

Is there a way to teach students how to convey something visually in a condensed manner?

Keith Haring Art

New York Subway Artist

Objective

1. Students will enhance their understanding of the term symbol.
2. Students will explore the purpose and function of symbols in society.
3. Students will examine how the 'readability' of a symbol is necessary in order for it to serve as its intended function.
4. Students will become acquainted with the work of Keith Haring.
5. Students will enhance their understanding of how drawings can depict specific ideas or narratives.
6. Students will develop their ability to speak about works of art in a thoughtful manner.
7. Students will create drawings based on sculptures depicting their favorite animals that they observed on a zoo visit.
8. Students will develop their ability to depict ideas visually.
9. Students will enhance their ability to draw in a bold and simplified manner.
10. Students will exercise their critical thinking ability.
11. Students will exercise the use of their imagination.

What is a symbol?

What function do symbols serve in society?

What is necessary in order for a symbol to effectively function as it was intended?





Keith Haring



K. Haring



What's the similarity between these drawings and the symbols we looked at?
What are the different images saying?
What kinds of messages do they convey?
Are they easy to understand? Is it important for the drawings to look realistic in order for them to convey a clear and specific message?

The students will then move from thinking of a concrete idea they want to express to designing a graphic image that depicts one idea in a visually coherent, moving, and simple way. Leave some visuals of Keith's work available on a table for students to skim through on their own terms.

They should be using line without shading, their shapes should be bold and direct. The image can be abstract, or representational, as long as the symbol has meaning to the artist.

Have kids make several symbols so they can choose one that they feel really good about. Use this opportunity to meet with each student individually and discuss their goals and ideas for their symbol.

Perhaps they will feel comfortable to share the thoughts that fueled their symbols.

Closure: Examine everyone's finished pieces together and discuss. Which of the artworks grabs your attention? What are some of the different stories that you see? Who are the different characters represented? How does the way that these characters are represented tell us about who the character is and what they are like? Are some pictures easier to understand than others? Is there an image that you really enjoy looking at even though you might not clearly understand what it is about?

