

Projecting Persona: The Public Image of Roy Orbison

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Projecting Persona provides activities that teachers can use

- to prepare young people to explore the Roy Orbison exhibition at the Tempe Center for the Arts (TCA),
- to focus their attention during a visit and
- to plan an artwork for a specific place after their visit.

[Teacher/Parent Introduction \(PDF\)](#)

Lessons

[Lesson One: Historical and Contemporary Personas \(PDF\)](#)

[Lesson Two: Tempe Center for the Arts Visit \(PDF\)](#)

[Lesson Three: The Look of a Lion \(PDF\)](#)

[Lesson Three: Extreme Makeover \(PDF\)](#)

Resources

[Historical Personas PowerPoint](#)

[The Look of a Lion PowerPoint](#)

[Extreme Makeover PowerPoint](#)

[Questor's Questions about a Contemporary Persona \(PDF\)](#)

[Roy Orbison \(PDF\)](#)

[Exploring Roy Orbison's Persona at the Tempe Center of the Arts \(PDF\)](#)

[Lion 1 \(PDF\)](#)

[Lion 2 \(PDF\)](#)

[Look of a Lion Label \(PDF\)](#)

[Extreme Makeover Label \(PDF\)](#)

[Patsy Cline \(PDF\)](#)

[Ritchie Valens \(PDF\)](#)

[Harry Belafonte \(PDF\)](#)

[Joan Baez \(PDF\)](#)

[Hank Williams \(PDF\)](#)

[Aretha Franklin \(PDF\)](#)

Web resources

[Computer and Digital Projector or SmartBoard](#)

[Mary Erickson Ventures](#)

[Roy Orbison](#)

Credits

Nancy Feiring is the primary author of Modular Madness.

Roxie May-Thayer is the primary author of Space Invaders.

Photos courtesy of the city of Tempe, Architekton and Mary Erickson.

Teacher/Parent Introduction

Themes

Roy Orbison is based on two themes.

- *Theme in Life:* We all want others to like and respect us.
- *Theme in Art:* Public figures use images of themselves to help them reach their goals.

Key Questions

Lessons approach the themes through two key questions.

- How does subject matter communicate feelings, moods or ideas?
- How do colors communicate feelings, moods or ideas?

Connections

Broad themes and key questions not only give focus to specific activities but also provide connections that children can use to go beyond those activities. The broad theme in art can be an entry point to explore art from many cultures and times. The broad theme in life connects art to widely-held human concerns. Similarly, the key questions can guide inquiry into a great many artworks, not just those introduced in the lesson.

Adaptations and Extensions

The lessons in this unit are written for all ages. Students vary greatly in maturity and prior experience. Of course, as you plan to implement specific activities, you will want to make adjustments to best suit the abilities and interests of your students.

If a trip to the TCA is not possible for your students, the “Roy Orbison” PDF provides information about Orbison and his persona.

Estimated Time

Preview and Lesson One = 90 minutes

Lesson Two = Field Trip

Lesson Three = 135 minutes

Lesson One: Historical and Contemporary Personas

Objectives

1. Students identify subject matter in detail.
2. Students interpret feelings, moods, or ideas communicated through color.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

RELATE: Artworlds

PO 101, 202 and 302: Discuss how artworks are used to communicate stories, ideas and emotions.

RELATE: Meanings or Purposes

PO 101, 202 and 302: Interpret meanings and/or purposes of an artwork using subject matter, symbols (and/or themes)

EVALUATE: Art Issues and Values

PO 202 and 203: Debate whether art is different from visual culture in general.

EVALUATE: Elements and Principles

PO 101: Identify an element and principle in an artwork that supports its meaning and/or purpose.

EVALUATE: Elements and Principles

PO 201: Describe an artist's use of elements and principles in an artwork to support its meaning and/or purpose.

EVALUATE: Meanings or Purposes

PO 101 and 201: Discuss how an artist uses subject matter, symbols and/or themes to communicate/s meaning and/or purpose in an artwork.

Preparation

Preview "Historical Personas" PowerPoint.

Decide whether to ask individual students or groups of students to complete the "Questor Questions about "Contemporary Persona" worksheet and accordingly make a copy for each group or student.

Assemble a collection of color publicity photographs of contemporary public figures from the worlds of politics, entertainment and/or sports - for example, CD covers, posed photos, poster photos, publicity photos (not candid shots) in newspapers or magazines. You may choose to ask secondary students to bring in photos of favorite public figures.

Activities

Unit Preview: Introduce the lessons of *Projecting Persona* unit by discussing its two themes. Introduce the *theme in life* (we all want others to like and respect us) by asking students to name an occasion when they dressed, talked or acted in a particular way because they wanted to make an impression or feel part of a group, for example, first day of school, party, first date, wedding, birthday, meeting older relatives, etc.

Introduce the *theme in art* (Public figures use images of themselves to help them reach their goals) by showing examples of publicity photographs of two or three contemporary figures with which your students are likely to be familiar. Explain that to help them reach their goals, many public figures in politics, entertainment and sports try to control how they appear. For example, a politician might want to look like a strong and trustworthy person so people will vote for him or her. A musician, dancer or actor might want to look beautiful, funny, clever or scary so people will be interested in his or her performance. An athlete might want to appear strong, flexible, fast, bold, charming or self-confident to attract fans. The public image of such people is called a “persona.” A persona is a mask, a second self or a character created to impress or put on a show for others.

Inquiry: Show “Historical Personas” to introduce:

- Unit themes and key questions

- Contemporary public figures in politics, entertainment and sports

- Persona

- Teddy Roosevelt, an important historical public figure person who visited Tempe

- Analysis of subject matter detail in Roosevelt photograph

- Two early 20th Century images of personalities (Annie Oakley and Jim Thorpe)

- Publicity photographs of early 20th Century male and female musical entertainers

- Introduction to color in contemporary publicity photos

Guided Practice: Ask individuals or groups of students to analyze the use of subject matter and color in a publicity photograph to create a persona for contemporary political, entertainment or sports figures using the “Questor’s Questions about a Contemporary Persona” worksheet.

Transfer at TCA: Explain that when students visit “Mercy: A Pilgrimage to Roy Orbison” at the Tempe Center for the Arts they will examine the persona of a singer-songwriter and guitarists of the mid-20th Century.

Extension Ideas

Lead a discussion around the following question: If you were running for class president what persona would you want to create?

Ask students to poll classmates about their perception of numerous contemporary figures and analyze the impact of carefully crafted publicity images on those perceptions.

Analyze how artists have created personas for powerful rulers in art history:

- Ancient Egyptian portrait sculpture

- Chinese imperial portrait paintings

- European portrait painters (Van Dyke, Gainsborough, Jacques Louis David)

Language Arts: Create a word wall to teach vocabulary for poses, gestures and facial expressions, sometimes called “body language.” Use a charades game with vocabulary cards to help students build vocabulary.

Vocabulary

Pose

Sitting	Jumping	Standing	Slouching
Leaning	Twisting	Other...	

Feelings Communicated by Pose

Excited	Friendly	Sneaky	Proud
Brave	Embarrassed	Lonely	Other...

Arm or Leg Gestures:

Reaching	Flexing	Grasping	Throwing
Pointing	Kicking	Marching	Other...

Feelings Communicated by Arm or Leg Gestures

Threatened	Protective	Shocked	Smug
Confident	Hysterical	Enraged	Other...

Facial Expressions:

Smile	Frown	Scowl	Wide-eyed
Sneer	Laugh	Pout	Other...

Feeling Communicated by Facial Expressions

Exhaustion	Confusion	Guilt	Anger
Happiness	Hope	Jealousy	Other...

Assessment Checklists

1. Objective: Students identify subject matter in detail.
___ Student accurately responded to the subject matter question on “Questor’s Questions About a Contemporary Persona” worksheet.
2. Objective: Students interpret feelings, moods or ideas communicated through color.
___ Student explains communication of color on the last question on “Questor’s Questions About a Contemporary Persona” worksheet.

Lesson Two: Tempe Center for the Arts Visit

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

RELATE: Artworlds

PO 101, 202 and 302: Discuss how artworks are used to communicate stories, ideas and emotions.

RELATE: Meanings or Purposes

PO 101, 202 and 302: Interpret meanings and/or purposes of an artwork using subject matter, symbols (and/or themes).

EVALUATE: Art Issues and Values

PO 202 and 203: Debate whether art is different from visual culture in general.

EVALUATE: Elements and Principles

PO 101: Identify an element and principle in an artwork that supports its meaning and/or purpose.

EVALUATE: Elements and Principles

PO 201: Describe an artist's use of elements and principles an element and principle in an artwork to support its meaning and/or purpose.

EVALUATE: Meanings or Purposes

PO 101 and 201: Discuss how an artist uses subject matter, symbols, and/or themes to communicate/s meaning and/or purpose in an artwork.

Preparation

Read "Roy Orbison" handout. Decide whether to copy it for students or to share information in some other convenient way before your visit to "Mercy: Pilgrimage to Roy Orbison" exhibition at the TCA.

Make arrangements for field trip to the TCA.

Before your visit, discuss with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Provide the docent with a copy of "Exploring Roy Orbison's Public Image at the Tempe Center for the Arts" worksheet in advance of your trip and discuss the extent to which students might complete any or all of the worksheet at the center or whether any or all of the questions might be addressed during their tour.

Activities

Review and Application: Distribute "Exploring Roy Orbison's Persona at the Tempe Center of the Arts" worksheets to students and ask them to answer as many questions as they can during their tour. If writing responses on the worksheet is not practical or possible during the tour, use the worksheet to guide students in focused observation as circumstances permit. For example, you might use questions on the worksheet when students assemble or travel to the TCA or when they assemble for or travel back to school.

Take notes on any new information presented by the docent as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour.

If the circumstances of the visit do not allow students to complete their worksheets, explain that later, in class, you will lead a discussion of discoveries they made about the use of subject matter and color to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Assessment Checklist

1. Objective: Students identify and describe subject matter and color in publicity materials.
___ Student accurately completed section B of “Exploring Roy Orbison’s Persona at the TCA” worksheet.

2. Objective: Students interpret ideas, moods or feelings communicated by images of Roy Orbison.
___ Student convincingly completed Section D of “Exploring Roy Orbison’s Persona at the TCA” worksheet.

Lesson Three: The Look of A Lion

“The Look of a Lion” is appropriate for elementary or secondary students. “Extreme Makeover,” another version of Lesson Three, is appropriate for older students.

Objectives

1. Students use subject matter to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.
2. Students use color to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Elements and Principles: PO 101 and 202

Identify and use elements and principles (to organize the composition) in his or her artwork.

CREATE: Meanings or Purposes: PO 101

Select and use of subject matter, symbols and/or themes in his or her artwork.

CREATE: Meanings or Purposes: PO 201

Explain purposeful use of subject matter and/or symbols in his or her artwork.

Resources and Supplies

Roy Orbison (PDF)

“The Look of A Lion” PowerPoint Presentation

Copies of “Lion 1” and “Lion 2” images for students to trace or draw on directly (Print out pdfs and photocopy as needed.)

Four large signs lettered: Scary, Serious, Silly and Sad

Colored pencils or crayons

Paper for tracing (light weight paper or tracing paper)

“Look of a Lion Label” for each student

Activities

Review: Return students’ “Exploring Roy Oribson’s Public Image at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheet. Share discoveries about how subject matter details and color choices helped reinforce Orbison’s persona.

Assignment: Ask each student to select a photograph tracing (“Lion 1” or “Lion 2”) or to draw their own lion. Ask them to transform the image to communicate a specific feeling (scary, serious, silly or sad). They should add, adjust or remove subject matter details (pose, facial expression, hairstyle, jewelry, accessories, props or background). In addition they should select colors to create an expressive persona.

Technical Demonstration: Show students how to use crayons or colored pencils
with controlled pressure,
to create edges without outlines and
to mix colors by layering.

In Process Feedback: Ask pairs of students to show each other their in-process drawings and point out alterations in subject matter details and color choices. Match students who are altering a different Lion image and attempting to communicate a different feeling.

Completion and Exhibition: When their drawings are complete, ask students to complete “Look of a Lion Label.”

Place large signs (“Scary,” “Serious,” “Silly” and “Sad”) in a classroom location where there is room for a small group of students to stand and be seen by the rest of the class.

Ask a small group of students to come forward to display their drawings. They should also bring their “Look of a Lion Label” folded down so their writing is not visible.

Ask the remaining students to discuss, explain and negotiate the placement of each student’s drawing near the “Scary,” “Serious,” “Silly” and “Sad” sign. Then ask each student to open and read their “Look of a Lion Label.” If the class and designer do not agree on the persona expressed by the drawing, discuss possible ways the assigned feeling might be more strongly expressed through the selection of subject matter or color/s.

Repeat until all students have displayed and read their labels.

Assessment Guides

1. Objective: Students use subject matter to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Exceeds Expectations

Drawing uses subject matter (adds, adjusts or removes subject matter details) effectively to communicate the assigned persona. The label accurately and in detail explains how subject matter helps communicate the assigned persona.

Meets Expectations

Drawing uses subject matter (adds, adjusts or removes subject matter details) that relates to the assigned persona. The label explains how subject matter helps communicate the assigned persona.

Approaches Expectations

Drawing adds, adjusts or removes subject matter details and is accompanied with a label that identifies the additions, adjustments or removals.

Fails to Meet Expectations

No subject matter in the drawing is added, adjusted or removed or is not accompanied with a label.

2. Objective: Students use color to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Exceeds Expectations

Drawing is fully colored and uses color effectively to communicate the assigned persona. The label accurately and in detail explains how color helps communicate the assigned persona.

Meets Expectations

Drawing is fully colored and uses color that relates to the assigned persona. The label explains how color helps communicate the assigned persona.

Approaches Expectations

Drawing is fully colored and is accompanied with a label that identifies the colors selected.

Fails to Meet Expectations

The drawing is not fully colored or is not accompanied with a label.

Lesson Three: Extreme Makeover

“Extreme Makeover” is appropriate for secondary students. “The Look of a Lion,” another version of Lesson Three, is appropriate for elementary or older students.

Objectives

1. Students use subject matter to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.
2. Students use color to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Elements and Principles: PO 201 and 301

Identify and use elements and principles to organize the composition in his or her artwork.

CREATE: Meanings or Purposes: PO 201 and 301

Explain purposeful use of subject matter, symbols and/or themes in his or her own artwork.

Resources and Supplies

Roy Orbison (PDF)

“Extreme Makeover” PowerPoint Presentation

Copies of “Patsy Cline,” “Ritchie Valens,” “Harry Belafonte,” “Joan Baez,” “Hank Williams” and “Aretha Franklin” images for students to trace or drawn directly upon (Print out pdfs and photocopy as needed.)

Colored pencils

Paper for tracing (light weight paper or tracing paper)

“Extreme Makeover Label” for each student

Activities

Review: Return students’ “Exploring Roy Oribson’s Public Image at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheet.” Share discoveries about how subject matter details and color choices helped reinforce Orbison’s persona.

Assignment: Ask each student to select a tracing of a publicity photograph designed to project the persona of a singer of Roy Orbison’s era (Patsy Cline, Hank Williams, Ritchie Valens, Joan Baez, Aretha Franklin or Harry Belafonte). Ask them to transform the image to increase its impact on young people today. They should add, adjust or remove subject matter details (pose, facial expression, hairstyle, jewelry, accessories, props or background). In addition they should select colors to create an effective updated persona.

Technical Demonstration: Demonstrate how to use colored pencils

- with controlled pressure,
- to create edges without outlines and
- to mix colors by layering.

In Process Feedback: Ask pairs of students to show each other their in-process drawing and point out alterations in subject matter details and color choices. Match students who are making over the persona of different entertainers.

Completion and Exhibition: When their drawings are complete, ask students to complete “Extreme Makeover Label.”

Ask all designers of makeovers for one entertainer to come forward and display their drawings. They should also bring their “Extreme Makeover Label” folded down so their writing is not visible.

Lead a group assessment guided by the following questions:

1. What subject matter details did the student add, adjust or remove?
2. How do these alterations in subject matter details affect the feelings, mood or ideas projected by the image?
3. What colors did the student choose?
4. How do these colors affect the feelings, mood or ideas projected by the image?

After each image is discussed, ask the designer to open and read their “Extreme Makeover Label.” If the class and designer do not agree on the persona expressed by the drawing, discuss possible ways the assigned feeling might be more strongly expressed through the selection of subject matter or color/s.

Repeat until all students have displayed and read their labels.

Alternative Studio Ideas

PhotoShop assignment in which students alter subject matter details and colors to transform the person of a contemporary politician, entertainer or athlete

Self Portrait assignment focused on subject matter and color

Assessment Guides

1. Objective: Students use subject matter to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Exceeds Expectations

Drawing uses subject matter (adds, adjusts or removes subject matter details) effectively to transform the idea, mood or feeling on the image. The label accurately and in detail explains how subject matter helps communicate the idea, mood or feeling.

Meets Expectations

Drawing uses subject matter (adds, adjusts, or removes subject matter details) that alters the idea, mood or feeling on the image. The label explains how subject matter helps communicate the idea, mood or feeling.

Approaches Expectations

Drawing adds, adjusts or removes subject matter details and is accompanied with a label that identifies the additions, adjustments or removals.

Fails to Meet Expectations

No subject matter in the drawing is added, adjusted or removed or is not accompanied with a label.

2. Objective: Students use color to communicate ideas, moods or feelings.

Exceeds Expectations

Drawing uses color effectively to communicate a feeling, mood or idea. The label accurately and in detail explains how color helps communicate the feeling, mood or idea.

Meets Expectations

Drawing uses color that relates to a feeling, mood or idea. The label explains how color helps communicate a feeling, mood or idea.

Approaches Expectations

Drawing is complete and is accompanied with a label that identifies the colors selected.

Fails to Meet Expectations

The drawing is incomplete or is not accompanied with a label.

Questor's Questions about a Contemporary Persona

Name: _____



What can I learn?

What do I know about the public figure? (name, age, accomplishments, etc.)



What can I See?

What subject matter can I find in the photograph?

pose, gesture, facial expression
clothing, accessories
props, background

What colors do I see?



What does it mean?

What ideas, feelings, message or mood does the photograph communicate through its subject matter?

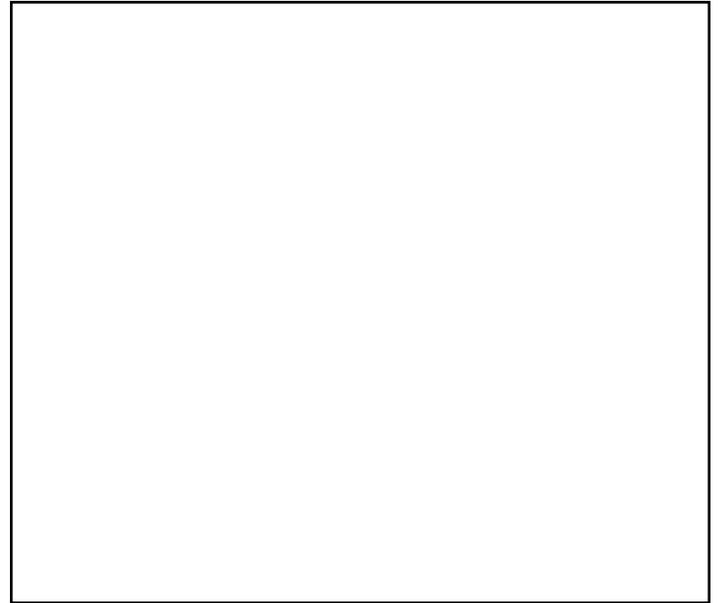
What ideas, feelings, message or mood does the photograph communicate through its color?

Exploring Roy Orbison's Persona at the TCA

Name: _____

A. Identification and Drawing

1. Look at the images in the Mercy exhibition.
Choose either a publicity poster, album cover or concert photograph to study.
2. Sketch the poster, album cover or photograph.
3. What words does the image include, if any?
4. What colors does the image include?



B. Subject Matter

List subject matter in as great detail as you can.

C. Color

Describe the color.

D. Feeling, Mood or Idea

What feeling, mood or idea about Orbison do the subject matter and color communicate? Explain.

Look of a Lion Label

----- [fold along line] -----

Name: _____

Circle one:

Scary Serious Silly Sad

What subject matter did you choose to create your lion's (scary, serious, silly or sad) persona? Explain.

What color/s did you choose to create your lion's (scary, serious, silly or sad) persona? Explain.

Mercy

a ROY ORBISON pilgrimage



Extreme Makeover Label

----- [fold along line] -----

Name: _____

Circle one:

Patsy Cline, Hank Williams, Ritchie Valens, Joan Baez, Aretha Franklin or Harry Belafonte

How did you add, alter or remove subject matter to update your entertainer's persona? Explain.



Life: Roy Orbison was a singer-songwriter and guitarist who was born in a small town in Texas in 1936 and died in Nashville, Tenn., in 1988. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame a year after his death.

Music Hits: Among Orbison's hit songs are Only the Lonely; Oh, Pretty Woman; Crying; It's Over; Love Hurts and Running Scared.

Quotes:

- Bono, U2 lead singer said about Orbison: "He was at the time of his death the finest white pop singer on the planet."
- Emmylou Harris, who had years earlier claimed that she never wanted to sell her house after Orbison had sung in it, called him "one of the greatest singers that ever lived."
- Chris Isaak, when asked what it was like being the opening act for Orbison, remarked, "It's like doing card tricks before the Second Coming."
- Billy Joel said when he learned of Orbison's death, "He had the voice of an angel."
- Bruce Springsteen, when inducting Orbison into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, said that Orbison had the ability "to sound like he'd dropped in from another planet."

Persona: Peter Lehman*, popular culture analyst, describes Orbison's persona as unique for his time. "Most rock singers of the period...strutted around the stage." In contrast, Orbison took a stance with his feet firmly planted and moved very little when he performed. He created a "dark, mysterious persona, clothed all in black, hidden behind dark sunglasses."

Men in Black: Lehman concludes that "in an era of countless men in black, [Orbison's] blackness somehow seemed unique." He explained that, in the Western world, men wore many colors until about 1830 when they began to wear black formal evening clothing. According to Lehman, men wearing black suggest many ideas, moods and feelings such as mourning, night, death, formality, power and authority. World War I and II flyers wore black jackets; fascists wore black regalia; police uniforms are often black; and bikers wear black. Lehman proposes that "black [also] may be worn as a protective shell that hides weakness, fear and sensitivity." Lehman labels Orbison's persona as "masculine vulnerability."

Lyrics: Roy Orbison often wrote lyrics that spoke for men who were not confident but sensitive and fearful of loss.

Only the Lonely: "Know the heartache I've been through"

Oh, Pretty Woman: "Don't walk on by"

Crying: "I thought that I was over you"

It's Over: "You'll be seeing lonely sunsets after all"

Love Hurts: "Love is just a lie made to make you blue."

Running Scared: "If he came back, which one would you choose?"

*Peter Lehman wrote Roy Orbison: The Invention of an Alternative Rock Masculinity published in 2003 in Philadelphia by Temple University Press.











