**Mosaics in Art**

by Kristy Kadish

**Unit Objective:**

Students will further their understanding of mosaics by thinking and applying the relevance and purposes of mosaics in relation to film, theatre, and their own lives.

\*\*This unit was originally written as a three-lesson mini-unit to be taught before a course began working on a class play. This curriculum was created by the instructor to provide an introduction to the students in the class in contributing as an individual to the whole project and class. It was a way to get the students to learn more about each other as well and see how their pieces add to the mosaic of the class and production.

**2014 Core Theatre Standards:**

**TH:Cr1.1.HSIII**

a. Synthesize knowledge from a variety of dramatic forms, theatrical conventions, and technologies to create the visual composition of a drama/ theatre work.

**TH:Re9.1.HSI**

b. Consider the aesthetics of the production elements in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cn10.1.HSI**

a. Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work.

**Prior Experience:**

None necessary – beginning to advanced can benefit from this mini-unit.

**Main Concepts:**

Collaboration, contributing to the “whole”, fragmented vs. mosaic

**Lesson #1**

**Objective:**  Students will demonstrate their understanding of mosaics in art by taking notes and participating in classroom discussions about mosaics in art (film & theatre).

**Lesson #2**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to see mosaics in art by analyzing a mosaic film and preparing a personal mosaic.

**Lesson #3**

**Objective:** Students will further their understanding of mosaics by thinking and applying the relevance and purposes of mosaics in relation to film, theatre, and their own lives.

A follow-up theatre curriculum unit could be a class play, ensemble scenes, etc.; anything that would allow the individual to shine but also to contribute to the bigger picture. Making mosaics together with their classmates.

**Mosaics in Art Lesson #1**

**Objective:**  Students will demonstrate their understanding of mosaics in art by taking notes and participating in classroom discussions about mosaics in art (film & theatre).

Materials needed: Power-point presentation on Mosaics, Mosaic Film

**Hook:** The first question on the power-point is “What is Art?” and “What defines Art for you?”

**Step #1**

Have the students pull out a piece of paper and free write about these questions.

**Step #2**

Have a class discussion about what the students wrote down.

**Step#3**

Use the power-point to lead the class in a discussion about Art and its relation to film and find what the class thinks about films in relation to art.

This will then go into a discussion of fragmentation vs. mosaics

Use the following notes to help guide you through the power-point presentation:

1. What is ART?

What defines Art? For you?

Self-reflexivity:

the process of making art… building blocks of which things are built

1. Nature   
    Darwin –we realize now that there are so many little components   
   (who we are)

Culture   
Marx - It is a reality but it’s not an inevitability   
(how we live)

The Mind   
Freud – subjectivity is a real key   
(who we are how we live)

1. Is Film a form of ART?   
    When? How?
2. What is the Purpose of Film?
3. What films move you? – themes/messages…etc?

to say something? To move the audience? To make people feel? To make people act? To inform?

🡪 In history Film was an invention and an experiment…not meant to be entertainment and not meant to be art…

1. Fragmentation vs. Mosaic  
    Fragmentation is the explosion part   
    Mosaic is putting it back together.

Is life fragmentated or Mosaic?   
Is theatre and Film?

1. This is life. These seemingly nonsensical things are what make it all up. Each experience that we go through and every situation we encounter throughout our days make up these little tiles. The little tiles that make up the mosaic of our lives.
2. Why would you fragment your life? Wouldn’t you want it in a mosaic?

“We fragment our own realities – it is impossible to take it all in, even for the most focused person.” We fragment our lives because not every single experience and occurrence can totally be tiled and placed in perfect order. Our tiles make sense the colors, and patterns, all placed accordingly, but it is to the individual that it fits because that is the way they placed it. If another person were to come up and look at my tiles that were making up my mosaic they most likely will not be able to recognize or define a lot of meaning from it. To them my tiles would seem fragmented and irrational. Yet an overriding significance and meaning is easier to find if they took a look at the overall mosaic instead of just my individual tiles.

1. As we talk further about fragmentation in this montage of tiles, we realize that we can take different perspectives on the mosaic. At times we have what I would call “tunnel vision” we are stepped in closer and holding our hands up to the sides of our eyes as blinders. This means that we can only see part of the tableau, only a small portion to judge off of.
2. Through slide 14

There are consequences of only looking at or concentrating on parts of a mosaic. The fragment that we are viewing my not be appealing. In fact it may be ugly and horrible to have to look upon. Just as if we were looking at a great work of art, if you step in close till all you can see is the color and brush strokes it may not be something that you wish to look at at all. If we were to take a few steps back and take it all in, all of the tiles together then maybe we can understand the purpose for certain tiles and we can better recognize and appreciate the ugly parts and truly value and be grateful for the beautiful tiles that are offered in the mosaic. Can we do that? Just take fragmentations to judge from? What justifies us only looking at one or a few parts? Are we willing to take a step back, or stand away, to really take it all in…do we realize that the tiles are making something? What is it they are making and trying to portray?

15- life is not always put together perfect…

16-19 fish

20-21 – none of us are only ever one story - do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Mosaic: all over the place; as long as it is jumping around, telling multiple stories, or from multiple perspectives, it counts as mosaic

> Life fragmented?

The temporariness of life makes our interactions with others more poignant and precious

There are lots of little things we need to know about so we can enjoy the big thing, if we only know the big things we won’t appreciate it

Art is a conglomeration of discrete elements in one way or another

Shot is the smallest component part in Film grammar

Montague is the basic component of film

juxtaposition

Film is very fragmented because it is made up of shots and scenes.

Is theatre fragmented?

-artificially there are imposed breaks/fragmentations

(blackouts/scene changes, intermission)

none of us are only ever one story

You go through the complete space and pick out parts of it

We fragment our own realities – it is impossible to take it all in, even for the most focused person.

-Mosaic: more often than we like to admit, the putting together is not perfect

[Mosaic/ fragmentation]

which reality is the true reality?

Different types of fragmentation:

How would changing it around (the mosaic and its order…etc) change the message?

We can put it together- we can make meaning out of it.

He was trying to figure out the world, and the world figured him out.

We are left with a difficulty – now what do we do? We still have something – we still have some matter.

**Step #4**

Tell the students that they will be watching a Mosaic film. (I used the Film I am David)

Have them pay attention to the movie- how it is a mosaic and why it was filmed/edited/presented in a mosaic form.

**Mosaics in Art - Lesson #2**

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their ability to see mosaics in art by analyzing a mosaic film and preparing a personal mosaic.

**Materials:** Mosaic Movie (optional example of a mosaic – so the students can see generally what is expected of them due in class next time.)

Movie day

**Hook:** For the sake of students who were absent – Review a little bit about mosaics with the class. And ask someone to briefly tell what has been happening in the movie so far.

**Step #1**

Remind the students that their personal mosaics will be due next time in class. Discuss with the class the requirements of their mosaics.

-Needs to represent them, generally or a specific part of their lives. There needs to be time and effort invested into this project, but it can be done in a number of different ways… the mosaic can make up a picture, design, or a colleague of their choice.

Option: Model an example of what a mosaic that they will make might look like

Taking pieces of \_\_\_\_(our life)\_\_\_\_ to make a unified image that conveys a message-

Watch the rest of the mosaic movie with the class.

**Mosaics in Art - Lesson #3**

**Objective:** Students will further their understanding of mosaics by thinking and applying the relevance and purposes of mosaics in relation to film, theatre, and their own lives.

**Hook:** Mosaic picture

**Step #1**

Have the students observe the mosaic picture -ask the students

How does knowing the whole picture change your viewing of the individual pieces?

How does knowing the “whole picture” help us to understand the individual pieces of the mosaic?

Is it more useful to look at the pieces first? Or the whole picture? Why?

What about when it comes to film?

In ***I am David*** how was the mosaic presented?

Do you think your perceptions and ideas of the film would change if you were to see it again. Why?

**Step #2**

Bring Class onto the Stage –

**Step#3 – Modeling**

Teacher models an example of presenting a mosaic to the class so they have a specific design to follow after.

**Step #4 – Guided practice**

Each student will present their individual mosaics to the class.

**Step #5** –

Have the students look around at everybody’s mosaics and notice how their mosaics relate to other mosaics.

**Step #6** –

Tell the students to get into small groups 3 or 4, with other students who have similarities within their mosaics. And have the students arrange their mosaics on the ground with each others.

- What ways can they arrange their individual mosaics to create a group mosaic?   
 in different ways? Does someone in the group want to change it to make it better? Or different, or look at it in a new way? Etc?

**Step #7 –**

Have the students transition their group mosaics into a class mosaic.

How have their individual pieces changed because of the addition of the group?

Have they changed at all?

What do they now see about themselves/their class because of this new mosaic that has been made from everyone’s individual pieces?

[ Option – depending on time: can be done at beginning or end of class- have the students write a brief response to the mosaic movie. Can also give questions for them to respond to.)

Ex:

>Movie quote: “You have to look at paintings differently – to see what it says…”

How can we relate this to mosaics? 🡪 it’s the same thing with mosaics- you need to look at them differently to see what they are saying.

>If you were to watch this movie again then you would know from the beginning how the whole mosaic (movie) looks not just seeing the individual pieces. Would this change the way you watched the film? How?

>etc

**Assessment:**

Students are assessed by getting points for doing their individual mosaics, presenting their mosaics and participating in the class activity.

A follow-up theatre curriculum unit could be a class play, ensemble scenes, etc.; anything that would allow the individual to shine but also to contribute to the bigger picture. Making mosaics together with their classmates.