

# CAEA Lesson Plan

## Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes

**LESSON TITLE:** The Art Effect Project

**Name of Presenter:** Sonia Lowman

**Grade Level:** Elementary, MS, HS

**Background Information:** The Art Effect Project, an exciting new initiative of the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC), and its international art competition with a grand prize of \$7,500, teaches students the power they have to create positive change in the world.

Through an innovative project-based learning approach, LMC works with U.S. and international K-12 students and educators to discover and creatively communicate the stories of role models (“Unsung Heroes”) who took extraordinary actions that positively impacted history and have yet to be recognized. By celebrating Unsung Heroes who demonstrate tremendous courage, compassion and conviction, LMC aims to inspire today’s young people to follow their examples.

### **Content Standards:**

Creating:

VA:Cr1.1.IIIa

- Visualize and hypothesize to generate plans for ideas and directions for creating art and design that can affect social change.

VA:Cr1.2.IIa

- Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.

VA:Cr2.1.IIa

- Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.

VA:Cr2.2.IIIa

- Demonstrate understanding of the importance of balancing freedom and responsibility in the use of images, materials, tools, and equipment in the creation and circulation of creative work.

VA:Cr3.1.IIa

- Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, reengage, revise, and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision.

VA:Cr3.1.IIIa

- Reflect on, reengage, revise, and refine works of art or design considering relevant traditional and contemporary criteria as well as personal artistic vision.

Presenting:

VA:Pr6.1.IIa

- Make, explain, and justify connections between artists or artwork and social, cultural, and political history.

Responding:

VA:Re8.1.Ia

- Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.

VA:Re9.1.IIa

- Determine the relevance of criteria used by others to evaluate a work of art or collection of works.

VA:Re9.1.IIIa

- Construct evaluations of a work of art or collection of works based on differing sets of criteria.

Connecting:

VA:Cn10.1.IIa

- Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art-making.

VA:Cn10.1.IIIa

- Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art-making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design.

VA:Cn11.1.Ia

- Describe how knowledge of culture, traditions, and history may influence personal responses to art.

**Common Core Content Standards addressed with the lesson:**

The lesson fulfills multiple Common Core Content Standards in Reading, Language Arts, Writing, Research, College and Career Readiness.

**Learning Objectives/Goals/Essential Understandings:**

Students will create a personal work of art based on their interpretation of an *Unsung Hero*'s character and actions. They will also reflect on their experiences by writing an artist statement that articulates their personal journey and interprets their work for the viewer. The activities will fulfill multiple parts of the National Art Standards.

**Vocabulary:**

*Unsung Hero*: One who has created positive change in history by improving the lives of others and has yet to be recognized. The individual's impact must have stood the test of time.

**Materials:**

Option of:

Dry Media

- Graphite, charcoal, colored pencil, pastel, etc.

Wet Media

- Acrylic, oil, watercolor, gouache, ink wash, printmaking, etc.

Digital Media/Mixed Media

- Photography, graphic design, textile, paper collage, etc.

**Motivation:**

Show students this 2 minute video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0DYOIHD-EA>

**Procedure:**Step 1: Reflect

Have students take a few minutes to reflect on the following two situations in their sketchbook:

1. A time in their life in which they made a personal decision and/or sacrifice through their actions that improved the life of someone else.
2. An event in their life when they were given an opportunity to better the life/lives of others and chose not to do so through their actions.

Give your students the opportunity to share with the class their responses to the questions above.

As the teacher, share your own personal experiences as an example to begin the conversation.

Step 2: Define an Unsung Hero

Introduce the concept of an *Unsung Hero*. How do your students define the term “unsung?” What characteristics does a “hero” possess? Give students time to work in their sketchbooks individually to define each term. Have students then share their answers with a neighbor. Next, as a class, define “unsung” and “hero” on the board through descriptive words.

Share with the students the following definition:

***Unsung Hero:*** One who has created positive change in history by improving the lives of others and has yet to be recognized. The individual’s impact must have stood the test of time.

Step 3: Meet Unsung Hero Irena Sendler

Take 15 minutes to watch the video, “The Irena Sendler Project Documentary: Life in a Jar,” which tells the story of a Catholic social worker who saved the lives of 2,500 Jewish children during the Holocaust and the U.S. students who discovered her unknown story decades later.

View the video here: <http://lowellmilkcenter.org/irena-sendler-storytellers/>

Step 4: Choose Your Project Category

*Option 1:* Create a work of art about an **already discovered** Unsung Hero, which demonstrates thoughtful, self-directed and independent ideas that are personally relevant in exploring visually (literally or abstractly) how the Unsung Hero created a positive change in history by improving the lives of others through his or her actions.

*Option 2:* Create a work of art over a **newly discovered** Unsung Hero, which demonstrates thoughtful, self-directed and independent ideas that are personally relevant in exploring visually (literally or abstractly) how the Unsung Hero created a positive change in history by improving the lives of others through their actions.

Note: If a student plans to enter the LMC Unsung Heroes Art Competition using a newly discovered Unsung Hero subject, he or she will need to receive prior approval on the topic by emailing [artcompetition@lowellmilkcenter.org](mailto:artcompetition@lowellmilkcenter.org).

### Step 5: Discover Your Hero and Become a Visual Storyteller (VA:Cr3.1.IIIa) (VA:Cn10.1.IIa)

Students should invest a significant amount of time upfront either searching for their newly discovered Unsung Hero or researching the recently discovered Unsung Heroes featured on LMC's website: <http://lowellmilkcenter.org/art-project-heroes/>

- Which stories move you?
- Which Unsung Hero inspires you visually?

Students should become highly acclimated with their Unsung Hero's story and the impact of his or her actions on the lives of others. To this end, students can take the following steps:

1. Deconstruct the story making note of the climax (illustration).
2. Consider any and every visual from the story, including:
  - Location (maps, geography, etc.)
  - Unsung Hero (images)
  - Significant Objects
3. Consider using the Unsung Hero's face while reconstructing the scene with photos for reference material.
4. Decide whether to pursue a realistic, abstract and/or nonobjective interpretation.

### Step 6: Select Process and Media (VA:Cr1.2.IIa)

#### Dry Media

- Graphite, charcoal, colored pencil, pastel, etc.

#### Wet Media

- Acrylic, oil, watercolor, gouache, ink wash, printmaking, etc.

#### Digital Media/Mixed Media

- Photography, graphic design, textile, paper collage, etc.

### Step 7: Introduce Project Criteria and Evaluation (VA:Re8.1.Ia)(VA:Re9.1.IIa)(VA:Re9.1.IIIa)

Visit <http://lowellmilkcenter.org/art-project-examples/> and look through Unsung Hero art project examples. Using [this rubric](#) and the judging criteria below, have students work in teams to assess the example artworks and artist statements. When finished, have each group share their totals and discuss how they arrived at their scores with their peers.

1. Connection to Unsung Hero (40%)
2. Aesthetic Value (40%)
3. Artist Statement (20%)

### Step 8: Produce Artwork (VA:Cr1.1.IIIa)( VA:Cr2.1.IIa)( VA:Cr2.2.IIIa)(VA:Cn10.1.IIIa)

Students will need to invest a significant amount of time planning their piece. Questions they should consider, include:

1. How will they handle their composition? (Viewpoint? Angles?)
2. What media will they use? (Acrylic? Pen/ink? Ink and watercolors? Mixed Media?)
3. What support will they work on? (Paper? Wood panel? Canvas? Digital?)

Keep in mind that student work should have a direct correlation to the Unsung Hero's story.

### Step 9: Critique Artwork (VA:Cr3.1.IIa)

Set an internal deadline in your classroom and provide an opportunity for your students to discuss their work with their peers. This is an important part of the project and allows students to advocate for their Unsung Hero's story while making meaningful connections. Encourage students to describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate their finished artworks while providing each other with constructive feedback on ways in which the works can be improved. Use the judging rubric as a guideline when conversing about the aesthetic value and how well each work connects to the Unsung Hero's life and/or heroic actions.

### Step 10: Write Artist Statement (VA:Pr6.1.IIa)(VA:Cn11.1.Ia)

Upon completion and critiquing of artwork, students will write an artist statement composed of 500-1000 words that articulate their vision, interprets the work for the viewer and discusses the personal journey the project provided.

Encourage students to reflect upon their experience with the project.

- Have them talk about their journey in selecting their topic.
- How does their work express their hero's character and heroic act(s)?
- How did they creatively and uniquely create their work in response to process?
- How has the process of creating a work changed their outlook on life?

### **Assessment and/or Evaluation:**

Please see attached evaluation rubric.

### **Extensions:**

Students in grades 6-12 may enter the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes International Art Competition, with prizes totaling \$16,000 including a grand prize of \$7,500, is open to U.S. and international students in grades 6-12. Eligible students are invited to submit high-quality art projects interpreting an Unsung Hero's character and actions in the following two categories: (1) Celebrating Unsung Heroes; and (2) Discovering Unsung Heroes. Winning art projects will be displayed temporarily at LMC's state-of-the-art Hall of Heroes in Fort Scott, Kansas, and given full consideration for display in a permanent collection.

Visit: <http://lowellmilkencenter.org/art-competition/>