

do it (australia)

**Extension Program
Workshop 1
What matters to me**

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan

Total duration 55 mins

This lesson is designed as the first of two workshops comprising the *do it (australia)* extension program for secondary Visual Arts students.

It includes a meditation activity and questions for discussion, inviting students to reflect on what matters to them and how to share their ideas with an audience.

Students will:

- Hear background information on Kaldor Public Art Projects and *do it (australia)*
- Take part in a guided meditation, and reflect on what matters to them
- Share their ideas in the form of a 'recipe for making art'
- Analyse instructions by contemporary Australian artists Lauren Brincat, Dale Harding and Amrita Hepi
- Reflect on how and why artists use text and instructions in their art-making

Pre-requisites:

Students should have completed learning activities 1-3 for *do it (australia)*. [Link](#)

Materials:

- Slideshow that accompanies this lesson, available on the *do it (australia)* learning webpage. [Link](#)
- Blank paper and pens/pencils

Reflection

5 mins

Overview and aims

- Gauge students' level of understanding
- Invite further reflection on past activities
- Encourage students to appreciate instructions as a form of art-making

Slide 1

- Why do you think instructions might be an interesting way to create an artwork?
- What did you notice when comparing your *do it (australia)* artwork interpretation with your friend/family member?
- What are some other art movements that use words and text?
- Why do you think artists might choose to use text in their art-making?

Overview and aims

- Develop awareness of the art world; different agencies and types of art organisations
- Develop awareness of the longstanding *do it* history
- Develop awareness of different artists' practice, and relationships between artist, artwork and audience
- Highlight the relationship between *do it (australia)* and the learning program
- Promote a greater connection with the wider *do it (around the world)* program
- Build a sense of community

Slides 2–3

Background: Kaldor Public Art Projects

- Kaldor Public Art Projects was founded by philanthropist John Kaldor in 1969
- For 50 years, the organisation has created groundbreaking projects with international artists in public spaces across Australia
- Kaldor Public Art Projects is the first and longest running public art organisation in the world
- What makes KPAP unique is that all of the projects are temporary.

Slide 2 notes

This slide features some iconic Kaldor Public Art Projects. Note that the projects are often large-scale, immersive, participatory – they invite audiences to engage with art in new, unexpected ways.

Slide 3 notes

Jonathan Jones' barrangal dyara (skin and bones), 2016, featured 15,000 shields across the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, retracing the vast outline of the Garden Palace building, which was destroyed by fire in 1882. The project took place over 16 days, before the shields were removed.

Slide 4

Background: *do it*

- *do it* was initiated in Paris in 1993 by innovative Swiss curator Hans Ulrich Obrist
- *do it* began as a conversation with artists Christian Boltanski and Bertrand Lavier, and the question, "What if we made an exhibition that never ended?"
- They asked 13 artists to send written instructions for artworks that could be made by anyone, anywhere
- The project has now taken place in more than 50 countries across the world; and includes over 400 instructions.

Slide 5

Background: *do it*

- *do it* is an international project, yet each edition is uniquely site-specific, engaging the local community as they respond to and create new sets of instructions.

Slide 5 notes

An instruction by American artist Alison Knowles, with 3 different interpretations. Note the differences of scale, placement, use of objects in each version – e.g. Australian milk-crates in the 2015 iteration by Adelaide artist Louise Haselton.

Slide 6

Background: *do it*

- *do it* is an open-ended exhibition that invites participation, interpretation and endless variation.

Slide 6 notes

A popular instruction by London-based Argentinian artist Amalia Pica. Note the use of language by the artist, which includes very specific details on materials (paper confetti), but is also open to interpretation (any kind, any size).

Slides 7–8

Background: *do it (australia)*

do it (australia) was developed in response to the COVID-19 situation

- It is a digital exhibition, featuring new commissions by contemporary Australian artists and creative practitioners;
- *do it (australia)* was developed as a unique response to the restrictions of this time, and the available materials and technologies under lockdown.

Background: *do it (around the world)*

- *do it (australia)* is part of a larger program titled *do it (around the world)* developed in partnership with Serpentine Galleries, London, Google Arts and Independent Curators International, New York.

Slide 7 notes

Full list of 18 artists and creative practitioners who contributed instructions for do it (australia).

Slide 8 notes

Sample of instructions and audience responses from do it (australia), which were shared through Instagram @kaldorpublicart, with the hashtag #doitaustralia

Activity: 'Pay attention'

25 mins

Overview and aims

- Encourage students to reflect upon their own unique values, and to identify something they would like the audience to pay attention to

Slide 9 (blank)

Briefly discuss:

- What is meditation?
- Why do people meditate?

We are going to do an activity now and the first step is a guided meditation. (Refer to student responses to the questions above regarding why meditation is being used as a tool for reflection – e.g. helps you to focus; calms the mind; enables you to look internally).

You may or may not have done something like this before, and that is OK. Just close your eyes and listen to the story we are about to share.

Step 1: Guided Meditation (2 mins)

Close your eyes

Think about a place, activity, idea or message that is important to you

Think about why it's important to you

Think about how it makes you feel

Is it big, or is it small? Is it real or imagined?

What is it made of?

What colour is it?

Describe this important object, place, idea or message in 3 words in your mind.

How could you share its importance with others?

Open your eyes!

Step 2: Memory (3 mins)

Write or draw anything you remember from when your eyes were closed.

Think of it as a quick sketch or as a page in your journal. It is just for you. It doesn't need to be neat, and it doesn't need to make sense.

Allow 2 minutes for students to complete the drawing and writing exercise

Step 3: Attention (1 min)

Artists are very unique people. They draw our attention to what matters most to them through their artworks. These give us an insight into how they see the world.

We all see the world differently. We all want to 'draw attention' to different parts of our everyday experiences that we think are important.

Slide 10

Step 4: Write a recipe (14 mins)

We can think of instructions as a method that artists use to communicate their ideas. Instructions can be like a step-by-step guide, or a recipe for making art.

Now you are the artist. Your task is to take the ideas that you jotted down after the meditation, and to share those ideas with an audience (your classmates) in the form of a recipe.

A recipe starts with ingredients. You will need to think of the ingredients required to make your artwork. What things does the audience need? Are there specific tools or materials? Do they need to use their own body? Is there a specific place where they need to be?

A recipe has measurements. Think about details of colour, shape, size, quantity, location, time of day. Are these important? You can be very specific, or you can leave these up to the audience. What is the method or process for making your artwork? What are the steps that the audience should follow? Is there a specific order?

What is the end result? Is it a physical object, such as a painting or sculpture? An action or event, such as a dance performance? Do you want to raise awareness of an issue, such as climate change? Or just evoke a specific mood or feeling?

Think carefully about your use of language.
Think about how you can invite your audience to pay attention to what matters most to you.

Don't be afraid to be direct and assertive in your writing.
As a student, you have to follow rules every day.
Today, you get to be an artist. You are writing the instructions, you get to make the rules.

Allow 8 minutes for students to complete the writing exercise

Step 5: Sharing (5 mins)

Invite students to read their instructions aloud to the class

Step 6: Reflection (5 mins)

(pose 2-3 most relevant questions to the class)

- How did the meditation help you reflect on what's most important to you?
- What was the process like translating your imaginings into a list of instructions?
- What kinds of creative choices did you make when writing your recipe?
- Were they very clear or intentionally 'ambiguous' or difficult to understand? Why did you choose that approach?
- What happens when instructions are written with less detail?
- Why do you think artists create artworks using only instructions?

Artist focus

10 mins

Overview and aims

- Introduce students to the *do it (homework)* artist instructions by Lauren Brincat, Dale Harding, Amrita Hepi

Slides 11–13

Reflection and analysis

(If time allows, try to interpret at least one of these instructions during the class)

Review the three artist instructions by contemporary Australian artists Lauren Brincat, Dale Harding and Amrita Hepi. These instructions were commissioned by the artists, specifically for young people. They were created while the artists were working with 8 high schools across NSW during *do it (homework) 2020*.

- Now that you've experimented with writing your own, do you see this instruction in a new way?
- What do you notice?
- What types of language does the artist use? (Persuasive, imagery, direct, open-ended?)
- What do you think this artist is drawing our attention to? Is it effective? Why or why not?
- In what ways are these instructions speaking to young people?

Wrap up

5 mins