

Who influences you & how do you influence others?

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Secondary Art

Background: A term that gets tossed around frequently in the social media realm is *influencer*, which refers to a person who uses a social media platform to promote a variety of trends. The term, *influencer* holds a heavy weight as increasingly, new trends appear that include both positive and negative messages and ideas.

In the following six art challenges, you will be researching, observing, investigating, reflecting, recording, presenting and creating work about the concept of *influence*. In short, we will become *influencers* in our world in a time when positivity is needed more than ever.

Be sure you have family permission for everything you do BEFORE you do it!

To start, you will need a physical or digital notebook to document this process. You can use a visual journal, a notebook, a computer, Word, PowerPoint, etc. You choose what is best for you. You will document each challenge by recording the date and all of your work. In every challenge, the work you need to complete is numbered. For every challenge there is an example.

Creative Challenge # 1: Researching & Identifying Influences

Today, we will be researching and collecting information related to the concept of influence.

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. Who has the biggest influence on you in your life? Explain.

- b. Who do you think are the most popular influencers in the world?
 - c. What influences you besides people?
2. Research an event, a time period, a movement, a person, etc. that has been influential in our world. For example: Harlem Renaissance, Industrial Revolution, Civil Rights Movement, Me Too Movement, Black Lives Matter, Suzan Shown Harjo, Yo-Yo Ma, Jimi Hendrix, Simone Biles, Alexander McQueen, Keith Haring, etc.
 3. Take notes, include websites, images, etc. Do and record your research!
 4. Share your work with your art teacher, family, and friends.

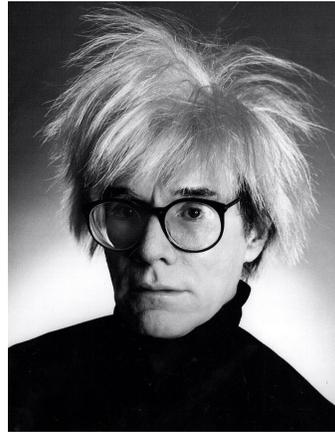
For example:

(Today's Date/In my case it was May 1, 2020)

*The event I chose is Woodstock. Woodstock was a dis-organized music festival that changed the course of music history by bring together some of the most iconic musicians. Due to the festival's low budget and last-minute location change, there was little to no security which resulted in the theme of the event being peace, love and music. The festival **influenced** distinctive decade filled with incredible music, an end to the Vietnam War and a free spirited, hippie culture.*



*The person I chose is Jean Michel Basquiat. Basquiat started his artistic career as a poetic street artist. He influenced street art culture by shifting the focus from tags to powerful quotes and messages. Later in life, Basquiat became a well-known painter who incorporated ideas from philosophers, poets, and inspirational leaders to engage viewers in a social commentary about societal issues. During this time, he befriended the pop artist Andy Warhol. Both artists had an enormous **influence** on art, fashion, and society.*



Creative Challenge #2: Becoming a Creative Influencer

Today, you will be reflecting on the amount of influence you, as an individual, can have on your community. Given the current COVID-19 situation, our range of influence has been impacted. We aren't able to physically get out much but our positive influence on others can still be present and is needed more than ever. We may just have to get a little more creative to ensure we influence others in a positive way!

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. Approximately how many people can you communicate with at this time? Consider, your family and using tools like a cellphone, email, a social media platform, online classes, etc.
 - b. Have you noticed any creative ways that people have been communicating messages with groups of people? For example, I went on a walk the other day and observed three things. There were positive messages on the sidewalk, painted rocks with smiley faces on them by a park and drawings of rainbows that you children did and hung on their windows facing the street so people walking by could see it.
2. Write the date and a positive message you think would be important to communicate to people right now. Consider the *influence* your message

will have on others. Will it be empowering, make someone laugh or smile, cause them to reflect on what they are reacting to what's going on in our world today, or something else?

3. Next, choose your platform. How will you be reaching your audience? Look back at question 1b for examples.
4. Pick an individual or small group of people to begin **influencing** first.
5. Create and record your message with photographs.
6. If you can, record any reactions to your message. In other words, did you **influence** anyone? If so, how? If not, why not?
7. Share your work with your art teacher, family, and friends.

For example:

(Today's Date/In my case it was May 3, 2020)

The positive message I would like to communicate is to find and spread peace. My intended viewers are my family members. I placed this small message at the entrance of our house to remind my family to stay peaceful and spread peace to whoever they may be communicating with.

Notice that even though my intended audience is my family (five of us are living at home), the message can still be spread by them to other people! I noticed people walking by stopping to read my message and smiling. I hope they felt some peace and will pass it on to someone else.



Creative Challenge #3: **Spreading your Influential Wings**

We started by choosing an individual or small group to ***influence***. This week, we are going to expand our sphere of ***influence***.

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. Did you influence viewers with your message from the last art challenge? If yes, what was the impact? If no, why do you think it did not have an impact?
2. Next, you are going to choose a larger audience and an ***influential*** goal. This means you might need to change the platform you are using in order to

reach more people. Your goal is to inspire people to try something that might help them through this pandemic or life in general.

3. Consider the types of hobbies you have, what materials you have to work with at home and the potential **influence** you could have on your larger audience. Record your goal and your intended audience in your physical or digital notebook. Don't forget to include the date!
4. Record any influence your work may have on your audience.
5. Share your work with your art teacher, family, and friends.

For Example:

(Today's Date/In my case it was May 7, 2020)

*My inspiration goal is to inspire people to be creative! I used iMovie to make a step-by-step video about making a physical journal. I posted the video on Instagram and challenged my viewers to make their own journals using the materials they have at home. I had a couple of people like my video so I know I have had some influence. However, if I allowed for comments I might know if I had even more **influence**; however, I am not comfortable doing that. You need to set boundaries that are good for you and getting permission from you family before you do anything, is a good way to start.*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfaS8XuO2tg&t=7s>

Creative Challenge #4: Collaborative Influencing

Today, you will continue spreading your positive *influence* in the world by recruiting and collaborating with others. This time, you will be using your intended audience to create a collaborative piece.

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. How can you get others to collaborate physically or through sharing ideas?
 - b. How you will recruit your participants?
 - c. What is the final message your piece will communicate.
2. Record your collaborative work in a collage format and in writing.
3. Share your ideas and work with your art teacher, family, and friends.

For Example:

*(Today's Date/In my case it was May 9, 2020)
I am using Instagram to write a collaborative short story. I posted a message on my story asking my followers if they were interested in being a part of the piece. However, I did not give a lot away. Only I know what the story will be about. I gave each participant a different prompt to respond to and gave them a few options in terms of how I would receive their work. Options included, mail, email, DM a photo and for a few participants who live in my neighborhood, I had them leave their response in their mailbox and I picked it up. Note: this may not be possible for everyone so you may need to adjust your idea for you piece when you are considering how you will get responses. I gave all participants a few days to send me their responses. Once I receive all the responses, I will put the short story together.*





Part 1: I reached out to the people that follow my art Instagram and gave them the option to participate. I kept it very vague to entice people.

Part 2: After I received a few responses (mostly from very close friends and family) I made another post showing the responses and recruit even more participants.

Part 3: I used everyone's input to write a short story and created a collage to highlight it.

Creative Challenge #5: Visually Presenting your Influence

It may be challenging to think about how you can present all of this work you have been doing and recording in your physical or digital notebook. You will need to be a creative *influencer* in order to identify a way to share and present your work.

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. First think about what platform you used to prompt your participants and who your participants are. Did you recruit family via word of mouth, phone, text, email, etc.? Did you recruit friends on a social media platform?
 - b. Will you be using that same platform to show the work?
 - c. Is your piece something that you can easily post online?
 - d. Are you able to photograph your piece or videotape it?
2. With family **influence**, decide which method of presentation that is best for you and go for it! Make sure to give credit to everyone who participated and record your influence.
3. Share your what you have done with your art teacher, family, and friends.

For Example:

(Today's Date/In my case it was May 12, 2020)

I documented the process of putting the collaborative short story together online using the same platform, Instagram. When the piece was complete, I shared three separate posts by photographing each page and included a written script of the text. Additionally, I filmed a video showing each page of the book and posted it to my YouTube Channel.

Creative Challenge #6: **Reflecting on your Creative Influence**

For the past few weeks you have actively and thoughtfully been **influencing** people in positive ways. Today you will reflect on how you creatively **influenced** your community.

1. Begin by reflecting on and answering the following questions in your physical or digital notebook:
 - a. Were you able to positively influence people?
 - i. -If so, how and to what extent?
 - If not, why?
 - b. What was your favorite part of these challenge?
 - c. What did not go as well as you had hoped?
 - d. What would you change if you could do it all again?

- e. What did you learn about yourself?
 - f. What did you learn about others?
 - g. What did you learn about art and life?
 - h. How did these creative challenges make you feel?
 - i. What did these creative challenges make you think?
2. Create a mixed media page that includes words and images, that represents the experiences you had while exploring your sphere of positive influence. Feel free to use whatever materials you have at home!
 3. Share your what you have done with your art teacher, family, and friends.

For Example:

(Today's Date/In my case it was May 13, 2020)

Personally, I was able to connect with friends I have not spoken to in a long time, I encouraged a few people who are normally not creative to participate in an artistic activity and I even made a few new friends.

Examples of visual journal entries.



Final Note: In the future, be mindful of who influences you and how you influence others!