. <https://www.streetboxart.com/chatsworth>
- Each box shows the artwork, the artist, and a short biography of the artist with a description of the artwork.
- Ask the children to give their favorite box and describe why they like it

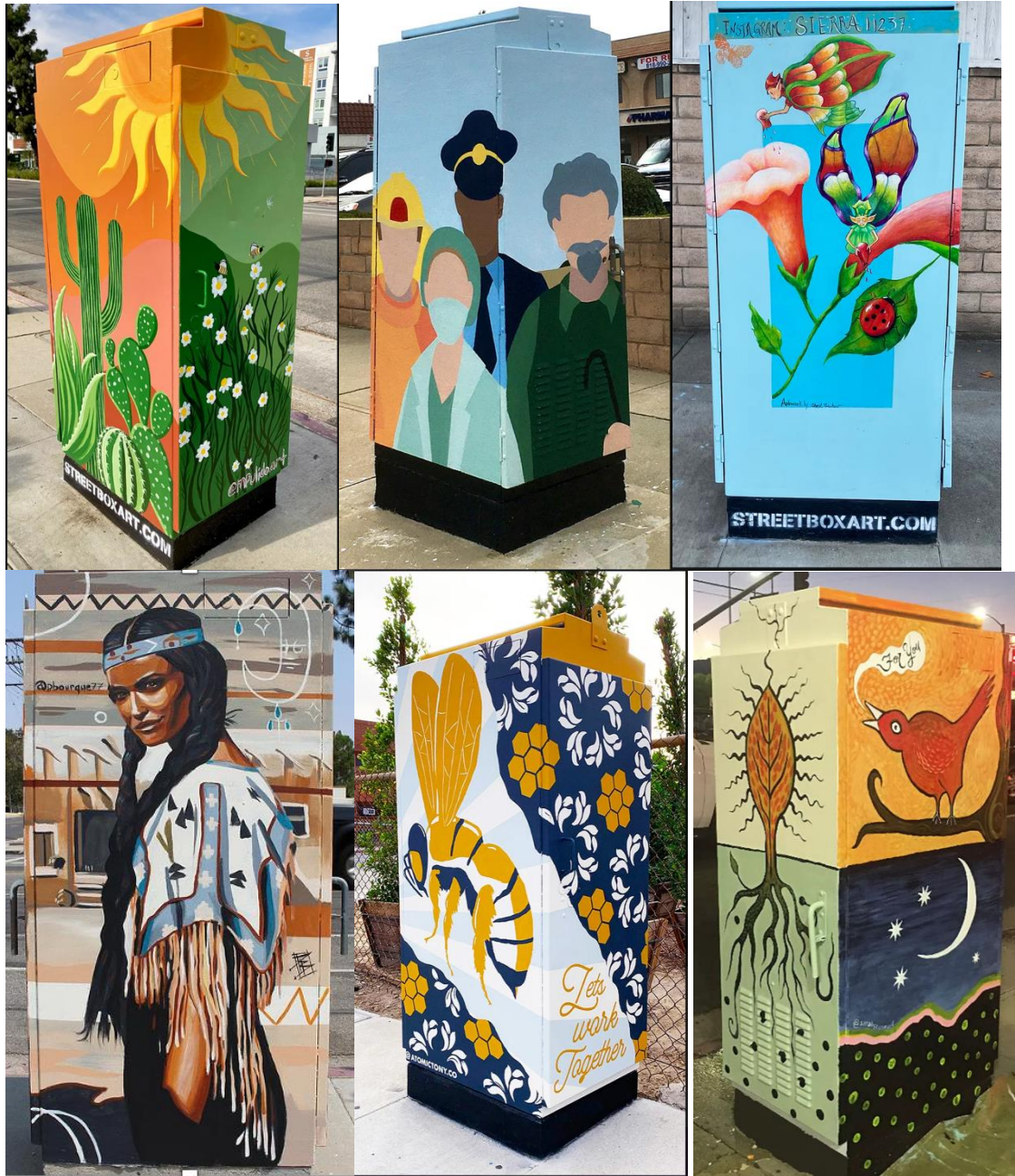
Activity 2:

- Students would be asked to create their own Utility Box design / artwork
 - Select a theme. Why did you pick this theme? Why is it important to you?
 - Using a provided template (11:11), design your box
 - Present your theme and art to the class
 - Submit the designs to **XYZ** for posting to community social platforms (see list)
 - Kids can check out their work and other children's artwork on the Utility Box Artwork Board.

Activity 3:

- Ask students to write about public art and the role it plays in our society. How can street art help bring communities together?
- Give examples of where public art has been used to unite communities.
- Encourage students to explore public art beyond the Northwest San Fernando Valley such as the Pacoima Mural Mile or the Top 10 murals in LA.
(<https://www.muralmile.org/recent> or <https://www.muralmapla.com/map>)
- Profile a local artist whose work they admire (Phil Bourque, Kristy Sandoval, Triston Eaton, or El Mac)

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Resources

- Free Courses
 - [Khan Academy - Art History](#)
Khan Academy offers a basic art history course online for free.
 - [MIT Open Courseware - Visual Arts](#)
MIT Open Courseware offers an extensive series of online courses, including a number on visual arts. Courses generally include lecture videos, assignments, exams, and more.
 - [OpenLearn - History & The Arts](#)
OpenLearn offers an extensive collection of free online courses, including a number on art history.
 - [Saylor Academy - Art Appreciation](#)
Saylor offers an Art Appreciation course designed to be an exploration of visual art forms and their cultural connections across historical periods, designed for students with little experience in the visual arts.
- Visual Resources
 - ARTstor: ARTstor is a digital library of over 2 million images in the areas of art, architecture, the humanities, and social sciences with a set of tools to view, present, and manage images for research and pedagogical purposes.
 - Europeana: Discover inspiring art, artists, and stories in 3,339,215 artworks from European museums, galleries, libraries and archives.
 - Google Arts and Culture: Provides high-resolution images of artworks from participating museums and 360 degree views of museums and other historical sites around the world.