
5th Grade LWSD Art Docent Project: Kusama Infinity Dots!

Collaborative Art Project

Objective: To explore the work of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama and to create a relief sculpture by arranging round objects of different sizes and heights. Then combining all of the students' panels into one large work.

Artistic Influence: the 2D and 3D immersive work of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama.



Materials:

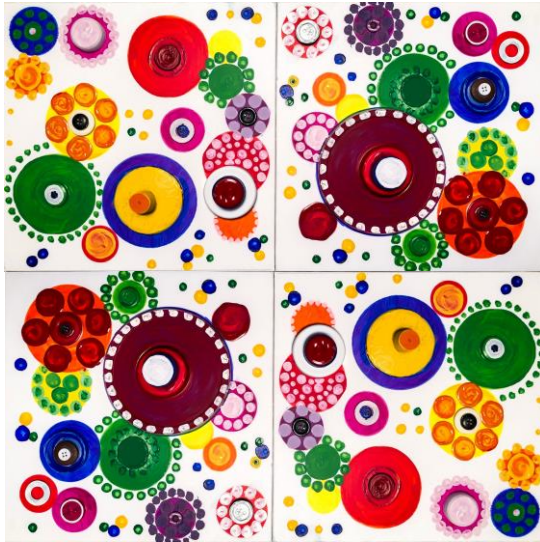
- **10"x 10" foam board squares** (or any very stiff piece of cardboard or heavy duty tagboard)
- **Ultra Fine Point Sharpie in bright colors** (two of each color can be shared between four students)
- **Circle templates** (can be cut out of tagboard with a die cut machine or can be clean plastic lids to trace)
- **Recycled plastic lids, buttons and other round objects**
- **Elmer's X-treme School Glue** (best school-safe/non-toxic glue for plastic and other tricky materials)
- **Small paper plates** (or paint palettes, but the glue can be hard to clean, so disposable plates are better)
- **Acrylic paint** (tempera and watercolor do not work in this project)
- **Cotton swabs** (or paint brushes, but swabs make nice, round dots and allow for easy clean-up)
- **Paper towels**

Instructions and notes:

1. This lesson must be completed in 2 sessions:
 - One 1-hour session for coloring with Sharpies, leaving at least 24 hours of drying time
 - One 30 to 45-minute to paint the surface with acrylic paint
2. Cutting foam board can be difficult, but there are places like Ben Franklin and Michael's with cutters.
3. Walk students through lesson slides 1 through 16.
4. Have students start by tracing different sized circles on their board with colorful sharpies. Avoid black.
5. When coloring in the circles/dots, start with lighter colors, because Sharpie tends to smear before it dries.
6. As students finish their coloring, distribute bowls of round objects to be shared by students.
7. Make sure that all of the Sharpies are tightly capped when the students finish.
8. Pour a small amount of glue on a small paper plates, one per student, for dipping round objects and sticking them to the board once the marker ink has dried.
9. When gluing, students hold each round object in place for at least 30 seconds.
10. The glue will need at least a day to dry. – **END OF SESSION 1** – Next time, start the slide deck with slide 17.
11. This lesson calls for cotton swabs because they make nice round shapes. On slide 20 demonstrate how to rotate a cotton swab in your fingers for a small dot vs. how to use a cotton swab more like a paintbrush.
12. The X-treme glue holds well, but it is possible to rip glued objects from the board. Gentle touch is required.
13. Invite students to share their art and talk about the process, if time allows.
14. Distribute parent information page for students to take home, and print an extra page to post on your bulletin board with the finished art. See following page.
15. Please complete the brief [LWSD Art Docent Program Feedback Survey](#) for this lesson.
16. Thank you for supporting our elementary students' visual arts education.

LWSD Art Docent Project: Infinity Dots!

The goal of this 5th grade lesson was to familiarize students with the work of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, to arrange round objects of different sizes and heights into a relief sculpture and to affect a repetition of 2D and 3D dots by merging all of the students' individual panels into one large one.



sample project



Accumulation of Stardust, 2001, Yayoi Kusama

WA State Visual Arts Standard

Cite evidence about how an exhibition in a museum or other venue presents ideas and provides information about a specific concept or topic. (VA: Pr6.1.5)

In this art lesson taught by volunteer art docents, students learned about Yayoi Kusama and how she translates her obsession with dots into fanciful and immersive artwork. Her work is sometimes limited to two dimensions but often expands into three dimensions. Some of her work involves small rooms lined inside with mirrors; in this way her artwork can completely surround the viewer and repeat itself outward to an infinite horizon. Kusama's 2017 installation at the Seattle Art Museum was sold out for the duration of its exhibition.

The development of this Lake Washington School District art docent lesson was made possible by a grant from the Lake Washington Schools Foundation.