

Lesson #1
The Art of Social Change

Learning Targets:	
Understandings/Prior Knowledge: What is Social Change and how it is has been important in history.	Essential Question(s): How can art create social change?

Key Un der st an di ng	Standards Addressed:
	D2.Geo.5.6-8. Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.
	D2.Eco.2.6-8. Evaluate alternative approaches or solutions to current economic issues in terms of benefits and costs for different groups and society as a whole.
	HA Connection:
	Strengthened Sense of Aloha (Communicate effectively to diverse audiences) Strengthened Sense of Hawai'i (Compare and contrast different points of view, cultures and their contributions.)

Se t-u p	Classroom Set-Up:
	Student can work individually at a desk.
	Materials and Equipment Needed: Writing Tool Handout of the articles

Pro duc t	RUBRIC:		
	Well Below 1	Approaches 2	Meets 3
	No clear structure	Organization is lacking,	Organized and focused response
no evidence is included	Some evidence is included. Evidence is weakly integrated.	Evidence from the article in thoughtfully integrated into the response.	

L e s s o n F l o w	Mins	Procedure:
	5	<p>Share the following essential question with the class.</p> <p>How can art create social change?</p> <p>Inform students that today they will writing a short explanatory essay (3-4 paragraphs). Their response should integrate both articles and ultimately explain the importance of art in changing society and cultures.</p>
	25	<p>Provide both articles to students.</p> <p>Direct students to read both articles paying close attention to possible evidence to support their ideas.</p>
		<p>If time permits have students share their responses with the class.</p> <p>Closing: Ask students the following question.</p> <p>How has completing the Mele Mural process created social change in their school? Has it also changed the community?</p> <p>Have students share responses with the class.</p>

How can artists lead dramatic social change?



A drawing by British graffiti artist Banksy near the Kalandia checkpoint in the West Bank

April 4th, 2017

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy

In 2014, a Pakistani teenager called Saba Qaiser was shot by her father and uncle and thrown into a river. It was her punishment for having eloped with a man she loved. Saba survived and became the protagonist of my documentary about so-called honour killings, *A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness*.

After seeing my film, which won an Oscar, Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif promised to take a tougher line on honour killings. He fulfilled his promise: about two months ago, parliament passed a new law that will make it much harder for the perpetrators to walk free.

How can art bring about such dramatic social change? In this case, it was through the power of storytelling. Many Pakistani lawmakers had never come face to face with a survivor of honour killings before they heard Saba talk about her story. Good art can educate and create empathy, and empathy leads to change. Global leaders in business and politics are increasingly aware of this and are investing in art as a way of engaging with communities, improving lives and boosting economic growth.

A Canadian business survey conducted in 2008 found that 86% of respondents believed art made for

more integrated and healthier communities, while 88% thought it had a positive impact on health and well-being. In economic terms, art more than pays its way. According to a 2015 report for Arts Council England, every pound of targeted public arts funding returns £5 in tax. Still, more must be done to really use the potential of art as an engine for progress.

Where the arts thrive, freedom of expression thrives. Art can directly empower the most vulnerable members of society. In another Oscar-winning documentary, *Saving Face*, I shone a spotlight on female victims of acid attacks in Pakistan's Punjab province. The film drew worldwide attention and encouraged the local Punjabi government to do more to support the victims. Their cases are now fast-tracked through special anti-terrorism courts. Before, it took years to bring the perpetrators to justice; now it takes months.

Of course, stories of injustice, protest and resilience are waiting to be told all over the world, not only in Pakistan. My next film will be about the difficulties of vulnerable young athletes in the seemingly privileged scene of US college sports. In China, the artist Ai Weiwei has highlighted numerous social issues through his installations and sculptures. He has used his work to criticize the official response to the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, to capture the fast pace of cultural change in China, and even to document his own persecution and imprisonment.



A visitor looks at part of Ai Weiwei's artwork *Cong*, displaying the names of 5,196 students who died in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake

Such social battles are not separate from economic progress, but go hand in hand with it. Creativity and individual freedom can generate new opportunities. In 2014, I directed Pakistan's first animated feature film, *Three Braves*, about two boys and a girl who are trying to save their community from a villain. Pakistan has a very young population, but because almost all our animated films are imported, children rarely see local role models on screen. My aim was to provide inspiration while also offering new prospects to young Pakistanis interested in media work. Homegrown movies can change minds and create jobs. Already, a new generation of Pakistani artists are developing their own animated films, which will attract further investment to our country's growing media sector.

For such change to happen around the world, leaders in the arts, politics and business must work together. Many businesses are already commissioning public art, funding literary prizes or sponsoring film festivals. However, these efforts often focus on well-known institutions in large cities. While these are important, grassroots organizations, poor urban areas and rural regions can often benefit from cultural funding too.

In England, the contribution of arts and culture to the economy has grown fastest in regions that have been struggling to recover from the recession, according to the Arts Council report. Here in Karachi, where I live, I have seen how youth programmes can dramatically reduce violence by helping gang members escape the cycle of crime. Healthy communities support healthy businesses, which in turn feed economic growth.

This link between creative, social and economic success is gaining increasing recognition. As the first artist to co-chair the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, my aim is to cement that link even further. I want to show business leaders that they can and should join the global conversation about arts and social change.

My films are examples of how one story, eloquently told, can move a country's lawmakers to break through decades of impunity and legal deadlock. Film, art, literature, music and performance help people express themselves and even just be themselves. As artists, politicians and business leaders, it is our responsibility to help the arts thrive - for a fairer, better and more creative world.

Why art has the power to change the world



"Art can motivate people to turn thinking into doing."

18 Jan 2016

Olafur Eliasson

One of the great challenges today is that we often feel untouched by the problems of others and by global issues like climate change, even when we could easily do something to help. We do not feel strongly enough that we are part of a global community, part of a larger we. Giving people access to data most often leaves them feeling overwhelmed and disconnected, not empowered and poised for action. This is where art can make a difference. Art does not show people what to do, yet engaging with a good work of art can connect you to your senses, body, and mind. It can make the world *felt*.

And this felt feeling may spur thinking, engagement, and even action.

As an artist I have travelled to many countries around the world over the past 20 years. On one day I may stand in front of an audience of global leaders or exchange thoughts with a foreign minister and discuss the construction of an artwork or exhibition with local craftsmen the next. Working as an artist has brought me into contact with a wealth of outlooks on the world and introduced me to a vast range of truly differing perceptions, felt ideas, and knowledge. Being able to take part in these local and global exchanges has profoundly affected the artworks that I make, driving me to create art that I hope touches people everywhere.

Most of us know the feeling of being moved by a work of art, whether it is a song, a play, a poem, a novel, a painting, or a spatio-temporal experiment. When we are touched, we are moved; we are transported to a new place that is, nevertheless, strongly rooted in a physical experience, in our bodies. We become aware of a feeling that may not be unfamiliar to us but which we did not actively focus on before. This transformative experience is what art is constantly seeking.

I believe that one of the major responsibilities of artists – and the idea that artists have responsibilities may come as a surprise to some – is to help people not only get to know and understand something with their minds but also to feel it emotionally and physically. By doing this, art can mitigate the numbing effect created by the glut of information we are faced with today, and motivate people to turn thinking into doing.

Engaging with art is not simply a solitary event. The arts and culture represent one of the few areas in our society where people can come together to share an experience even if they see the world in radically different ways. The important thing is not that we agree about the experience that we share, but that we consider it worthwhile sharing an experience at all. In art and other forms of cultural expression, disagreement is accepted and embraced as an essential ingredient. In this sense, the community created by arts and culture is potentially a great source of inspiration for politicians and activists who work to transcend the polarising populism and stigmatisation of other people, positions, and worldviews that is sadly so endemic in public discourse today.

Art also encourages us to cherish intuition, uncertainty, and creativity and to search constantly for new ideas; artists aim to break rules and find unorthodox ways of approaching contemporary issues. My friend Ai Weiwei, for example, the great Chinese artist, is currently making a temporary studio on the island of Lesbos to draw attention to the plight of the millions of migrants trying to enter Europe right now and also to create a point of contact that takes us beyond an us-and-them mentality to a broader idea of what constitutes *we*. This is one way that art can engage with the world to change the world.

On a practical level, we work to promote solar energy for all – Little Sun responds to the need to develop sustainable, renewable energy by producing and distributing affordable solar-powered lamps and mobile chargers, focusing especially on reaching regions of the world that do not have consistent access to an electrical grid. At the same time, Little Sun is also about making people feel connected to the lives of others in places that are far away geographically. For those who pick up a Little Sun solar lamp, hold it in their hands, and use it to light their evening, the lamp communicates a feeling of

having resources and of being powerful. With Little Sun you tap into the energy of the sun to power up with solar energy. It takes something that belongs to all of us – the sun – and makes it available to each of us. This feeling of having personal power is something we can all identify with. Little Sun creates a community based around this feeling that spans the globe.

I am convinced that by bringing us together to share and discuss, a work of art can make us more tolerant of difference and of one another. The encounter with art – and with others over art – can help us identify with one another, expand our notions of *we*, and show us that individual engagement in the world has actual consequences. That’s why I hope that in the future, art will be invited to take part in discussions of social, political, and ecological issues even more than it is currently and that artists will be included when leaders at all levels, from the local to the global, consider solutions to the challenges that face us in the world today.

Ref lec tio n	How will you check for understanding during instruction and how will you know if learning targets are met? Component 1F → 3D
	The Teacher can circulate around the room during individual work time and check in with students. During student share out the teacher can call on students and clear up any misconceptions

