

**NAME:** Karen Baker

**LESSON TITLE:** "Closely Observed Still-life"

**GRADE LEVEL:** 6<sup>th</sup>

**PA. ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES:**

9.1.8. B. Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts.  
9.1.8. C. Identify and use comprehensive vocabulary within each of the arts forms.  
9.1.8. I. Know where arts events, performances and exhibitions occur and how to gain admission.  
9.2.8. B. Explain the historical, cultural and social context of an individual work in the arts.  
9.3.8. D. Evaluate works in the arts and humanities using complex vocabulary of critical response.

**OBJECTIVES:**

**KNOWLEDGE:** Students learn that Andrea Baldeck is a talented photographer, whose work is composed of strong lines and textures.

**SKILL:** Students learn how to "zoom in" on a still-life with a viewfinder and create a strong black and white image on scratchboard, focusing on the elements of line, texture, and composition.

**ATTITUDE:** Students become more aware of the artistic beauty of natural objects and appreciate the fine details that are found through close observation.

**PREPARE AHEAD:** Andrea Baldeck's book Closely Observed, viewfinders, scrap paper and pencils, 11x14 scratchboard, etching tools, still-life of natural objects.

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** "Post-field trip"- Students went last week to the gallery at Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia, where there was a show of Andrea Baldeck's photography. Students were asked to bring their journal and jot down a response to her work that they would share with the class the next week.

**MOTIVATION:**

**QUESTIONS LEADING THE STUDENTS TO DISCOVERY:** Teacher addresses the class: "Hello everyone! I am eager to get started today because I can't wait to hear your thoughts on the gallery show we saw last week! I'd like you all to take out your journals and review what you wrote about Andrea Baldeck's work." (Students get journals.) "We're going to go around the room and I'd like everyone to state one thing

that struck them. Let's start here with Jason ." (Teacher goes to the board and begins writing students' descriptions.) "Yes, strong light and dark values...a lot of pattern ...texture in the flowers ...use of architecture...you liked the portraits...very detailed ....strong lines...beautiful landscapes ...lighting...arched doorways....shadows that draw your eye in...quiet moments with children ...shapes that were parts of things...some had simple composition....you liked the close-up views...Great! Wonderful observations!" (Teacher picks up Baldeck's book and opens it to show the class.) "Here are just a few images to freshen our memory. This is her Closely Observed book, with the images that were close up. Wasn't it interesting?!" (Teacher flips through a handful of pages.) "What I think is so neat about this series is how Ms. Baldeck has photographed very common things, but has zoomed in on them so closely that we almost don't know what they are. We are forced to look at the lines and texture which create such a beautiful

composition! Artwork can be just as moving when we don't know what the object is and are just drawn to it by its elements. Two key elements that you mentioned a number of times are: line and texture." (Teacher proceeds to the front of the classroom where there is a large still-life of flowers, vegetables, leaves, pinecones, stalks, etc.) "Everyone please look at this still-life. How could you look at just one small portion of this?" (Student raises hand.) "John?- Ok, look through a tube." (Students raise hands.) "Yes, Leah? Good- you could make a viewfinder with your hands. How else?" (Students raise hands.) "Ok, Tommy- right- you could cut a rectangle in a sheet of paper and use that to 'frame' your image. Very good. That's what we are going to use today. Each of you will get a viewfinder to "zoom-in" on an area of this still-life that you want to draw." (Teacher holds up the viewfinder, made of a slide without the negative.) "You will hold your viewfinder up to one eye. Looking through the rectangular hole, look at the still-life and move it closer to it until you've got a portion of it that you like. It can be vertical or horizontal. Think about the lines and textures you see. Make sure the image touches atleast three sides of the viewfinder. I don't want to see any floating images. Strongly consider the composition of the piece. Someone tell me what 'composition' means." (Teacher writes 'composition' on the board and calls on a student.) "Tracey?-Yes, it is how things are arranged in a space. Good. A strong composition draws your eye through from one side to another, or all the way around."

**DEMONSTRATION:** Teacher demonstrates step-by-step instructions. "Once you've selected what your composition will be, you will sketch it out on scrap paper. After I've seen your sketch, then you will get a piece of 11x14 scratchboard, like this (teacher holds up board). I know most of you have used this material before, but I will review briefly how to work with it. Taking your etching tool, you will begin to scratch the surface of the board. As you do this, you will see that the black ink is removed to reveal a white line. There are a lot of ways you could show texture and create various lines by the way you remove the black. You can make bold lines, soft lines, little dots, or try crosshatching (teacher demonstrates different ways). You will all end up with a neat black and white piece- here's an example (teacher holds up exemplar). Have fun with it, but start out slowly and go carefully until you get comfortable. I will pass out the viewfinders, scrap paper and pencils now."

**VISUAL AIDS:** Andrea Baldeck's photography from her Closely Observed book, exemplar.

**REFERENCE TO ART HISTORY:** Andrea Baldeck's photography from her Closely Observed book.

**EXEMPLARS:** Teacher made exemplar.

#### **ACTIVITY:**

**WHAT WILL THE STUDENTS DO?** Students will create a black and white image of a still-life on scratchboard, inspired by Andrea Baldeck's photography, with strong elements of line, texture, and composition. WEEK ONE: Teacher and students will discuss the gallery show, review the artist's work, and begin sketching the still-life. WEEK TWO: Students will finish the sketch and begin the scratchboard drawing. WEEK THREE: Students will complete their piece and prepare their work for a class critique. Every student will write a response to someone else's work and read it.

**SUPPLIES:** Viewfinders, scrap paper and pencils, 11x14 scratchboard, etching tools, still-life of natural objects.

**VOCABULARY:** Composition

**CLOSURE:** Teacher addresses the class. “Allison, please tell me who Andrea Baldeck is.” (Student answers: a really cool photographer!) “Name two elements that we focused on with this project.” (Student answers: line and texture.) “Excellent! Great work today!”

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**ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:** Class critique.

**CORRELATED LESSONS:** A study of Georgia O’Keeffe and watercolors.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY DOMAINS:** Writing and Reading are incorporated in this lesson as students write a response to the artist’s work, a classmate’s artwork and read both to the class.

**REFLECTIONS:** The students will enjoy the field trip to the gallery and truly be inspired after seeing Andrea Baldeck’s work in person. For those students who are not confident in their abilities, the close range of the project should erase any pressure they might feel for the image to be recognizable.