LESSON/ACTIVITY: Turn on the Lights! by Kiley Grantges

LEVEL: 3rd grade and up

SUGGESTED TIME: Discussion time plus 3 hours

OBJECTIVE(S): students will
1. demonstrate understanding of the message and theme of the book Grandfather Gandhi
2. Create an artwork depicting the advice given to Arun Gandhi by his grandfather to “Live your life as light, not lightning.”
3. create a collaborative installation artwork
4. communicate ideas about emotion in an artwork

MATERIALS/TOOLS:
papier-mâché
round balloons
8 ½” x 11” white copy paper cut into approx. 1 inch wide strips
1 oz. art utility cups
Tape
craft knife (adults only)
tempera paint (white)
silver glitter
glue
white yarn for display

PREPARATION:
Read Grandfather Gandhi. Observe and study the artwork throughout the book and discuss how the illustrations and message of the book relate to and complement each other. Discuss the message and theme of the book with students; ask what they think it means to “Live your life as light, not lightning.” (The advice given to Arun Gandhi by his grandfather) Tell students that today they will be creating a collaborative installation artwork inspired by the message and theme of the Grandfather Gandhi book. In this project they will be creating a light bulb as a literal interpretation of their own light. These light bulbs will be displayed from the ceiling for all to enjoy and for all to be reminded to “Live your life as Light”!
PROCEDURE:

Before creating the light bulb sculptures discuss the visual/physical qualities of a light bulb with students. Converse about the kinds of lines, shapes, and colors they see, the fact that it is a 3 dimensional form, and that it is a conductor of electricity. (Great science component to this lesson!)

The directions for creating the light bulb sculptures are as follows:

1. Shape the body of the light bulb by inflating a round balloon. Use the approximately 1-inch-wide strips of white copy paper and apply the first 1-2 layers of papier-mâché by individually dragging the strips through the paste, wiping off the excess with your fingers, and pressing them onto the balloon so that they overlap slightly. Cover the whole balloon except for a 1-2 inch square opening at the knotted end. Let it dry for 24 hours. Pop the balloon and pull or out from the now dry papier-mâché sphere.

2. With a craft knife (adults only), cut an asterisk-shaped opening into the bottom of a small 1 oz. plastic art utility cup. Push the end of a string of white yarn through the asterisk and tie a double knot. (The double knot should be located on the inside of the plastic cup, so that the yarn does not slip through the asterisk once complete.) Fit the top of the container snugly against the bulb bottom (where the opening is) and tape it in place. The white yarn should be dangling from the light bulb.

3. Add 2 more layers of papier-mâché to the entire sculpture, including the plastic art utility cup.

4. Once dry, paint the bulb with white tempera paint and let dry. Then gently spread glue over the art utility cup portion of the light bulb and sprinkle with silver glitter. Display by suspending all light bulbs from the ceiling for a full installation piece inspired by the wonderful message of Grandfather Gandhi!

VOCABULARY:

straight line horizontal vertical shape rectangle neutral metallic three-dimensional form sphere, cylinder, cube, pyramid installation art
RESOURCES:

*Grandfather Gandhi* by Arun Gandhi and Bethany Hegedus, illustrated by Evan Turk.

POINTER/PITFALLS:

Paper mache can be messy, cover tables with newspaper or butcher paper and use aprons! I recommend cutting all newspaper strips and deli containers prior to the art making.

VARIATIONS:

Aluminum foil may also be used to cover the plastic cup portion (instead of glue and glitter) to simulate the neck of a light bulb. (Secure the foil with 3 strips of black electrical tape.) Silver tempera paint may also be used to cover the plastic cup portion (instead of glue and glitter) to simulate the neck of a light bulb. This project may also be completed as a 2-d work; either by creating a cut and paste collage, painting or any other form of illustration. Students might wish to start an anger journal in preparation for this project. See [http://grandfathergandhi.com/live-your-life-as-light/live-the-pledge/](http://grandfathergandhi.com/live-your-life-as-light/live-the-pledge/) for more information on how Arun Gandhi recommends the facilitation of an anger journal.